



SS. Michael & Peter Junior School

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Code of Behaviour

Our Mission Statement

The school recognises the dignity, rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and strives to promote the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual development of its pupils so that all may achieve their full potential.

Introductory Statement

Our Mission Statement guides our school environment. Respect for all is central to this policy as it is to all members of the school community. Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. In SS Michael and Peter Junior School, 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.

Rationale

- To ensure a continued positive happy climate for learning in the school and during all school related activities.
- 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:*
 - *The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 - *The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
 - *The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
 - *The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
 - *The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.*
- To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.*

Section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act states that, prior to registering a child as a student of the/that school, the principal teacher shall provide the parents of such child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour and that the principal '*may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of*

behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child’.

Aims of the Code

We aim:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our Mission Statement.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of honesty and responsibility, respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the step by step approaches that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are applied in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.
- To create a school environment in which pupils feel secure and make progress on all aspects of their development.

The establishment and maintenance of a caring environment, where the talents of each child are valued, is central to the ethos and spirit of the school. We believe this has been achieved and can only be maintained through the high level of respect and cooperation which exists between management, staff, parents and pupils.

Content of Policy

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PART I

Guidelines for Behaviour

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.
- SS Michael and Peter Junior School recognises that factors influencing children's behaviour may sometimes need to be considered and accommodated.

Prior to registering a pupil, the principal teacher shall provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour and that the principal may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.

SCHOOL RULES

We expect children to:

1. Attend school regularly and arrive on time. This means:

- That children attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- That if children miss school their parent contacts the school to explain the absence by written note. A parent can otherwise speak to the secretary/ class-teacher or supply a doctor's certificate, especially when there may be a recurring illness which impacts negatively upon attendance as per Túsła regulations.
- That if a child is unavoidably late, they bring a note.
- If children must leave school during the day, they are collected by their parents (or another assigned adult)
- That children arrive on time (are in their line when bell is sounded), do not delay and respond promptly to the bell ending break times.
- Children in Junior and Senior Infants are collected at 2.10 pm when the Infant day ends.
- Children in 1st Class are collected at 3.10 p.m. and children in 2nd Class are collected at 3 p.m. respectively.

2. Do their best work both in class and at their homework, written and oral. This means:

- That children listen to their teachers.

- That children don't disturb the class.
- That children do their homework each night, written and/or oral.
- That children always use their homework journal (1st and 2nd) to take down their homework.

3. Come to school properly prepared. This means:

- That children should have proper pens, books and copies.
- That children carry them in a suitable bag to prevent damage to rental scheme books.
- That children bring in any special equipment/clothing needed.

4. Come to school in complete uniform, clean and tidy.

- Coats, bags, jumpers etc, should be clearly labelled.
- Jewellery should be of a type considered suitable by staff members within the school.
- No body-piercing is permitted with the exception of suitable earrings.

5. To be well behaved, showing respect and consideration for other students and adults.

- Respect of other pupils' property and the property of the school staff and the school itself.
- Treat everyone with kindness, courtesy and respect and to expect to be treated likewise. No inappropriate language. Bullying is unacceptable (See Anti-Bullying Statement).
- Obey all teachers' instructions and School Rules at all times.

6. To be courteous of and respect the instructions of their teachers.

- Each teacher has their own set of rules per class, which are communicated to pupils at the beginning of the school year.
- Courtesy, respect and co-operation is shown towards visitors to the school.
- This behaviour applies especially when accompanied by teachers outside the school.
- Pupils remain seated (unless playing structured games) during class.
- Guidelines applying to supervision by staff will be observed by children during wet days.

7. Act in a proper manner around the school.

- In the morning, remain in yard and co-operate with supervising teacher. Come in with other students in a quiet orderly manner. On wet/very cold days' supervising teachers will direct the children indoors from 9.15 a.m. in St. Peter's building and 9.25 a.m. in St. Michael's building. Late arrivals must register at the office.
- Enter and exit the school building in a safe orderly manner.
- Do not leave the school grounds without written or verbal permission.
- Wait quietly in an orderly fashion before entering and leaving classrooms.
- Please leave electronic equipment at home.
- Use of mobile phones is prohibited during school hours.

