

## **Code of Behaviour**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí ( in accordance with ‘Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008) has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

If the school is to achieve a happy, safe environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework which promotes positive behaviour and discourages unhelpful/negative behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a disruption free and calm environment. The school Code of Behaviour places a greater emphasis on affirmation than on sanctions, and on responsibility rather than blame. The ideal is that pupils will take responsibility for their behaviour, recognising where harm has been caused and seeking to repair damage or hurt when possible.

We also believe strongly in the importance of clear rules for all and agreed sanctions when required. In addition, we recognise the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of cooperation among teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, the Board of Management (BOM) and the Parents Association (PA).

In case of conflict between the Irish/English versions of this policy the Irish language version shall take precedence.

### **RATIONALE**

The review of the Code of Behaviour was conducted to ensure that it is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in ‘Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’, National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), 2008. It has also been strongly informed by the philosophy of Restorative Practice (RP) as we are an evolving Restorative Practice (RP) school along with the principles of ‘Emotion Coaching’ following NEPS - approved training on this strategy. The NCSE ‘Relate’ document has further informed a regulation first approach in the school.

It is a requirement 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:

1. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
2. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school;  
(See Appendix 1)
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil (See Appendix 1)
6. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Reference is made throughout the Code to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Access to this policy is available on the school website under the 'Polasaithe Scoile/School Policies' link.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO THE SCHOOL ETHOS, VISION, MISSION AND VALUES**

It is our intention that our Code of Behaviour be consistent with our school ethos. It is also strongly informed by our vision and mission which are outlined below.

Our vision is to create an atmosphere which is welcoming, inclusive, cooperative and child-centred to ensure that every pupil's voice is heard in a safe and positive learning environment. Equal opportunity and each child's self-esteem is encouraged. We show and expect respect. The highest standard of teaching and learning is central to everything we do with a wide range of teaching methodologies used. Irish language and Culture is celebrated to foster a love, respect and appreciation of the Irish language.

Above all, our Code of Behaviour was drafted with our five school values in mind. These values are outlined below and each one is specifically addressed over 2 months with all are revisited at the end of the school year:

- Gaeilge
- Respect
- Kindness
- Pride
- Diligence



## AIMS OF THE CODE

- To create an ordered environment, where all children feel secure and are given an opportunity to develop their full potential.
- To create a positive learning environment that facilitates the education and development of every child.
- To support good behaviour patterns based on consideration, empathy, tolerance and respect for the rights and needs of others, thereby encouraging the children to take ultimate responsibility for their own behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and an understanding of unique strengths, needs & challenges.
- To engender positive relationships of mutual support among students, staff and parents.
- To equip the pupils with the skills to deal with conflict and to enable them to mature into responsible and active citizens.
- To ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all members of the school community are widely known and understood.
- To ensure consistency of response to both positive and negative
- behaviour and to clarify the steps to be taken in the event of unwanted behaviours.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this

policy.

## **WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

The BOM recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect, the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by the principal, teachers, ancillary staff, pupils and parents in the implementation of the Code and the Restorative Practice and Emotion Coaching approach along with the regulation first approach promoted in the NCSE Relate document.

As part of our on-going efforts to promote positive behaviour, time will be allocated at some staff meetings for discussion regarding the implementation of the Code and RP/Emotion Coaching . Staff will be given opportunities to share their experiences of both positive and negative behaviour and to learn from this collective wisdom. To enable new members of staff to become familiar with practices within the school, a copy of the Code will be included in all teachers' documents. The Code will also be available on our website for parents and will be regularly referred to and reviewed as appropriate.

Maintaining a safe and happy environment for all is of paramount importance. The school promotes mutual respect and empathy between and towards pupils, staff, parents and the wider community throughout the school day. GS Mhuscraí adopts a proactive and positive approach to discipline which is specifically guided by the principles of RP, Emotion Coaching and NCSE 'Relate'.

### Restorative Practice (RP)

As a school, we favour Restorative Practice (RP) as a tool for promoting positive behaviour and relationships as well as a means for dealing with wrongdoings or conflict. This approach is implemented from Rang 2- Rang 6. RP is a way of being as well as a way of doing and requires a mindset that embodies trust and respect. It focuses on repairing the harm that has been done and provides pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their behaviour and accept the consequences for their actions. It also fosters empathy and understanding for others, particularly those we might not see eye to eye with. In RP, challenging behaviour is often seen through the prism of unmet needs. It is a staged approach to problem solving/conflict resolution that includes all of the parties involved.

