



Code of Behaviour

Introduction

We, the staff, Board of Management, pupils and Parents' Association of Scoil Naomh Áine have devised the following Code of Behaviour. In devising this Code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of Scoil Naomh Áine. The aim is to ensure the individuality of each child is respected and the wellbeing of the whole school community is promoted while providing a safe, welcoming environment in which children can learn and staff can work and teach. This Code was developed following the guidelines laid out in the National Educational Welfare Board's (NEWB) "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" (2008).

It is also prepared in accordance with 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 notification of a child's absence from school

Our Vision for Relationships and Behaviour in Scoil Naomh Áine

- A. In Scoil Naomh Áine we strive for an environment where pupils feel safe and are inspired to learn and grow.
- B. Respect for all members of the school community is our core value.
- C. Teachers and parents are partners in a child's education. Co-operation and communication between home and school are essential for the child to receive the most from their years in primary school.
- D. Scoil Naomh Áine recognises that all children are different but all are equal.
- E. While Scoil Naomh Áine is a school with a Catholic Ethos, pupils from different religious denominations and cultural backgrounds are welcomed and respected.
- F. Our classrooms and school environment are characterised by fair treatment, teamwork, opportunity to grow and learn, high expectations and all children working to the best of their ability.
- G. We support through help and encouragement the wellbeing of all.
- H. Teachers, parents and pupils communicate in a polite, thoughtful manner to one another.

Our School Philosophy and Mission Statement

Scoil Naomh Áine is a Catholic Primary School under the patronage of the Bishop of Ferns. It promotes a Catholic ethos, while welcoming and respecting the values of children of all denominations.

Our aim is to impart Christian values and standards within a constructive learning environment. We endeavour to ensure that the individuality of the child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment. Our Code of Behaviour shows caring and concern for each child and we nurture self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.

We encourage the active learning of each child at his/her own pace and to his/her full potential. We strive to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed.

Scoil Naomh Áine promotes excellence in teaching and learning.

We in Scoil Naomh Áine subscribe to the vision of the new Curriculum Framework(2023):

- providing a strong foundation for every child to thrive and flourish, supporting them in realising their full potential as individuals and as members of communities and society during childhood, as they progress through primary school.
- viewing children as unique, competent, and caring individuals, and teachers as committed, skilful, and agentic professionals.
- supporting high-quality learning, teaching, and assessment that is inclusive and evidence-based, recognising the right of all children to make progress in all areas of their learning and development.

The Purpose of the School Rules

The purpose of the School Rules is to ensure all pupils and staff can work and learn in a safe environment where disruptions are kept to a minimum, everyone is encouraged to reach their potential and an atmosphere of teamwork and respect permeate all interactions.

Expectations of Pupils

Pupils can expect to:

- be treated with respect
- be treated fairly
- feel safe and secure
- have their individual differences recognised
- have positive behaviour re-affirmed
- have sanctions imposed for misdemeanours
- receive quality teaching

School rules (applies to ALL school activities)

Pupils are expected to:

- *show respect and kindness to teachers, pupils, all school staff and visitors - treat others as they would like to be treated*
- *be mindful of their own safety and that of others and never do anything that would put others in danger*

- *be truthful and honest at all times*
- *be punctual*
- *keep the school premises neat and tidy and respect all school property*
- *wear the school uniform*
- *use appropriate language at all times*
- *leave jewellery at home - watch and stud earrings only allowed*
- *nails to be kept short and false nails and eyelashes are not permitted, no make up*
- *work to the best of their ability at all times*
- *have the correct books and materials in school*
- *follow class rules and procedures*
- *stay on the premises during school hours*
- *do homework to the best of their ability*
- *leave mobile phones at home*
- *queue and board the school bus safely, use seatbelts and remain seated while the bus is travelling*

Playground rules

Pupils are expected to:

- *play in their class play area/pitch*
- *when the bell rings, walk to their class line and stand in an orderly fashion*
- *wear pitch shoes when playing on the pitch*
- *show respect for the play equipment*
- *go onto the grass only with the permission of an adult*
- *be mindful of the safety of others at all times*
- *seek the permission of the supervising teacher or the SNA to leave the school yard*
- *follow instructions given by those supervising (teacher/SNA)*

Classroom Rules

Classroom rules will be devised collaboratively with the pupils at the beginning of each school year.