8. Be tidy and careful with school property.

- Do not break, damage or deface school property.
- When using equipment or books, return them tidily after the class.
- We are very proud to be working towards our Green School Flag and, with the help of the children, we hope to achieve it by ensuring our school is litter free.

Classroom rules:

Each September the class teacher, in consultation with the students, draws up a set of classroom rules. These will be displayed in each classroom. Children are reminded regularly of the rules.

Playground rules:

- Show consideration for smaller children at play in the communal playing space.
- Play should be inclusive. However it may not be possible to include all classmates in each and every play session. For example, some children may not wish to be included in a particular game. This is acceptable provided that he/she is not isolated.
- Play fairly (It's not all about winning)
- No jeering remarks.
- When the first bell to signal the end of break rings each student pauses and on the second bell walks in an orderly fashion to their lining up area. They wait in this line until the teacher arrives.
- Pushing/jostling during this time is not permitted.
- The playground is for safe play for all – no potentially dangerous objects allowed.
- Take care of yourself and of others when playing.
- If you are running watch where you are going.
- Watch out for others – be a good friend.
- Please do not shout or scream too close to others.
- The teachers on duty are in charge; always do what they ask you to do.
- Request permission from the teacher on duty to leave the yard.

Green Code:

As we are a Green School please remember to:

1. Participate in school environmental projects.
2. Use litterbins and so keep school playground and school ground litter free.
3. Take home lunch wrapping and cartons.
4. Chewing gum, crisps and similar snacks are not allowed in school.
5. Glass bottles are not allowed in school or on school outings.

PART 2

Whole school approach to promote positive behaviour

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

Role of Staff:

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.

The adults have responsibility to:

- Provide a caring and effective learning environment for all children.
- Promote honesty and courtesy through example.
- 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 contributions of all.
- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Discourage physical aggression and encourage kindness.

Staff:

- Help to familiarise new parents with the policy through the infant parent's introductory meeting and the booklet including references to the Code of Behaviour that is sent to parents. Parents are asked to read and sign a declaration of co-operation.
- Take part in the Droichead programme for NQTs, which addresses the Code of Behaviour.
- Support each other in the implementation of the Behavioural Plan and Code of Behaviour.
- Engage in regular reference and discussion on the code of behaviour at staff meetings.
- Use IEPs / care plans for children with SEN. Staff may use behaviour contracts if the need arises which set behavioural targets. SNAs support children with behavioural difficulties by encouraging positive behaviour during breaks.
- Help communicate standards and rules to SEN Students/Newcomer Children, particularly the Resource Teacher/SNA
- Are given a copy of the Code of Behaviour and are expected to familiarise themselves with the policy and implement it in a consistent manner.
- Discuss SPHE at staff meetings and work together in co-planning
- Take part in informal meetings with parents.
- Engage in circle time, fun day, active week, etc, to encourage positive behaviour, team work and promote self-esteem.

The Board of Management:

The B.O.M. of the school regularly reviews the Code of Behaviour. It endeavours to create a physical environment in the school that is conducive to good behaviour i.e. spacious classrooms, plentiful resources and play areas. The B.O.M., supports the staff in implementing the code of behaviour through provision of opportunities for staff development.

Role of B.O.M.

- To promote a whole school approach to the use of sanctions through the principal.
- To support the implementation of the code of behaviour in the school.
- To facilitate and support staff training where and when necessary.
- To ensure that the school's physical environment supports positive behaviour.
- To ensure that the code of behaviour reflects the school ethos.
- To facilitate a review.
- To formally record the adoption of the policy.
- To provide information on behaviour in the school at its annual report to parents at the AGM of the Parents association and to staff at staff meetings.

