

Scoil Mhuire Naofa  
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Co Chorcaí



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## Scoil Mhuire Naofa Code of Behaviour

### Rationale

Every school is required under the Education Welfare Act (2000) to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of the students registered in the school. The Act provides that the Code shall specify;

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

It is the policy of our school to review our Code of Behaviour on a regular basis to ensure that it is at all times relevant and in compliance with legislative requirements.

### Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

Our aim is to provide a happy, secure, safe environment for our pupils in which there is a sense of order and discipline. This is achieved by having guidelines to direct behaviour for the good of all our pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that our code is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. A high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within our school and to achieve this, we maintain a high level of cooperation among all the staff and between staff, pupils and parents. Regular up-skilling by teachers who undertake Continuous Professional Development in this area emphasises the importance placed by staff, and the school as a whole, in creating a positive learning environment.

### Aims

The aims of this Code of Behaviour are:

- to allow the school to be a happy and safe environment for learning.
- to enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- to create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.

## Code of Behaviour

- to promote positive behaviour and self-discipline recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences. Children are regularly rewarded when they are “caught being good”. Every teacher is made aware of the children who are on an Individualised Behaviour List.
- to assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures in our code and to seek their co-operation in their application.
- to ensure that our systems of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.
- to fulfil the requirements of 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.
- to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community.

### **General Guidelines**

The following are general guidelines expected of the pupils of Scoil Mhuire Naofa:

- to show consideration and courtesy and respect to other children and adults.
- to show respect for the property of the school, other children’s and their own belongings.
- to be punctual and regular in their attendance.
- to do their best both in school and for homework.
- to uphold the schools code of behaviour while on school tours and representing the school at out-of-school activities.
- to participate in a “teamwork” approach to the promotion of positive behaviour.
- to respect and uphold the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- to positively input into the drawing up of class rules upon invitation from the class teacher and to positively participate in promoting and upholding those rules.

### **School Rules**

- It is School Policy that pupils wear the full school uniform every day. School tracksuit may be worn on PE day(s), or other days, as directed by the teacher.
- All parts of pupils' school uniform and tracksuit should be clearly marked with pupils' names.
- Pupils must be on time for school in the morning. Pupils should also be collected on time after school and after school activities.
- Pupils must walk into line quickly and quietly when directed to.
- Pupils must be of good behaviour in the corridor and in classrooms at all times.
- Pupils must show respect, courtesy, consideration and tolerance to teachers, ancillary staff, visitors and fellow pupils at all times. Likewise a similar standard of behaviour is expected when on school tours and other outings.
- Pupils must not interfere with or damage school property, teachers’ property or other pupils’ property. Damage to same must be paid for by the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Persistent disruptive behaviour, talking and answering out of turn, noises or sniggering at other children is not acceptable behaviour.
- Pupils must not leave the school or playground without permission from the teacher in charge.
- Pupils who need to leave school during school hours must be collected by parent/guardian or the person designated by parent/guardian. Pupils must then be signed out by a staff member at the office.

## Code of Behaviour

- All pupils have to be in the playground during break times where supervision is provided. In extenuating circumstances, on receiving a written request from parent(s)/guardian(s), the principal may review this, on a case by case basis.
- Parents must record all absences on Aladdin Connect.
- Pupils must not chew gum in school.
- Pupils are expected to take their litter/waste home.
- Pupils must do all homework, oral and written, every night. Homework must be neatly presented.
- Pupils must refrain from bullying, fighting and using bad language.
- **Aggressive or violent behaviour is regarded as a very serious matter.**
- Pupil mobile phones are discouraged. If a child needs to have one in school it must be turned off and out of sight at all times. Without exception, any phone which is used during school will be confiscated and held in the office and must be collected by a Parent/Guardian. Children may communicate with their parents during school time via school landline/school mobile if necessary.
- Items considered dangerous/distracting should not be brought to school.

### **Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour**

It is our aim to promote and reward positive behaviour as an effective means of discouraging challenging behaviour.

**Sporting Contract**In Scoil Mhuire Naofa our aim is to offer a wide sports curriculum to the maximum number of children. Our ethos is one of respectful sportsmanship, where the children comply with decisions of the teachers and referees and show respectful behaviour at all times. The Sporting Agreement (Appendix 1) must be abided by at all times, signed by all participants, and their parents.