All classroom rules will be based on the following rules:

- Be kind
- Be respectful
- Listen
- Try your best

Expectations of Staff

Staff can expect to:

- *be treated with respect*
- *feel supported by colleagues, management and parents*
- *be listened to and participate in decision making which affects their own work and that of the school in general*
- *work in a well maintained environment*
- *work in an atmosphere that supports Continued Professional Development*
- *work in a positive, supportive environment where collegiality is valued*

- have grievances dealt with in accordance with the guidelines agreed by the INTO and management bodies

Staff are expected to:

- treat pupils fairly and with respect
- act professionally in their dealings with all members of the school community
- be cognisant of their duty of care towards all pupils both in and out of school
- adhere to the Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers as developed by the Teaching Council
- create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for pupils
- be punctual
- implement the Code of Behaviour and all other school policies
- endeavour to develop and promote wellbeing in all pupils
- recognise and value individual differences in pupils
- adopt a positive approach to behaviour, praising desirable behaviour
- enable pupils to reach their full potential
- minimise opportunities for disruption
- keep records of serious misbehaviour and repeated instances of misbehaviour on Aladdin
- support colleagues
- participate in Continued Professional Development
- devise class rules in consultation with pupils and in line with the Code of Behaviour
- discuss the Code of Behaviour regularly with their class and teach relevant lessons
- adhere to the principles of teaching, learning and assessment in the new Curriculum Framework

Expectations of Parents

Parents/guardians can expect to:

- be treated with respect
- have a safe and welcoming environment for their child
- have individual differences recognised having due regard for resources
- receive a progress report on pupils – Parent Teacher Meeting and Annual School Report
- receive information on school policies and procedures
- be informed early of problems regarding their child

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- understand their role in meeting the standards expected in the school
- be aware of the aims and values in which our school rules are embedded
- ensure their child attends school
- ensure pupils are punctual for school and are collected at 3pm (Infants 2pm)
- promote positive behaviour and encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour
- arrange a meeting with the class teacher if he/she has concerns about their child in school
- ensure their child wears the school uniform
- ensure their child has the correct books and materials
- label all of their child's belongings
- report to the office if calling to the school during the day for any reason
- record on Aladdin if arriving to school late or collecting a child before 3pm
- arrange a meeting beforehand if he/she needs to speak with a teacher
- treat all members of the school community with respect
- record all absences on Aladdin

- inform the school of any change to collection procedure for their child
- co-operate with teachers and the principal in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty for others
- communicate to the school any problems/changes in personal circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour
- attend meetings at school if requested
- help their child with homework
- Follow the healthy eating policy
- distribute party invitations outside of school

Systems for Acknowledging Good Behaviour and Effort

In Scoil Naomh Áine, we promote an atmosphere of positive behaviour. Good and improved behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded through implementing the following strategies: (This list is not exhaustive...)

- A quiet word or gesture of praise
- A word of praise in front of the class/group
- Send a child to another teacher/principal to show them their good work
- A mention to the Principal
- A mention to parents
- A note home
- A small prize
- Stars / Stickers
- Pupil of the Week (Dalta na Seachtaine)
- Dalta Cinealta Award
- A mention at Assembly
- Whole class points / Group points / Individual points
- Dojos
- Golden Time
- Reduction in homework/Homework Pass

The Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour

Incidences of misbehaviour will be addressed by prioritising repairing harm caused rather than apportioning blame. In doing so, teachers will use the following questions when investigating incidences of misbehaviour.

- What happened?
- What were you thinking?
- How were you feeling?
- Who else has been affected?
- How can you make things better?

Where unacceptable behaviour has become an issue, the following strategies may be used in response:

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers
- Thinking time / Time Out to reflect on behaviour – in the classroom or at the wall during breaktimes
- Pupil Behaviour Reflection sheet
- Withdrawal from class temporarily to another class
- Completion of unfinished written activity at home or at breaktime
- Parents notified (note from teacher, phonecall or meeting)
- Confiscation of items
- Loss of Privilege - golden time/ class activities/school tour etc.
- Written reflection on behaviour
- Referral to Principal
- Detention during breaktimes
- Suspension
- Expulsion

This list is in no particular order and the context and nature of the unacceptable behaviour will determine the strategy used in response.