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared rests with the Board of Management.

Parents/Guardians

Parents are involved in the review of this policy. The draft policy was made available on the website and an invitation was extended to parents to make suggestions based on the draft policy.

Parents support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour through the following means:

- Parents ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Parents encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- Parents are aware of and cooperate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
- Parents attend meetings at the school if requested.
- Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
- Parents ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- As a staff we try to discern between the child who needs help and the child who needs correction. You may help us to do this.

Parents will be given a copy of the code of behaviour with notification of the enrolment date. All students transferring are given a copy on enrolment. Parents are expected to adhere to and

support the staff in the implementation of the code of behaviour and are asked to sign a declaration of co-operation on the enrolment form. Parents are expected to model the standards of behaviour that the students are asked to respect.

The policy and our school ethos will be communicated to the parents through the following methods:

- Parents Association meetings and AGM
- Declaration of adherence to the Code to be signed on enrolment
- Copy given prior to enrolment, to be signed on enrolment
- Parent / Teacher meetings
- Newsletters
- New infants parent meetings in Spring and September
- School Journal
- Copies are always available on request from the office

We ask Parents/Guardians:

- To acknowledge their constitutionally upheld position as primary educators of their child and to support their child's learning in every way.
- To make sure your child attends school regularly and punctually, arriving at the school from 9.15 in St. Peter's building and 9.25 a.m. in St. Michael's building. Class assemblies at 9.20 a.m. in St. Peter's building and 9.30 a.m. in St. Michael's building.
- To make sure your child wears school uniform and to encourage your child to participate in all school curricular and co-curricular activities.
- To be on time collecting children from school. Meet your child at the appointed place at 3 pm in St. Peter's building and 2.10p.m./3.10p.m. in S. Michael's building.
- Not to park in the staff car park.
- To send a note if requesting permission for your child to leave school early. Children must be collected and signed out at the office.
- Have clothing, books and any other personal items clearly named. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost items.
- To encourage a positive attitude towards homework and to sign homework journal when requested.
- To cooperate with all signs within the school grounds.
- To supply a note of explanation for all absences on the child's return to school, as required by law.
- To encourage children to adhere to the Code of Behaviour and other relevant policies, listed hereunder.
- To remember you are always welcome to make an appointment through the office if you wish to speak to your child's teacher regarding any concerns or issues you may have and to leave lunches, sports gear etc at the office for children during school hours.
- Help may be sought from Principal/SEN team to access outside agencies.

- To please check in at the office if you come to the school during the day and to collect children who are leaving school early from the office.
- To inform the Principal/Class Teacher of any circumstances e.g.health, that may affect your child's behaviour, concentration or application in class.
- To assist us in maintaining a positive parent/staff; student/staff and student/student relationship.
- To attend parent/teacher meeting and other meetings when arranged.
- To read all correspondence from school.

Procedures for notification of student absences from school

1. The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.
2. Parents/guardians are required to send in a signed, dated note informing teachers in writing of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence. This is to be sent in on the first day of return to school. These notes are kept for the school year. The school uses the standard forms on-line to report on student absences to the National Education Welfare Board. In cases of serious absence (over 20 days) a letter is sent to parents by the school. This may occur several times depending on level of absence.

3. Strategies which may be used to encourage school attendance:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
- A system for acknowledging/rewarding good or improved attendance will be developed.
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to students.
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications at enrolment and by newsletter
- Promote fun activities in the school
- Positive climate and atmosphere in the school
- As a staff we model good attendance and punctuality

Pupils:

In SS Michael and Peter Junior School we believe that generally we enjoy high standards of behaviour due to good communication between staff and pupils.

