

Scoil Bhríde Ráth Chormaic

Draft Code of Behaviour and Discipline (reviewed November 2020)

Introduction

The policy was originally drafted in 2010 through a consultative process involving staff, parents, pupils and the Board of Management. The policy was formulated in line with the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) publication “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools”(2008).

Rationale

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 requires that each school must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour for pupils in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board. (NEWB), 2008

This review of the Code of Behaviour was deemed necessary as the existing policy has been in place since 2010.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the School

Scoil Bhríde’s Code of Behaviour is inextricably linked to its Vision and Mission Statement. “Our vision is to “create a caring school community where children actively participate, achieve their potential and are proud of their achievements”. In Scoil Bhríde we aim to provide a welcoming, safe, happy, inclusive learning environment where everyone is respected and listened to and the uniqueness of each person is recognised and valued. The school plays a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. Acceptable standards of behaviour are based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. This 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 of Behaviour

To promote positive behaviour and to allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way

To promote self-esteem and positive relationships

To nurture each child and to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued

To achieve a high level of respect and cooperation between staff, parents and pupils

To facilitate the development of self-discipline, respect and tolerance for others

To provide for the efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline so that there is an effective and stimulating environment for learning

To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community

To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their cooperation in the application of these procedures

To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

Our vision for relationships and behaviour in the school

Scoil Bhríde is a community consisting of pupils, teachers, support staff, parents and other visitors to the school. The well-being of the school as a community is dependent on positive relationships and the level of care and co-operation among its members. The Code of Behaviour provides a framework to support this sense of community and well-being. School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to the health, welfare and safety of all members of the community. In formulating the Code of Behaviour account was taken of the variety of differences that exist among children and of the need to accommodate these differences. Every effort is made to emphasise the positive over the negative in terms of encouraging, monitoring and evaluating pupils' behaviour. The Code of Behaviour also provides a framework within which positive strategies/techniques of motivation, reward and encouragement are utilised.

The following **Golden Rules** underpin our Code Of Behaviour.

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| Be Gentle |
| Respect Others |
| Be honest |
| Do your best |
| Look after property and our environment |

Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

It is vital to have a whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour in the school. The expectations of the various members of the school community are as follows;

School Staff are **expected** to:

- support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour in a fair, consistent manner;
- be cognisant of their duty of care;
- model positive interactions with other staff members and pupils
- encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding
- create a safe, welcoming atmosphere for pupils and parents
- develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil;
- praise desirable behaviour;
- facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential;
- recognise and provide for individual differences as far as is reasonable;
- be courteous, consistent and fair;
- keep opportunities for disruption to a minimum;
- keep a record of serious misbehaviour and repeated instances of minor misbehaviour;

Pupils are **expected** to:

- attend school regularly and punctually

- listen to teachers and others
- pay attention in class and follow the instructions of the teacher
- show courtesy and respect to everyone in the school community
- obey the school rules
- wear the school uniform and school tracksuit as instructed by class teacher
- work quietly and safely to the best of their ability at all times;
- respect the right of others pupils to learn;;
- respect school property, the property of others and their own belongings;
- keep the school environment clean and tidy;
- follow class rules;
- move quietly and carefully around the school;
- line up quietly in an orderly manner before and after break;
- stay on the premises and within designated areas during school times;
- do their homework to the best of their ability.

Parents are **expected** to:

- ensure their children attend school regularly and that they arrive punctually for 9.20 a.m start time and that they are collected from school on time (2pm for infants, 3p.m. all other classes)
- encourage their children to follow the school's Code of Behaviour;
- ensure their children wear the school uniform and school tracksuit as requested by the class teacher
- ensure their children have the correct books and materials;
- have their children's belongings labelled;
- read written communication received from the school and respond appropriately;;
- make an appointment (phone call to office/email/note in pupil journal) if they need to meet a teacher;
- to treat all members of the school community with respect;
- explain all absences by completing the appropriate Aladdin "Explanation of Absence Form"
- inform class teacher of any change to collection procedure for their children;
- help their children to learn and practise good behaviour and to have a positive attitude towards themselves, other people and towards the school;
- cooperate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulty to others;

- communicate to the school problems which may affect their child's behaviour;
- attend meetings at the school if requested;
- help their children with their homework and ensure it is completed.