When using the continuum above, each classroom and support room will also display the Restorative questions on a chart in a prominent place side by side with the **Golden Rule - "Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself."** The questions are as follows:

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
3. What do you think/feel now?

4. Who has been affected and in what way?
5. How could things have been done differently?
6. What do you think needs to happen next?

The question ‘why?’ is always avoided and work will be done at a class level to develop the language required to engage with the process. The following rules exist when working through the questions:

- We must be respectful to each other
- We must tell the truth
- We must not interrupt unless it is okay with the person whose turn it is to talk

### **Emotion Coaching (EC)**

Emotion coaching is the strategy utilized in Infant – 1<sup>st</sup> class. Emotion Coaching is a way to help children calm down. It teaches them how to manage their emotions. There are 4 stages involved in Emotion Coaching.

1. Notice & Empathise. Acknowledge the emotion.
2. Label & validate. Help the child to name what they are experiencing in the moment. ‘I can see that you are angry. I would be angry too if that happened to me...’
3. Set Expectations. EC accepts the emotion, but the behaviour may be inappropriate. ‘I understand you are feeling sad but hitting your friend is not okay’.
4. Problem-solving. When the child is calm, find solutions with the child. ‘Let’s think about what you could have done instead’.

## **STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR AND EXPECTATIONS**

### **School Values**

**Gaeilge** – speak Irish

**Respect** – respect for yourself, for your school property, for other pupils, for school staff, for school visitors.

**Kindness** – treat everyone with kindness – Treat others as you would like to be treated.

**Pride** – take pride in your Irish language and Irish culture. Take pride in your abilities as a child.

**Diligence** – always do your best.

### **PUPILS:**

#### *General Behaviour*

Each pupil is expected to:

- attend — school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- wear — the correct school uniform/ tracksuit on the correct days (see appendix 3)
- Listen – to teachers/staff and act on their advice/instruction.
- speak — in Irish at all times
- Eat – a healthy lunch
- Avoid – any behaviour that disrupts learning or that endangers others.
- Walk — on the school grounds, corridors and stairs in an orderly manner

- Respect — all staff members, parents and visitors in the school, the property of the school, other children and their own belongings
- Include - other children in games and activities.
- Adhere — to the school's mobile phone and smart devices policies
- Include - other children in games and activities.
- Speak to a teacher if they feel anything is wrong.

### In the classroom

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teacher’s permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

### In the school yard

- Remain on school grounds at all times, play only in their designated area, and stay within the bollards in the specified areas.
- Follow the directions of staff on duty at all times.
- On the sound of the bell, to line up in an orderly manner in their designated areas, return the soccer ball to the pupils on duty, and wait to be collected by their class teacher.
- Show respect to teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), and fellow pupils while on the yard.
- Obtain permission before re-entering classrooms during break times. Toilets should be used before coming out to the yard.
- Play safely and avoid rough or dangerous games (e.g. slide tackling, Bulldog, Bulldog Take Down – this list is not exhaustive). Toys and trading cards (match attacks etc) are not permitted on the yard.
- Not to lift or carry younger children at any time.
- Refrain from swearing, name-calling, or physical altercations.
- Include all children who wish to take part in a game.
- Adhere to the agreed rules of any game being played.
- Avoid bringing lunch out into the yard.
- Inform an adult if anyone is hurt.
- Irish is to be spoken at all times on the yard.

### Around the school

- Walk in the corridors
- Use our ‘indoor voice’ – no shouting.
- Keep doors open for anyone passing nearby.
- Walk up/down stairs in a single file on left/right with your hand on the bannister.
- Speak in Irish around the school.

### School trips

- Follow the instruction of the teacher/SNA at all times.

- Remain with the class group and teacher/supervisor
- Behave politely towards those they meet on such trips
- Observe the rules of general good behaviour
- Speak in Irish to the teacher/SNA and fellow pupils.

Pupils can expect to be

- treated — with respect, fairness and consistency
- welcomed — into a safe atmosphere and well maintained physical environment
- recognised — for individual differences and have their needs met in so far as possible
- listened — to and encouraged to participate in decision-making
- enabled — to reach their full academic potential
- advocated — for to ensure access to appropriate assessments and necessary supports

### SCHOOL STAFF:

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. Each teacher and SNA must be fully aware of the contents of the Code and must be cognisant of their duty or care.