- Pupils should be involved in the on-going implementation of the Code of Behaviour by drafting rules for the classroom and taking part in assemblies.
- Each class draws up a list of class rules in consultation with the class teacher, which promote good behaviour and reflect standards expected in the school.
- Assemblies are used to support and reward the positive attitudes and behaviours of both classes and individual students

Children with Special Needs

The Code of Behaviour caters for children who may present behavioural difficulties arising from their special education needs by making every effort to differentiate for pupils with emotional/behavioural difficulties through the curriculum and an IEP with behavioural targets.

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special educational 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 support/resource 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 taken on board.

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

PART 3

POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOUR

Classroom

Interactive and Interpersonal:

- Emphasis on highlighting and praising good behaviour.
- Rewards: DVD, homework pass etc.
- Condemn unacceptable behaviour – not the child.
- Pupil input in devising class rules.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand how they are expected to behave and this explained at the beginning of the school year.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. All efforts will be made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of each pupil.

- Educational Support
- Religion Programme
- Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.): Care for myself, care for others, care for the environment.
- Stay Safe programme
- Circle Time: Actively promote a differentiation between ‘telling tales’ and reporting threatening or bullying behaviour.
- Emphasis on ‘You should’ rather than ‘You don’t’.
- Rules should be kept to a minimum, except in relation to safety.
- Use of school assembly to reinforce and reward positive behaviour and to remind children of aspects code of behaviour
- Use of Class Dojo to reward children
- Implementation of mindfulness and meditation in class to help develop self-regulation strategies

Playground

The following are positive strategies, which staff implement to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour.

- A concise set of playground rules, which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted. These are communicated to staff at meetings and pupils within individual classrooms subsequently. The pupils can be involved in a review of these rules.
- The arrangements for supervision in the playground are clearly laid out in our Supervision Rota.

- Our SNA staff members assist teachers on the yard, placing specific emphasis on the children to whom they have a duty of care.
- Playground games can be taught to children to promote socialisation and interaction.
- When necessary, zones are created within the playground, providing sections for specific age groups/games as required.
- Staff supervision of pupils going to and returning from the playground.
- Children who cannot play on the yard sit with a friend at a suitable place on the yard. Procedures in place to manage incidents of misbehaviour on yard include: time-out, withdrawal of privileges, reporting to classroom teacher. Where appropriate the incident is recorded in a 'Serious Incident Record Sheet' for inclusion in an incident folder, which will be sorted in the office.
- The use of a record book on yard to record behavioural and/or friendship issues.

School Related Activities

Standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour usually apply in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. High standards of behaviour are expected during school tours, games, extracurricular activities and on other school-linked events.

PART 4

Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

The following strategies may be used as recognition of good, improved behaviour, to reinforce positive behaviour or as an incentive for good behaviour. These may be chosen at the discretion of the teacher or principal and will be relevant to the age level or class level of the student.

- Stickers, stamps and stars
- Dojo points
- Homework pass – reduced homework or homework off
- Smiley faces or comments on work
- Positive comment in journal or note home
- Golden time
- Extra art, games etc.
- Showing work to other teachers / classes
- Principal's reward – visit to principal or positive note home
- Reward assembly
- Group / table / student of the week
- Lucky dip
- Positive comment to another teacher or principal
- Whole class rewards e.g. class picnic
- Student of the day
- Sit with a friend for a day
- Certificates

Examples of minor misdemeanours

Interrupting class work/arriving late regularly for school/running in the school building/leaving seat without permission/leaving litter around school/being discourteous or unmannerly/not completing homework without good reason/playing in areas of playground that are deemed out of bounds, misuse of school property.

Examples of serious misdemeanours

Constantly disruptive in class/stealing/damaging other pupils property/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises without appropriate permission/climbing or walking along school wall/using unacceptable language/bullying/deliberately injuring a fellow pupil/fighting, bashes or any other aggressive games are strictly forbidden.

Examples of Gross misdemeanours

Deliberately acting in a manner which causes serious damage to school property.
Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or pupil.
Bringing weapons to school
Deliberately causing physical injury to a fellow pupil/staff member – kicking/punching etc.