Board of Management is expected to

- support the staff in implementing the code of behaviour by providing opportunities for staff development e.g. seminars on challenging behaviour etc
- support the Principal and Staff in dealing with serious breaches of behaviour/discipline

General School Rules

Good discipline promotes order, gives security and fosters a situation where organised, orderly learning, as well as safe and fair recreation may take place. School Rules help our pupils to develop self-discipline and build relationships based on mutual respect. It is to be understood that each teacher and class group has its own internal code of discipline and children will be reminded regularly of what is expected of them in areas such as courtesy, hygiene, the care of text-books, homework, punctuality, listening, neat presentation of work etc.

In order to achieve a happy, healthy and safe working environment, where a sense of mutual respect is fostered, every pupil is expected to keep the following rules;

1. Children are expected to show respect for themselves, their fellow students and for all staff, both teaching and non-teaching members.
2. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated.
3. Full uniform must be worn each day except on designated P.E. Day. School tracksuit and appropriate footwear must be worn for P.E. activities.
4. The main door will open at 9.05 a.m. each morning. |Classes commence at 9.20 a.m.
No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving at the school before 9.05 a.m. |.
5. Children are not allowed to leave school grounds between 9.20 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. (9.20 a.m. and 2 p.m. for infants) unless he/she is accompanied by a teacher, parent or other responsible person.
6. Children are not allowed to leave school grounds to retrieve a ball or any play object without permission of the teacher on yard duty.
7. All absences must be explained in writing via the Aladdin "Explanation of Absence form.
8. Notes from parents will also be required for any of the following reasons.
 - A. In the event of a parent wishing the child to leave school or the school grounds before normal time.
 - B. In the event of a child coming to school without completed homework.
 - C. If a child is not wearing his/her school uniform.
 - D. For non-participation in certain school activities for valid reasons e.g. medical
9. Chewing gum is not allowed.
10. Tipp-Ex or similar products are not allowed in school.

11. Children are encouraged to bring sensible, healthy lunches. Fizzy drinks, sweets, popcorn and crisps (or any member of the crisp family) are not allowed. Parental cooperation in this matter is vital. As some pupils have nut allergies nuts and nut products are not allowed in school. All lunch waste, food and wrappers etc must be brought home.
12. On wet days or when the yard is in a dangerous condition children must remain in the classroom throughout breaks. Children must remain off the grass during specified periods.
13. Children should have a sense of pride in their school and in the environment and should not litter the area.
14. Rough play and other dangerous behaviour (piggybacks, birthday bumps etc) is forbidden.
15. Pupils are expected to line up quietly at break times and to move quietly through the school.
16. The use of a mobile phone during school hours or during school related activities or on school grounds is not allowed.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

School staff use a variety of strategies to encourage and promote positive behaviour in Scoil Bhríde including, among others,

Classroom:

- Promoting our “Golden Rules”(Golden Rules displayed in each classroom)
- “Class rules”/ behavioural expectations in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the code of behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning
- Pupil input in devising the class rules/class contract
- Explicit teaching and regular revision of important routines (lining up, going to yard, returning to class, walking on the stairs greetings, moving through the school, hand washing etc)
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave
- Ensuring positive interactions between teachers and pupils
- Class teachers have a clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour
- Consequences and sanctions for misbehaviour are explained to pupils
- Teachers use a variety of classroom management techniques and use a variety of different teaching methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation
- Explicit teaching about rights, responsibilities, actions and consequences In S.P.H.E and Religion
- Pupil specific behaviour plans as part of an Individual Education Plan for children with specific needs

Playground

- A concise set of playground rules are adhered to which emphasise positive behaviour. Children are regularly reminded of these rules. **(Appendix 1)**
- Adequate roster for teacher supervision on yards
- SNA personnel assist with supervision for children with different needs
- Children are visible at all times
- Suitable games/toys available in classrooms for wet days
- Incidents of serious misbehaviour or recurring misbehaviour are logged by the teacher on yard duty in the yardbook. This book is kept on shelf in the staff room and is checked weekly by the Principal.