Each teacher and SNA (where appropriate) is expected to:

- discuss — the Code with their class at the beginning of the school year
- devise — the individual class rules with the pupils based on the Code
- display — the rules in the classroom, RP questions and/or EC steps and refer to them regularly
- implement — the rules, incentives and sanctions in a fair and consistent manner
- encourage — self-discipline and positive behaviour, hence minimising disruption
- use — the principles, practices and questions of Restorative Practice
- ensure — there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times
- contact — parents/guardians where there have been infringements of the Code
- keep — a written record of all incidents of continued minor misbehaviour and serious/ gross misconduct and inform the relevant parties of same
- report — repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal
- support — colleagues in implementation of the Code

Teachers and SNAs can expect to:

- be treated — with respect, courtesy and fairness
- teach — in a well-maintained physical environment relatively free from disruption
- work — in a safe environment free from physical assaults and verbal attacks
- receive — support and cooperation from colleagues and parents in order to fully implement the Code
- participate — fully in decision-making which affects their own work and that of the school in general

- obtain — support and professional advice from the Board of Management (BOM), Department of Education (DE), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), the Tusla Educational Support Services (TESS) to help to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of their pupils

### PARENTS/GUARDIANS

As the primary educators, parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes, practices and values in their children which result in positive behaviour in school.

*Parents are expected to:*

- familiarise — themselves fully with the school's Code of Behaviour
- encourage — their children to follow the school's Code
- ensure — their children attend school regularly and on time
- collect — pupils from school promptly
- inform — the class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children
- give — homework due time and effort, in line with ability
- provide — children with necessary materials (stationery etc)
- supply — their children with a healthy lunch in line with school policy
- treat — members of the school community with respect at all times
- provide — an explanation note on Aladdin for all absenteeism
- cooperate — with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others
- communicate — to the school any issues and changes in family life which may affect their child's behaviour
- make — an appointment to discuss their concerns regarding any aspect of their child's behaviour

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

Parents can expect:

- treatment that is respectful, courteous and fair
- an environment that is safe and welcoming for their child
- to obtain recognition for individual differences among pupils, having due regard for the resources that are available.
- the full implementation of the school's Code of Behaviour
- the receipt of progress reports in accordance with agreed school policy (P.T. meetings and end of year reports)
- to receive information on school's policies and procedures
- grievances to be dealt with in accordance with the Parental complaints procedure procedures i.e. (INTO – School website under Polasaithe na Scoile link)

### **PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

As a general rule, the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is

reinforced through praise and incentives. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school and positive behaviour will be recognised and affirmed as often as possible. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously struggled with behavioural challenges so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

### Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour

The following are some examples of how positive behaviour is promoted and how it may be acknowledged. *As a health promoting school, we strongly discourage the use of treats as prizes with exceptions on the day of Halloween, Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays and for the Scríbhneoir na Míosa award.*

- Modelling of positive behaviour
- Verbal affirmation and encouragement (individually/on intercom/at assembly)
- Involvement of Coiste na nDaltaí (Student Council)
- Social Stories
- Value of the Month and related resources (Gaeilge/Respect/Kindness/Pride/Dilligence)
- Specific Weeks - e.g. Anti-Bullying Week, Well-Being Week etc
- Buddy Systems/Cáirde Chlóis – Well-Being Wednesday
- Kindness cards/stickers to acknowledge acts of kindness
- Cártaí Glasa to acknowledge efforts speaking Irish
- Written affirmation of good behaviour (by email or through homework diary)
- Additional ‘Golden Time’ given to preferred activity chosen by the child or class
- Stars, stamps, stickers, tickets, certificates, homework passes and prizes
- Class of the week with different prizes awarded such as trips to the park, golden time, extra PE etc.
- Student of the Month based on the Value of the Month
- Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine - photo shared on Instagram with the permission of parents
- Special responsibilities - Student Council, Well-being Ambassadors.
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal's office to acknowledge the positive behaviour/effort.

### **PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

Class teachers and specialist personnel such as the Special Education Teachers (SETs) and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) will check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that pupils with additional needs can understand. It will be helpful to check for this understanding from time to time, especially where a pupil with additional needs is acting in a way that would usually be seen as being in breach of the rules.