Inappropriate touching
Overtly sexual behaviour

It should be noted that these lists of gross misdemeanours are not exhaustive and consist of examples only. It is not meant to be a total comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

Sanctions/Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour:

The degree of misdemeanours ie. minor or serious, will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

It is accepted that there is a need for sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.

- a) Reasoning with the student.
- b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve). A behaviour contract may be introduced whereby behaviour targets are set and parental/guardian support may be sought.
- c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others (within class)
- d) Note in homework journal.
Withdrawal of privilege - Parental co-operation can be of great value here to withdraw some privilege at home; e.g. to ban television for a period, pocket money, etc. to reinforce home-school link.
- e) Temporary removal from the classroom to a supervised location 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 his/her behaviour.
- f) Assigning additional work of a reflective nature to be signed by parents (sorry card/behaviour reflection worksheet/picture)
- g) Communicate/meet with Parents/Guardians by Class Teacher.
- h) Refer to Principal/another teacher whereby behavioural targets may be set and monitored with the student in a supportive way. Support of Parent/Guardian may be sought.
- i) Referral to Principal.
- j) Communicate with Parents/Guardians by Principal for repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour.
- k) Resulting sanctions devised and agreed by Parents and Principal.
- l) Temporary Suspension.
- m) Expulsion

Approximate Guide in the Implementation of Sanctions/Strategies:

Minor misbehaviour: (a) – (g)
Serious misbehaviour/ Repeated minor misbehaviour: (h) – (l)
Gross misbehaviour: (l) – (m)

Teachers will decide on the most appropriate sanction to use drawing on professional judgement and the knowledge of the particular context of the student and the behaviour.

In the event that the school's strategies for positive behaviour fail, as they inevitably will from time to time, the following strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour will be applied. When these minor misdemeanours occur repeatedly children will receive a 'Behaviour Reflection Worksheet/Sorry Card' to be completed at home.

Playground Sanctions/Strategies:

- The teacher on duty reminds children of the playground code of behaviour.
- Children are given a verbal warning ('if you do/say that again you will be sent to 'Time-Out')
- Children are sent to the time out area for a short time – not exceeding 5/10 minutes at a time.
- Teachers will note serious incidents in yard book and/or on Aladdin.
- Class teacher may give a child a behaviour reflection form to be completed at home and signed.
- The principal may talk to the child's parents / guardians.
- The child may have to sign a good behaviour contract – Refer to Behaviour Contract.
- Other sanctions from our school Code of Behaviour may be used by the class teacher.

Playground Sanctions/Strategies for Serious/Recurring Incidents

- Immediate removal to time out area.
- Child's parents contacted regarding the incident.
- An extended period of time out or other appropriate sanction may be applied depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident.
- The incident will be recorded in the yard book.

Involving parents in the management of problem behaviour:

Children who repeatedly misbehave and/ or children with special needs may be supported by a behaviour management programme, whereby support from parent and or guardian and from outside agencies may be sought. In specific circumstances and where appropriate, the Parent/Guardian may be requested to attend for short periods during the school day, to support the child. Suitable areas will be provided.

Management of Aggressive or Violent Misbehaviour

- Children who are emotionally disturbed are immediately referred for psychological assessment, with the prior knowledge and consent of parents/guardians.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. HSE, NEPS, SESS
- The school has a Special Educational Team (SET) which includes the Principal, Resource and Learning Support teachers who facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour.
- The SET staff act as mentors for particular children or in assisting teachers in the creation of individual behaviour plans for specific children.
- Professional Development is available to staff through SESS, Colleges of Education, ICEP courses, Education Centres and Staff Development.

Prior to admission or at any other time during the child's education, the Board of Management may consult with the parent/guardian and decide, in exceptional circumstances, to review the participation in the school day, with a view to phasing in the participation of the child. This would be considered where a pupil's behaviour is such as interferes with his/her right to education or that of other pupils or with his/her safety or that of other pupils and/or staff.