### **Rewards**

Rewards, within class, will be at the discretion of individual teachers.

Teachers may co-operate in organising “Privilege Time”, Golden Tickets etc.

### **Strategies promoting positive behaviour:**

Strategies are chosen from among the following:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Regular reminders of behaviour expectations
- A comment in a pupil’s copy / Aladdin/ email to parent
- A visit to another member of staff or the principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegation of some special privilege or responsibility
- A mention to parent either written or verbal
- Reward systems

### **Dealing with Challenging Behaviour**

Where a pupil is displaying challenging behaviour it is expected that parents will positively support this school to assist the pupil in understanding the standard of behaviour required and to support the strategies selected by the school for bringing about a better understanding of these expectations as well as a willingness to adhere to them.

#### **1. Sanctions**

## Code of Behaviour

Sanctions, within class, will be at the discretion of the individual teacher who may consult with pupils and will be consistent with the ethos, policies and practices of the school.

### **2. Card System**

- Class lists are maintained in the front of all yard books. A pupil may receive a tick for breaking school rules while in the yard. An accumulation of 3 ticks results in a detention card being issued to the pupil. All pupils will start on a clean slate after each half term. Pupils who maintained a clean sheet in the previous half term will be awarded a homework off voucher.
- Detention cards may also be issued for persistent misdemeanour or gross misbehaviour.
- Detention cards are sent home to be signed by parents so that they are aware of the incident/s which have occurred.
- Upon return of a signed detention card, the pupil will attend detention in the school hall during both lunch breaks on a specified day.

A white card will be issued to a pupil who has received five blue cards.

- White cards are for **serious** misbehaviour or an accumulation of five detention cards.
- Yellow cards are for an accumulation of five white cards and are to be signed by class teacher and the Principal
- Red cards are for an accumulation of three yellow cards and are to be signed by the class teacher and the Principal.
- Red or yellow cards may be issued for a single serious incident.
- Sanctions for receiving a White/Yellow/Red card will be issued after consideration of the incidents which have occurred.
- The issuing of a red card is always reported to the Board of Management.
- The Deputy/Assistant Principal will retain and monitor detention and white cards for the school year. Pupils will commence each school year with a clean slate. Yellow and red cards will be retained for a minimum of two years.
- All cards are records of an incident or series of incidents and must be returned, signed by a parent/guardian to the class teacher/deputy principal/Principal.

### **Clean Slate;**

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. A record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed. When the sanction is completed the school will expect the pupil to adhere to the code of behavior. Every pupil will start with a clean slate every September.

### **3. Suspension/ Expulsion**

Suspensions or expulsions may occur in accordance with the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) Guidelines for schools 2008

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

- Reason with the pupil at time of transgression.
- Reason with the pupil in an individual setting.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Detention during a break.

## Code of Behaviour

- Prescribing additional work or useful tasks.
- Communication with parents.
- Restorative Practice.
- Referral to the Principal

### **Strategies for dealing with ongoing or single serious incidents**

When the strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour have been exhausted or following a single serious incident or at any time at the principal's sole discretion:

- Formal/Informal report to Board of Management.
- Suspension (temporary)
- Expulsion

### **Suspension**

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

This authority may be formally delegated to the Principal, in writing.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as:

- The student's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to the safety of the pupil or any third party.
- The student displayed a consistent lack of willingness to adhere to this Code of Behaviour
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

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

In such cases, the Chairperson or Principal has the authority of the Board to sanction an immediate suspension, pending discussion of the matter with the parent(s) / guardian(s). A suspension may be revoked following the agreed appeals procedure.

### **Expulsion**

Under the Welfare Act Education (2000) "*a student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of 20 school days following the receipt of a notification under this Section by an education welfare authority*". "*It is the right of the Board of Management to take "such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of the students is secured"*.

### **The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student**

The decision to expel is only taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and where the Board, following a series of interventions including adhering to fair procedures for investigation and decision making, believe they have exhausted all possibilities of changing the student's behaviour.

### **Appeals**

In accordance with circular 22/02, parents are entitled to appeal some decisions of the Board of Management. Parents will be informed about the appeals procedure when a suspension or expulsion is to be invoked.

## **Records of Behaviour**

### **Class Level**

In the end of the school year report card, reference will be made to Behaviour in Class and Behaviour in the Playground. A list of children on differentiated behaviour plans is compiled and regularly reviewed.