Teachers may need support in understanding how best to help a pupil with additional needs to conform to the behavioural standards and expectations of the school. Specific behavioural targets are set out in their Support Plan and are developed collaboratively between pupil, parents/guardians and teachers (and SNAs where appropriate). School staff including class teachers, SETs and SNAs work collaboratively to put in place an appropriate system of incentives and rewards for good behaviour. These incentives and rewards are tailored around each individual child. Some children have a simplified version of the school rules.

⇒ Levels of intervention:

Three levels at which intervention may take place are outlined below. At each level, parental and family support will be sought.

<b>Levels of Intervention (in line with the Continuum of Support)</b>	
<b>Support for all</b>	Most pupils behave appropriately, with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional, minor misbehaviour will be attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher (using rewards and sanctions - some of which are detailed in this code).
<b>Additional support for some pupils</b>	Some pupils need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Without additional help, they may not reach their full potential; behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Referral to another teacher or SNA who can work with the pupil</li> <li>● Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the pupil in a supportive way through a Support Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Specialised support for a small minority of pupils</b>	A small minority of pupils may show particularly persistent challenging behaviour. They may have great difficulty in learning new behaviour and may not respond to low-level interventions. These pupils will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. <p>The Principal and staff will build mutually supportive relationships with the parents/guardians. Subsequently they will build good links with local support services that may be able to assist in responding to the needs of a pupil with behavioural difficulties. Sources of support may include the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), HSE Community Psychology Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).</p>

A very small minority of pupils with additional needs may exhibit behaviours that seriously challenge the ability of the school to respond. These behaviours include actions that seriously disrupt the work of the classroom on a sustained basis.

Pupils displaying significantly challenging behaviours will require a high level of intervention as set out in the levels of intervention above. Behavioural targets in line with the Continuum of Support will be reviewed and a clear system of rewards and sanctions will be put in place in consultation with the pupil themselves and their parents/guardians. Staff use the NCSE Relate resources to support student engagement and participation. The support of external agencies such as NEPS, CAMHS, the NCSE, Tusla, HSE etc will be sought. The school recognises that this can be extremely difficult for parents/guardians but their support is both necessary and expected to achieve the best possible outcome for their child. In some cases this may include exploring a more specialised school setting that would provide increased support and better meet the needs of their child.

Temporarily removing a pupil who displays seriously challenging behaviours from the classroom to a supervised location may be appropriate in the interests of classroom management. This is in order to ensure the learning of other students and to help the individual student to recognise and learn about the impact and consequences of their behaviour. In such an instance the Principal will be alerted and a decision made as to the next course of action which may include asking the parent/guardian to take the child home.

If a child must be taken home, a Behaviour Reflection Form may need to be completed by parents and child before the child returns to school. (See Appendix 2)

A reduced day may be considered in line with Circular 47/2021.

It is acknowledged that a certain degree of flexibility is necessary when dealing with pupils with additional needs. However, where serious incidences of misbehaviour occur and where the safety of other pupils or staff is at risk, this Code of Behaviour takes precedence.

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## SCHOOL RULES

1. Irish is the spoken language of the school. All staff members and pupils are required to speak it. It is expected that the parents will give the children every encouragement and endeavour to use whatever Irish they have, especially in the school surroundings.
2. It is important that every pupil treats others with respect. Behaviour that interferes with learning or the safety of others will not be tolerated.
3. It is essential that the children are on time for school. A child who is late or absent is required to give an explanatory note on Aladdin and a reason for the absence.
4. The children must wear the full school uniform. They are expected to wear the full school tracksuit on allocated PE days.
5. All pupils are expected to keep their books, copybooks and stationary neat and tidy.
6. All children should bring a wholesome lunch to school. Chewing gum, crisps, biscuits, sweets, **nuts** and fizzy drinks are forbidden. All drinks in glass bottles or cans are strictly not allowed. Lunch should not be shared.
7. Each child is expected to complete his/her homework properly. A parent/guardian should sign this work. If for some reason a child cannot do his/her work the parent/guardian should put an explanatory note in the child's Homework Diary.
8. The children are expected to be courteous at all times to one another, to their teachers and to visitors to the school. Misconduct in any form which brings the school into disrepute is forbidden.
9. Children must respect school property and other people's belongings and keep the school neat and tidy.
10. Pupils are prohibited from bringing any valuables, mobile phones or expensive games onto the school property.
11. Jewellery, if worn, should be kept to a minimum and should not present a health and safety risk e. dangling earrings.
12. Pupils must walk inside the school. Running within the school building is forbidden (except as part of a PE lesson).
13. Pupils are not allowed to run dangerously or engage in rough play in the school yard. They are expected to be quiet and orderly whenever they are in their assembled class lines.
14. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school during the day. If a parent finds it necessary to collect a child early the secretary or Class Teacher should be informed in advance.
15. Bullying is never allowed.