This phased participation would be reviewed on a regular basis, participation being increased, maintained, or decreased in line with targets being achieved or not and would continue until such a time as the pupil ceases to present such challenging behaviour.

This intervention would form part of an Individual Learning Plan and be in consultation with the Parent/Guardian, the National Education Welfare Board and the National Educational Psychological Service and would involve the support of the School's Learning Support Department and other relevant outside agencies, if necessary, and would be in accordance with the School's Code of Behaviour and other relevant policies.

In the event of a serious incident; where the health and safety of the child/other children/staff with whom they are in contact with, is compromised the school will contact home and require the child to be collected as soon as possible.

PART 5 SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as: *requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.* During the period of a suspension, the student retains their place in the school. The Board of Management of SS Michael and Peter Junior School has the authority to suspend a student. However in exceptional circumstances the Board authorises the principal to impose a suspension in circumstances, where a management meeting cannot be convened in a timely fashion.

Suspension should 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 not worked. 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.

Factors as per the NEWB guidelines will be considered prior to suspending a student. (Refer to appendix 1)

Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

Forms of Suspension from School

Immediate Suspension: In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.

Temporary Suspension: The grounds for temporary suspension will be of a serious nature such as those grounds listed above.

Informal or unacknowledged Suspension: Exclusion of a student for part of the school day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a child from school, as a sanction, is a suspension. Any exclusion imposed by the school is a suspension, and will follow the Guidelines relating to suspension.

Procedures in Respect of Suspension

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. The school will observe the following procedures:

- *Inform the student and their parents about the complaint*

Let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents will be informed by phone and/or in writing.

- *Give parents and student an opportunity to respond.*

Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. A meeting of Principal and Senior Management with the student and their parents provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to

the negative behaviour. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Procedures in relation to Immediate Suspension from School

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, will be open-ended. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The school has regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances will a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

The Period of Suspension

The Board of Management gives the Principal the power to suspend a student for 3 days with no allowance for appeal. A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. The Board will place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

Appeals

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student. In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board, an appeals process may be provided by the Patron.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*. At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student should be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, and should be given information about how to appeal.

Implementing the suspension

Written notification

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm:

- the period 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 student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998*, section 29).

The letter will be clear and easy to understand. Particular care will be taken in communicating with parents who may have reading difficulties, or whose first language is not the language of the school.

Engaging with student and parents

Where a decision to suspend has been made, it can maximise the impact and value of suspension if the Principal or another staff member delegated by the Principal meets with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave well when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this. Where parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Grounds for removing a suspension

A suspension may be removed if the Bord of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the student

The school should have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. Where possible, the school will arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

Records and Reports

Records of investigation and decision-making

Formal written records should be kept of:

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

Report to the Board of Management

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to Túsła

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the Túsła reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, section 21(4)(a)).

PART 6 EXPULSION

Prior to expulsion the Board of Management will take legal advice and consult with NEPS and NEWB. A student is expelled from a school when the 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*. The Board of Management of SS Michael and Peter Junior School has the authority to expel a student.

The Grounds for Expulsion

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

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their 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.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. A key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

Expulsion for a First Offence

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

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying of illegal/legal drugs to other students in the school or being in possession of illegal drugs (a drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels)
- sexual assault.

Factors as per the NEWB guidelines pg. 82 will be considered prior to expelling a student. (refer to appendix 2)

Procedures in respect of expulsion

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:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; following legal advice and the holding of a hearing.
- Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

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

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal will:

- Inform the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know. This also ensures that parents are very clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour. Parents and the student must have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents is essential. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school should record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

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

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- inform the parents and the student in writing that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parents 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 parents
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

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

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board of Management will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board of Management's deliberations. Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. The Management meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be properly conducted in accordance with the procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents put their case to the Board of Management in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board of Management will take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board of Management should facilitate this, in line with good practice and management procedures. After both sides have been heard, the Board of Management will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for their deliberations.

