



Code of Behaviour

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Scoil Mhuire, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has the ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within Scoil Mhuire, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/Guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

Aims of the code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self esteem
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage
'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.

A **Code of Conduct** for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

School Rules

- We show respect for self and others
- We show respect for our property and the property of others.
- We show respect for other students and their learning
- We are kind and willing to help others
- We follow instructions from staff immediately
- We walk quietly in the school building.
- We show courtesy and good manners
- We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- We ask permission to leave the classroom/school
- We do our best in class
- We take responsibility for our own work
- We wear the appropriate uniform and tracksuit
- We follow our Healthy Eating Policy

These can be summed up as ***'6 Golden Rules'***.

1. We listen and we wait our turn.
2. We are gentle.
3. We are honest.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard and we try our best

6. We respect our property and the property of others.

These 6 Golden Rules will be the main ones for all classes. Rules apply during school time and during all school related activities.

Each week during both assemblies, the principal will ask the children what the Golden Rule of the week is.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the 'Golden Rules'. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of Scoil Mhuire is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different levels of ability and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be high as for work.

The following are some examples of how praise might be given:

1. A quiet word or gesture to show approval
2. A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
3. A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation
4. A word of praise in front of a group or class
5. Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
6. A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
7. 'Bualadh Bos' in class
8. 'Student of the week/ Most improved pupil' at the whole school assembly.

Field trips/ annual school tours and our end of year special event will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised:

Minor, Serious, and Gross.

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher at break times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the class teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of '**Minor Misbehaviour**' include:

1. Bringing electronic equipment or mobile phones to school
2. Not wearing appropriate school uniform, bringing in chewing gum
3. Not following instructions

Examples of '**Serious Misbehaviour**' include:

1. Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
2. Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
3. Threats or physical hurt to another person
4. Damage to property
5. Theft
6. Bringing dangerous equipment to school
7. Leaving school/school activities without permission

Examples of '**Gross Misbehaviour**' include:

1. Assault on a teacher or pupil
2. Serious theft
3. Serious damage to property
4. Serious bullying
5. Carrying drugs, alcohol or cigarettes

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional – conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- **PHYSICAL** – includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping etc.
- **VERBAL** – name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates
- **EMOTIONAL** – threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. *"Cyber/ text bullying"*.

Scoil Mhuire takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using 'Circle Time', 'Drama' etc.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The class teacher and school principal should be informed.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner without infringing on valuable teaching time. Isolated bullying incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint when this is deemed necessary.

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 staff that their wellbeing is being protected

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

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- Keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Steps to be taken by school staff

1. Reasoning with the pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within the class and/ or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribed extra work/writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Referral to Principal
7. Communication with parents
8. Principal communicating with parents

If there is no improvement the teacher will meet with the child's parents/guardians to develop a 'Behaviour Management Plan'.

9. Exclusion(suspension or expulsion) from school(in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules of National School as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Suspension/Expulsion.

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

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious to be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the school principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with the teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical

information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules of National Schools and the Education 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 may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board of Management shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, in Scoil Mhuire, the parent/s or guardians, of the child, may apply, in writing, to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s or guardians must give an 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 pupils 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.

Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, Scoil Mhuire recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning/resource support teacher, and or principal will work closely with 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 invaluable.

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

Communicating with Parents.

Scoil Mhuire actively encourages communication with parents/guardians and realise the importance of maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing broader philosophy which can be implemented at home or school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers/principal/H.S.C.L about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a journal, please check for notes)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School Notice Board
- Newsletters/School website/Emails
- Text a Parent service

Code for Parents/Guardians:

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their children attend school and are punctual
- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient drink and uniform
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through office
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same
- Label pupils coats and other personal property
- Strictly supervise pre - school children, when in the school.
- Strictly NO SMOKING anywhere on the school premises.

Conclusion

The essence of our Code of Behaviour is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self-discipline.

Reviewed:

This policy was reviewed in November 2017 and will be reviewed again in November 2019.

Formally ratified by _____

Chairperson, Board of Management, Scoil Mhuire

Date: _____