Each teacher maintains a file on each pupil. These files contain information on academic progress, social development and individual behaviour plans as required. Specific strategies for children presenting with behavioural difficulties arising from special educational needs may be included in that pupils individual educational plan.

Report cards and files are handed on to subsequent teachers

### **Playground**

Incidents of misbehaviour in the yard, are recorded in the online Yard Book. Implementation of the Code of behaviour will be discussed with all staff at the beginning of each school year.

### **Formal records**

Formal records will be kept of incidents that result in suspension and /or expulsion.

These records will detail

- How and by whom the incidents were investigated including notes of all interviews held.
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management

The Principal will report suspensions to the NEWB

## **Home School Communication**

It is in the interests of pupils, parents and teachers that good relations should prevail between school and home. Our school prides itself on the high level of co-operation that exists between us. Parents support the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules. The staff of our school always welcomes the opportunity to discuss, with parents, behavioural problems that may arise from time to time. With mutual respect, trust and goodwill these occasional problems are readily solved. The successful implementation of this policy depends on pupils, parents and staff working together. This policy, together with our school's Anti-bullying Policy are available for the entire school community on the school website. It shall be a condition of registration of a pupil in Scoil Mhuire Naofa that all parents and guardians seeking to have their child enrolled in the school can confirm in writing that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.

## **National Education Welfare Board**

Our school is obliged to report to NEWB when one or more of the following criteria apply:

- A student has reached 20 days absence cumulatively
- The principal is concerned about a student's attendance
- A student has been suspended for six days or more cumulatively
- The Board of Management decides to expel a student
- A student's name is to be removed from the school register for whatever reason.

**This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies of the school**

- SPHE Plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Record keeping
- Health and safety
- Special education needs

It is important to us to consider the views of all members of the school community in formulating our policies. We are very grateful to the Parents Association and all parents who made submissions in relation to this policy and these were fully considered and very welcome in formulating this Code. We are especially grateful to our pupils whose submissions were also very helpful and important in drafting this Code. We would like to acknowledge the huge input from staff members and in particular the subcommittee which coordinated the drafting of this Code. Their research and coordination was crucial to the formulation of this Policy.

In formulating this code, the Board of Management considered a submission from, and discussed the same, with the body representing the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the pupils attending the school. All members of the teaching staff have been involved in planning the code.

**Scoil Mhuire Naofa**  
**Sport Agreement**

*In Scoil Mhuire Naofa our aim is to offer a wide sports curriculum to the maximum number of children. Our ethos is one of respect, where the children comply with decisions of the teachers and referees and show respectful behaviour at all times. Through the medium of Sport the pupils receive much more than just the benefits of aerobic exercise. They also learn important life lessons. They will learn how to win with honour and lose with grace. They will learn acceptance in the face of disappointment. They will learn compliance with rules and regulations regardless of personal opinion. They learn respect.*

*It is important for parents to read the contract below carefully and fully discuss it with their child before signing. There will be zero tolerance for disrespectful attitude or demeanour towards teachers or referees at training sessions or matches. Parents should provide positive, encouraging support. Decisions are school based only and will be final. Clear understanding of this is vital from the outset.*

*Sport in Scoil Mhuire Naofa is inclusive and is not allied with any outside agencies or clubs, though we may request their input from time to time. It is important to note that after school training/matches is offered on a voluntary basis by our dedicated teachers and it is not compulsory. Respect for the authority of the teachers is mandatory and your child may be asked to step down from the team if they are unable to show a respectful attitude or demeanour. Decisions regarding team selection rests solely in the realm of the school. Our ethos is one of inclusion first and foremost.*

- I agree to be respectful at all times to teachers and referees.
- I agree to accept the decisions of the teachers and referees.
- I agree to be respectful at all times to helpers, other teams and their teachers/helpers.
- I agree to be positive and support sport in Scoil Mhuire Naofa.
- I agree to abide by the Scoil Mhuire Naofa Anti-Bullying Policy.
- I agree to abide by the Scoil Mhuire Naofa Code of Behaviour.
- I agree to behave responsibly on the pitch and at the sideline.

*I hereby declare that I have read and understand and agree to comply with the above*

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*Parent/Guardian*

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## Code of Behaviour

*Child*