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

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board of Management to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction. Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, s24(1)). The Board of Management should refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, s24(1)).

An appeal against an expulsion under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Educational Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with section 24(1) or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion (*Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, s4A*).

The Board of Management will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
- convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24*).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities. In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education. Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, a Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)*). A Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is a likelihood 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 students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

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

The appeals process

The appeals process under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and

Skills). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

PART 7

Keeping records

Teachers keep records in a factual and impartial manner. SNA's may also be asked to keep a diary of a child's behaviour as requested by a SENO or may be part of a care plan.

Class level

- Teachers record incidents of misbehaviour including the date, students involved and details of the incident. If there is an accident resulting from the incident this is recorded in the accident book. Improvements in behaviour may also be recorded.
- If there are repeated incidents of misbehaviour resulting in health and safety issues and/ or having a negative effect on the learning of others this will be reported to the principal.
- Teachers report on behaviour to parents in the end of year report, through use of smiley faces and comments where necessary. Parents are also reported to verbally at the parent teacher meetings or through informal meetings. Notes may also be sent home through the use of the school journal or from the principal.

Playground

- A folder/ efolder with individual record sheets will be used to record serious incidents of misbehaviour. This will be recorded in the format of: Date – Student Name – Incident – Teacher
- This record should be filled in when an incident occurs.
- Where there are repeated incidents this will be reported to the class teachers and the principal if necessary.
- To ensure consistency in the application and interpretation of the rules, teachers must familiarise themselves with the rules and sanctions for the playground.
- A yard book will be used to record issues on yard such as rough play, inappropriate retaliation and exclusion. This is not an exhaustive list. The yard book will be monitored by the principal.

School Records

- In the case of children with behaviour issues a teacher may be requested to keep a log of a child's behaviour. These will be recorded on individual sheets and retained in the principal's office.
- Meetings with children regarding their behaviour are recorded by the principal. Records are also kept of meetings with parents.
- Documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29

Part 8

Relevant School Policies

Health & Safety Statement Healthy eating Anti Bullying Statement
Homework Policy Child Protection Policy Enrolment Policy

Part 9

Consultation, Implementation and Review

Student Consultation

- Students are involved in developing class rules which promote good behaviour and reflect standards expected in the school.
- Class discussion/reflection on positive values, unacceptable behaviour and commitment from students to their learning and to that of their peers takes place between Principal/Teacher and Students.

Parent/Guardian Consultation

This policy was reviewed by staff in November 2018. Following this it was made available to parents through the office and via the website as part of the consultation process.

Success Criteria

Identify some practical indicators of the success of the policy

- *Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment*
- *Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by everyone*
- *Clear understanding by the children of the behaviours expected*
- *Reduced incidents of misbehaviour*
- *Regular reminders by all teachers of the expectations and rules*
- *Good behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded*
- *Support from Board of Management and Parents*

Roles and Responsibility

- *The Board of Management plays a supportive role and implements correct procedure when incidents arise*
- *Principal, teachers, Board of Management, Parents, staff and children have responsibility for the implementation of this policy*
- *The principal and staff will coordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy*
- *Students are expected to abide by the code of behaviour and encourage others to do likewise*
- *Parents should support the school and encourage students to abide by the code of behaviour*

Implementation Date

The revised Code of Behaviour was presented to the Board of Management for approval and adoption in February 2019.

Ratification & Communication

The BOM officially ratified this policy in February 2019.
Revised policy will be uploaded to school website distributed thereafter prior to enrolment.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed: James Dunne

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Lisa Dempsey

Principal

Date: 5/2/19

Date: 5/2/19

Appendix 1

Factors to consider before suspending a student

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

The interventions tried to date

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)?

Whether suspension is a proportionate response

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of suspension

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?
- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?