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## INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response, the Code of Behaviour classifies inappropriate behaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed. Teachers and/or the Principal will make judgements based on a common sense approach, having due regard to the age, needs and vulnerability of the child and the gravity and frequency of this inappropriate behaviour. The three categories of inappropriate behaviour are classed as minor, serious or gross.

### **Category One**

#### **Inappropriate Behaviours - Minor**

Category 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Category 1. (Please note the list is not exhaustive.)

- failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- running in the classroom/hallways
- ascending or descending the stairs inappropriately
- disturbing the work or play of others
- deliberately taking belongings of others
- not working to full potential
- speaking in English
- disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- back answering
- ignoring staff requests
- interrupting classwork or talking out of turn
- littering around the school/inappropriate use of school bins
- walking around the classroom without permission
- not wearing the appropriate uniform
- not following school policies in relation to phone and smart devices use
- not following the rules of the yard

#### **Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviours - Minor**

Consequences for minor inappropriate behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will deal with pupils at Category 1. Some examples of Category 1 responses are:

- Engaging in Restorative Practice practice/Emotion Coaching strategy
- Filling in of a reflective log (if relevant) See Appendix 2
- Time Out in classroom or during yard time

- Prescribing of additional school work
- Loss of privileges / withdrawal from fun activities
- Time out to another class
- Contact with parents
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher. Parents will be contacted at an appropriately early stage so that they can support their child in bringing about a change of behaviour.

In cases of inappropriate behaviour by a pupil/pupils towards another pupil(s) during school time, we do not recommend that parents contact each other. It is advised that parents make contact with the school directly and let the school follow procedure.

## **Category Two**

### **Inappropriate Behaviours - Serious**

Category 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the pupils and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Category 2. (Please note the list is not exhaustive.)

- Repeated instances of Category 1 behaviour which have not been modified by [intervention](#)
- Profanity/disrespectful language/verbal assault
- Constantly disruptive in class/deliberate and continuous disobedience
- Telling lies (repeated and/or of a serious nature)
- Blackmail
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, sexuality or ethnic origin
- Inappropriate use of the internet
- Smoking/vaping
- Cheating / Stealing
- Endangering self/fellow pupils in the class or on yard (e.g. physical violence such as pushing, punching, striking, tripping, biting, throwing objects etc)
- Intentionally damaging school, other pupils or personal property
- Purposely activating the fire alarm
- Possession or use of dangerous items
- Leaving school premises without permission

- Deliberately coughing, sneezing, spitting on another child or member of staff
- Bullying - All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy

### Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviours - Serious

Consequences for serious inappropriate behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. Teachers in conjunction with the deputy principal or principal will deal with pupils at Category 2. Some examples of Category 2 responses are:

- Teachers may initially take measures as outlined for Category 1 above (with continued efforts to employ RP and EC)
- An account of all incidents will be entered on the pupil file on the School's Database.
- Behaviour Contracts
- Child will be sent to the Deputy Principal / Principal
- Formal email/call from school Principal informing parent of inappropriate behaviour
- Class teacher or supervising teacher and Principal will meet with one/both parents
- Implementation of a more extensive Behaviour Management Contract/Plan
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the NEPS, NCSE, CAMHS, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and the Principal
- Suspension will be used as a sanction where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Communications to parents regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing. (Copies of all correspondence will be retained)

### **Category Three**

#### Inappropriate Behaviours - Gross

Category 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Category 3. (Please note that the list is not exhaustive.)