School related activities

- Class teacher supervises class when going to hall/church/toilets and yard

- Class teacher accompanies the class at all times within the school buildings and on trips outside the school
- Children are regularly reminded of health and safety rules by teachers and principal
- A shared responsibility by staff of Scoil Bhríde contributes to promotion of positive behaviour around the school
- Standards and rules contained in the Code Of Behaviour apply to all school related activities including school tours, field trips, extra curricular activities , special events and any events where the pupils represent the school

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour by teachers

Praise (may be given at individual/group/class level)

Praise may given as;:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group
- "Smiley faces" stamps/ reward stickers
- Extra responsibility given to child/group

Other Rewards and Acknowledgement of Good Behaviour

- Class treat-(school based)
- Golden time
- Delegation of extra responsibility
- Customized certificates in recognition of specific achievements
- Weekly/Monthly prize/plaque awarded to individual/group
- Informal reporting to parents of good/improved behaviour during assembly or dismissal periods
- Notes to parents in Homework Journal recording good/improved behaviour
- Commendation at assembly (Principal's award, Golden Book)

Parent/School Relations:

Good relationships between Scoil Bhríde and the parent body are fostered in order to achieve and maintain a high standard of behaviour and discipline in this school.

- Parents are invited to attend Parent/Teacher meetings annually with follow up meetings as necessary, non-attendees are given other opportunities to meet with teachers
- The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) is used to support children, staff and parents
- Provision of guest speakers on topics relevant to their children's development
- Parents are consulted for policy development and policy review e.g. S.P.H.E., Anti-bullying, Substance mis-use Policy, Code of Behaviour, Homework policy
- Pre-entry talks for parents
- Sacrament Preparation meetings
- Liaising with Parents Association
- Involving parents and pupils in fundraising/ charity activities
- Book Rental scheme is provided in the school
- Regular newsletters keep parents informed of school events and activities

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross.

Level 1 Minor

Minor instances of undesirable behaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher through the use of minimal interactions aimed at refocusing the pupil's attention. These interactions between teacher and pupil/s may include:

Level 1 Sanctions

- Discussion with pupil/s regarding the need for appropriate behaviour
- Discussion with an individual pupil/s in order to ensure pupil/s understands why behaviour is unacceptable
- Diversion
- Rule reminders
- Reasoning with pupil/s
- Loss of privileges
- Time out
- Reprimand
- Reprimand accompanied by verbal warning of separation from peers
- Communication with parents by classroom teacher (note home, phone call, note in journal)
- Reprimand and temporary separation from peers with prescribed additional assignment assigned by teacher
- Incomplete/unsatisfactory presentation of homework/schoolwork to be re-done/completed

Persistent breaches of level 1 discipline may result in **LEVEL 2/ LEVEL 3** sanctions being applied as appropriate.

Level 2 Serious

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission
- Truancy

For misbehaviour which in the opinion of the relevant teacher falls into the category of serious or level 2 incidents, the class teacher will follow the procedures as listed below.

- Discussion of behaviour, reasoning, advice re appropriate behaviour
- Prescribing appropriate sanction (additional constructive work, loss of privileges)
- Incident is recorded by class teacher and parents are informed (Note, phone call)
- Intervention of principal
- Principal speaks to child, to outline appropriate behaviour for the future and names sanctions

- Formal letter to parents from class teacher (following communication with Principal) to arrange a meeting of parents, principal, class teacher and possibly child to discuss the behaviour and appropriate sanctions.

