

This policy is to be read and understood in conjunction with Scoil Mobhí's Anti-Bullying Policy 2018.

## **Code of Behaviour**

Scoil Mobhí has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

All children behave differently. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, mutual respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Therefore any rules will be age appropriate, with clear, agreed consequences.

Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

## **Aims of the Code**

- To create a positive learning environment that facilitates, encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to fulfil their role without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are known through the availability of policies and an ethos of open communication. This code of behaviour is presented to all parents.

- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

### **Responsibility of Adults**

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

As adults we should aim to:

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

### **School Rules**

**Veritas (truth) is the school motto. St. Mobhí is the patron saint of the school and the children are encouraged to follow his examples of –gentleness, kindness, consideration and truthfulness.**

#### **School Rules:**

- Irish is the spoken language at all times in the school and yard (except in English class).
- Veritas (truth) is the motto of all Dominican schools.
- Be helpful and co-operative. (qualities of St. Mobhí, St. Brigid, St. Colmcille)
- Be gentle and kind. (qualities of St. Mobhí, St. Brigid, St. Colmcille)
- Show courtesy and respect – for self, others, others’ property and others’ learning.
- Seek permission from a teacher before leaving his/her presence.
- Be in time for school. Remain in the playground every fine morning until the bell is rung at 8.52a.m. Go to the hall if it is wet.
- Leave the school grounds immediately when your school day finishes at 1:35/2:35.
- Use only sponge balls on the school playground.
- Put all rubbish in the allocated bins.
- Do not climb
- Do your best at all times with your school work and homework.
- Wear the complete school uniform and bring the correct requisites to school each day.

- Come to school each day without makeup, jewellery, nail varnish and wear hair tied back.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.
- Mobile phones may only be used in accordance with the school mobile phone policy.
- Students will be supervised each morning from 8.40 a.m.

### **Class Rules**

**At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children. These reflect and support the school rules, but are presented in a way that is accessible to the children.** Class rules should be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. They should where possible emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. ‘Walk’ and not ‘Don’t run’). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted.

### **Incentives**

Part of the vision of Scoil Mobhí is to help children achieve their personal best. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and that similarly children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. All children deserve encouragement to attain their best. Praise is given in Scoil Mobhí when it is earned. An award “Gradam Mobhí” is presented to those children who are making a special effort to speak Irish as well as for many other reasons three times a year. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. Everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the Principal to discuss their child’s behaviour.

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical harm to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher
- Assault on a pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property

## **Sanctions**

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- There should be direct correlation between the undesired behaviour and the sanction imposed. Sanctions should be age and ability appropriate
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Whole class punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

The following steps will be taken when the children behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and ten being for serious or gross misbehaviour. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupils devise strategies for this. In an emergency, however, one may go to whatever step is deemed appropriate within these guidelines, to solve the problem.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
5. Loss of privileges
6. Detention during break
7. Communication with parents – where applicable
8. Referral to Principal
9. Principal communicating with parents – where applicable
10. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

However sanctions should relate as closely as possible to the behaviour. Therefore a child, who does not do the work expected of him/her in class or has not completed the homework expected of him, may be detained at break time to finish the work.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health & safety.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards another person will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

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

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

### **Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or Principal as we work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice and/or psychological assessments may be sought.

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 in all individuals.

### **Methods of Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with

children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

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

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journals (Infants to Rang a hAon do not have a homework journal – please check bags)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Website, Text a Parent

### **Code of Behaviour - Parents**

- Mutual respect and co-operation between parents, teachers and staff members is fundamental to the ethos of Scoil Mobhí and to the welfare and care of every member of the school community.
- Parents will support the Code of Behaviour by reading, accepting and co-operating with the Code.
- Parents will confirm in writing that they accept the Code of Behaviour and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code.
- Parents will ensure that children will attend school regularly and punctually.
- Parents will encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- Parents will make themselves aware of, and co-operate with, the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
- Parents will attend meetings at the school if requested.
- Parents will help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
- Parents will ensure their children have the necessary materials for school.

- As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health and Safety of all staff and students, parents are asked to refrain from approaching or reprimanding another person's child on the school premises.
- While the staff are always happy to speak in Irish to parents, they are also willing to accommodate those who feel more comfortable speaking in English. Group meetings will be conducted in both languages.
- The Board of Management has a duty of care to protect their staff under the Health Safety & Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- The Board will not tolerate any rude or threatening behaviour towards staff members. Failure to comply with this code of practice may result in an individual parent being asked to leave the premises and the Board will be informed. In serious cases the Gardaí may be called.
- Posting of slanderous comments on social media platforms regarding members of staff will also be deemed as a serious breach of the Code and may result in the staff member and /or Board taking legal action.

Ratified by the Board of Management **19 Meán Fómhair 2018.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

-----