The purpose of a sanction is to help children learn that their unacceptable behaviour may have a negative effect on themselves, on others and on their learning. Sanctions aim to help them make better choices in the future.

Anti Bullying

Scoil Naomh Áine has a separate and comprehensive Anti Bullying Policy developed in line with “Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools” September 2013 Department of Education and Skills.

Bullying is defined as unwanted, negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) which is repeated over time.

PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL ABOUT REASONS FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000, if a child is absent from school, the school must be notified in writing about the reason for absence.

Parents/Guardians must record the Reason for Absence on the Aladdin Connect App.

Parents/Guardians will automatically receive a notification when their child has been absent for 10 and for 15 days.

The school is obliged to report absences of more than 20 days to the Tusla.

Parents/Guardians should also enter details of pupils arriving late to school or leaving early from school on the Aladdin Connect App.

PROCEDURES FOR RAISING A CONCERN OR BRINGING A COMPLAINT ABOUT A BEHAVIOUR MATTER

If a parent has a concern he/she should:

1. write a note to the teacher on the Aladdin Connect Noticeboard or phone the office to request a callback
2. arrange an appointment to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue
3. arrange an appointment to meet with the principal (following step 2) if the concern has not been resolved.

Please refer to the Parental Complaints Policy

If a teacher has a concern he/she should:

- inform the principal
- write a message on the Aladdin Connect Noticeboard to the parent outlining behaviour
- speak with the parent in a phone call or in a meeting

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Áine has delegated the authority to suspend a student, to the principal, for suspensions of up to three days. Suspension will only be used where all other sanctions have failed, or in instances of very serious misbehaviour.

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 misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

Teachers shall keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour. Before resorting to suspension, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage, rather than a last resort.

The factors to be considered before suspending a student as per the NEWB guidelines for schools pg.72 will be used when considering a suspension. See appendix 1 attached

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.

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 will 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. Parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.

Procedures in respect of suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures:

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

The school will let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.

- *give parents and the student an opportunity to respond.*

Parents and the student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. A meeting 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. 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 will record the invitations made to parents and their response.

The period of suspension

A student will 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. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. The Board of Management will normally 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 of Management, 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*.

Implementing the suspension

Written notification

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will 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 and to commit to an individual behaviour plan)
- 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).

Grounds for removing a suspension

A suspension may be removed if the Board 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*.

Re-integrating the student

The school will plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed.

Clean slate

When the suspension is completed, a student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour, and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Records and reports

Records of investigation and decision-making Formal written records will 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 NEWB The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB (Tusla) reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, section 21(4)(a)).

Review of use of suspension

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension following the imposition of a suspension.

Expulsion

A student is expelled from the school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Education Welfare Act. The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Áine has the authority to expel a student. The school will 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, Special Education Support Service).

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 are similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, 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 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 could include:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school

The factors to be considered before expelling a student as per the NEWB guidelines for schools pg.82 will be used when considering an expulsion. See appendix 2 attached

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

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

The school will refer to the guidelines pg.83-86 in the event of an expulsion. Where expulsion is being considered the parents of the pupil involved will be given a copy of the procedures in relation to expulsion.

Appeals

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

Review of use of expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school following an expulsion.

RECORD KEEPING

Class, yard and school level

The Aladdin online school database is used for recording individual instances of misbehaviour.

There is also a standard school report form for recording serious incidents of misbehaviour. The record notes the following information:

- Date and location
- Incident of misbehaviour
- Pupils involved
- Signature of supervising teacher
- Actions taken
- Signature of person who wrote the report

These records are stored on Aladdin and kept on file until a pupil has reached 25 years of age.

THE PLAN FOR REVIEWING THE CODE

This Code of Behaviour policy was ratified by the Board of Management on February 5th 2019. It was again reviewed by staff, pupils and parents in 2024 and ratified by the Board of Management on 25th April 2024.

It will be reviewed and updated regularly. The next formal review will take place in the school year 2027/ 2028.

Signed: Brendan Kelly
Brendan Kelly
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 25/4/24