It should be noted that persistent breaches of level 2 discipline may result in Level 3 sanctions being applied as appropriate

Sanctions:

In case of non-compliance with Principal's verbal reprimand the following further sanctions may be imposed:

- Write out of appropriate school rule/s
 - Pupil asked to write an account of the misbehaviour and how he/she intends to behave in the future. This work to be signed by parents/guardians
 - Denied privilege of school outings: i.e. tour, field trip, participation at school event,
 - Denied privilege of representing school at formal performances/functions i.e. sports event
 - Detention during a break, supervised by Principal/teacher/other adult

Level 3: Gross Misbehaviour

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on any member of staff or pupil
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil, teacher or other member of staff

For misbehaviour which in the opinion of the relevant teacher and Principal falls into the category of level 3 incidents, i.e. gross misbehaviour the following procedures will be adhered to.

- Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.
- Parents may be asked that the pupil in question be collected and taken home as soon as possible that day
- Pupil in question will be removed from contact with other pupils and supervised on an individual basis until parent/guardian arrives
- Parents invited in writing to attend meeting with Principal and Chairperson of Board of Management at an appointed time and venue
- Pupils misbehaviour will be fully explained to the parents at this meeting
- School's decision in relation to the appropriate sanction will be advised to the parent(s)/guardian
- Sanctions to be applied will involve one or more of the following measures as appropriate to the individual case
 - Suspension from school for an appropriate number of days(not exceeding ten days for any one period of suspension imposed)
 - Expulsion from the school and notification of the E.W.O
- Before a suspension is lifted the parents/guardian and pupil concerned will be required to give a written undertaking of future good behaviour in the school. This must be subsequently adhered to.

Suspension and Expulsion Appendix 2 Section 10, Section 11 and Section 12 Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde has adopted the policy and procedures for Suspension and Expulsion as outlined in **“Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools” “2008** These Guidelines will form the framework for any decisions / procedures relating to Suspension or Expulsion.

Suspension is defined as “requiring a student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days”. During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as

- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any member of the school community
- deliberate damage to school property/vandalism
- 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

Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. However, suspension may be deemed a proportionate response to a single incident of gross misconduct,

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour the chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested to attend a meeting at the school. This ensures that parents and student are given an opportunity to hear the complaint and respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. Where parents do not agree to attend a meeting regarding their child's behaviour, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

The maximum initial period of suspension will be 3 school days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers a period of suspension longer than 3 days is required in order to achieve a particular objective. The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde, authorizes the principal to act on its behalf to impose a suspension. If a suspension longer than 3 days is being proposed by the principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and expected outcomes.

However, the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde authorises the principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions. The Board of Management places a maximum of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. In cases of gross misbehaviour the Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde authorises the principal to sanction an immediate suspension of 3 days maximum, having contacted the parents/guardians of the student in advance of that 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 directs that it be removed following an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

A plan will be developed by the school to help re-integrate a student who has been suspended and that student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Expulsion

A student may be expelled from the school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school, while complying with the provisions of Section 24 of the Educational (Welfare) Act 2000. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case of unacceptable behaviour.

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

6.1 A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the principal.

6.2 A recommendation is made by the principal to the Board of Management.

6.3 Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing with the parents/guardians.

6.4 The Board of Management deliberates and acts following a hearing

6.5 Consultations are arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.

6.6 The decision to expel is confirmed to parents/guardians.

As in the case of suspension, the parents and student are given an opportunity to hear the complaint and respond before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde will, at all times, follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Educational (Welfare) Act 2000 when proposing to suspend or expel a student.

Appeals:

In the event of a pupil being either suspended for a cumulative period(s) of greater than 20 days in a single school year or expelled from the school, an appeal against the school's decision may be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. Parents in this situation will be advised of the appeal mechanism by the Principal/Chairperson of the Board of Management. (circular22/02)

Sanctions:

- Sanctions for **level 3** misdemeanours are as set out in the procedures above.