- Repeated or serious instances of Category 2 behaviour which have not been modified after intervention
- Persistently engaging in activities that have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate
- Assault - intentionally causing physical harm to others or violent fighting
- Intentional possession or use of weapons with intent to cause harm
- Possession or Use of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Setting fire to school property
- Vandalism of school property

### Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviours - Gross

Behaviour at Category 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension or expulsion are outlined in Appendix 1. Examples of Category 3 responses are:

- Restorative Practice and/or
- Suspension from school for one to five days:  
This response will occur with the first incidence of Category 3 behaviour or Category 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.
- Suspension from school for five to ten days:  
This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Category 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.
- Expulsion:  
Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

### NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- The school should be notified of the absence as soon as practicable or on/before the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be documented in writing by using the Aladdin system
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school has a legal obligation to inform the Tusla Education Support Services (TESS) in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register.

### **RELEVANT SCHOOL POLICIES**

There is significant overlap between various school policies. The following are the policies that will have a direct impact on, or be directly impacted by, the Code of Behaviour:

- SHPE
- Bí Cineálta (Anti-bullying Policy)
- Health and Safety Statement
- Special Educational Teaching Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- School Attendance Strategy

### **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

- Positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and the school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy are consistently implemented by teachers and supported by the parent body of the school.
- Prevention of and dealing with inappropriate behaviour when it occurs.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

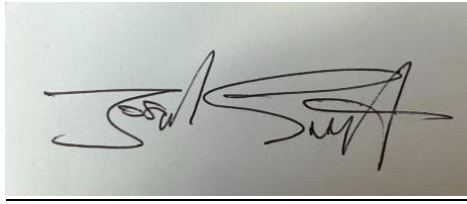
### **EVALUATION, REVIEW**

The Board of management reserves the right to add to or amend the Code of Behaviour as deemed necessary, and will inform the teachers and the parents of any changes as soon as possible. The Code of Behaviour will be evaluated and reviewed by the staff and the Board of Management every two years or as they deem necessary.

### **RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION**

A copy of this policy will be given to all parents upon enrolment of their children in the school. It is available to all members of the school community via the school website.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the *20th April 2026*.



Sinthe:

Cathaoirleach



Príomhoide Feidhmeannach

## Appendix 1

### PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

#### Suspension

##### Definition of Suspension:

‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’

##### **Authority to Suspend:**

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an ‘Immediate Suspension’ to the Principal Teacher. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an ‘Automatic Suspension’ for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

##### **Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension**

An ‘Immediate Suspension’ will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An ‘Immediate Suspension’ may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An ‘Automatic Suspension’ is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur ‘Automatic Suspension’ as a sanction;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff or
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension.

Such a notification will detail:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss:

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

(i) No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

### **Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:**

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply; Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to

Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.
- Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision.

- The letter will confirm: the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

### **Expulsion**

#### **Definition of Expulsion:**

‘A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.’ (Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board)

#### **Authority to Expel:**

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

#### **Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

A) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

B) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parent(s)/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 are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

(C ) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s (or BOM’s Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing If, having considered the Principal’s report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

1. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
2. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
3. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing. In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

(D) 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

Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

(E) 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 will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Mhuscraí acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

#### REMOVAL OF SUSPENSION (REINSTATEMENT)

Following, or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s (and pupil) 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 and will not have a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils. The Principal in consultation with the parents, the class teacher and the pupil (if appropriate) will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil, if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class. Where a satisfactory resolution of a problem is achieved, a pupil may be re-admitted to school within a suspension period at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Board and the Principal.

## Appendix 2

STUDENT REFLECTIVE SHEET / LOG. (Restorative Practice Questions are utilized for older pupils)

What did I do?

What was the reason that I did it?

What rule did I break?

What can I do to fix it?

### Aguisín 3

#### Culaith Reatha Gaelscoil Mhuscraí



Bun den chulaith reatha / school tracksuit bottoms



Nó Bríste dúbhghorm, simplí / Or Plain navy joggers



I ndea-aimsir is féidir brístí gearra dúbhghorma a chaitheamh. During the summer term/good weather plain navy shorts can be worn.

Ní cheadaítear iad seo / The following is not allowed instead of the above



## Éide Scoile Ghaelscoil Mhuscraí

Caithfidh gach páisté éide scoile iomlán a chaitheamh. A full school uniform is required on certain days.



Ní hé seo éide scoile. The following is not a full school uniform - a mix of a school jumper and branded sports clothing.