**EACH CASE WILL BE JUDGED ON ITS OWN MERITS AND A SANCTION AS SET
OUT IN THE CATEGORIES ABOVE WILL BE APPLIED AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE
ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS**

Clean slate/Fresh Start

When any sanction, including 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 will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Children with Special Needs

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 teacher, and or Principal. School staff will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable. The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs

adhere to 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.

Scoil Bhríde's Code of Discipline takes recognition of the following school policies:

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Health and Safety
- Special Educational Needs
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Bullying and harassment (See Anti Bullying Policy)

Bullying in any form will not be tolerated in Scoil Bhríde and all allegations will be investigated. Breaches of the school's anti-bullying policy will be treated as a serious misbehaviour.

General Procedure to be followed when a behaviour problem arises:

- The class teacher/teacher in charge deals with it and may impose a sanction. If a parent/guardian wishes to make a complaint regarding a child's behaviour, it is expected that such a complaint would in the first instance be addressed with that child's class teacher and/or with the class teacher of their own child.
- If the problem is not solved/resolved, the class teacher/teacher in charge shall consult with other teachers, and/or the Principal and/or the parents/guardians of the pupil(s) with a view to helping the pupil(s) overcome the difficulty.
- If the problem persists or in the case of serious misbehaviour as outlined above it may be necessary to have on-going discussions between the parents/guardians, teacher(s) and Principal/Board of Management to monitor the situation and to deal appropriately with it, always with the objective of helping the child.
- In the case of an incidence of gross misbehaviour or where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Board of Management authorises the Principal to suspend the child for a period of time up to a maximum of 3 school days initially if such is deemed appropriate.
- A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of suspension up to a maximum of 10 school days. Parents/guardians will be required to meet with representatives of the Board of Management to discuss the matters relating to the child's misbehaviour prior to the authorisation of a second period of suspension.
- The ultimate sanction of expulsion shall be exercised in accordance with relevant guidelines and current legislation.
- Recompense is expected to be made by pupil/parent/guardian for damage, loss or theft of property.

Roles and Responsibility:

Board of Management

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school and a duty to ensure that a fair code of discipline applies therein. It also has a positive role to play in fostering understanding and cooperation between teachers, parents and pupils.

Principal/Staff

The Principal has overall responsibility for implementation of the school disciplinary policy. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/ her classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises.

Parents

Parents can cooperate with Scoil Bhríde by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules and by cooperating with the Principal and other members of school staff.

Parents play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour in school. They should take full advantage of all formal and informal channels of communication made available by Scoil Bhríde.

Pupils

Pupils are likely to respond positively to a Code of Behaviour Policy if it is clearly understood and applied in a consistent manner. In this context, Principal and teaching staff will consult older pupils about the relevance of individual rules and regulations i.e. classroom rules and yard rules

Procedures for raising a concern or bringing a complaint

Any complaints or concerns about behaviour or issues relating to this Code of behaviour should be discussed with the class teacher/ Principal/ Deputy Principal / Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Procedures for notification of a child's absence from school

All absences must be explained in writing. Parents should use the explanation of absence facility on Aladdin to explain absence. If no written explanation is given, the teacher will record the absence as "unexplained" when compiling a report for NEWB.

Application of Code of Behaviour

Pupil behaviour in school and during all school related activities (school tours, field trips, sports activities etc) will be subject to this Code of Behaviour.

Success Criteria

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

Implementation Date: December 2020

Review Date: December 2023 or earlier if necessary

Ratification and Communication

Board of Management Scoil Bhríde Rath Chormaic officially ratified the policy on 01/12/2020

This Code of Behaviour Policy was communicated to all school staff. The policy is published on the school website www.sbrathcormac.ie for parents. A hard copy of the policy is available on request from the secretary's office.

Signed: _____, _____

Marie Walsh

Margaret Howard

Chairperson Board of Management

Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____