

St Mochulla's National School Tulla



Code of Behaviour

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Principal Teacher: **Brian Cullo**

Code of Behaviour Policy

Mission Statement

St. Mochulla's is a co-educational, Catholic primary school which strives to provide a caring, happy and secure environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral, social and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

Motto: Oiliunt agus omos
Training and respect

This policy incorporates the school policy on Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Suspension/Expulsion

Introduction

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of St. Mochulla's National School has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour of St. Mochulla's National School has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour. Guidelines for Schools*', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

1.VISION (Aims & Objectives)

1.1 By carrying out a review of our Code of Behaviour it is hoped to:

- Create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- Create a positive and safe environment for learning and teaching.
- Encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and behaviour.
- Help young people to mature into responsible, participating citizens.
- Build positive relationships of mutual respect, mutual support among students, staff and parents.
- Ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

1.2 Policy Formulation

In formulating this policy the following steps were taken:

- Step 1** **June '08 staff meeting – decision to review our code. This was at the same time as Dept of Education directive.**
- Step 2** **June '08 meeting between Alanna O'Beirne, (Health Promotion Officer Mid-West) and Principal.**
- Step 3** **Sept '08 Staff meeting – workshop. Audit of current policy.**
- Step 4** **Nov '08 Alanna O'Beirne meets parents.**
- Step 5** **Jan – Feb '09 parents met with Principal and post holder.**
- Step 6** **I.S.M.T. meeting to formulate code**
- Step 7** **June '09 presented to staff.**
- Step 8** **Sept '09 presented to parents.**
- Step 9** **Sept '09 presented to B.O.M.**
- Step 10** **Anti Bullying Policy presented to BoM November '09. Presented to parents November '09.**
- Step 11** **Suspension / Expulsion to BoM February '10.**
- Step 12** **Anti bullying policy adopted within the school's overall code of behaviour. (February 2014)**
- Step 13** **March '18 Review of the Code of Behaviour with staff. Amendment to section 2.5. Note added on how a child receives a tick.**

1.3. Whole School Approach

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

1.4 The expectations for students, staff and parents and how they treat each other.

- It is expected that staff, students and parents will treat each other with respect at all times. This respect will be extended to all members of the wider community.
- It is expected that students, teachers and parents will help promote a happy school.
- A happy school environment where all feel safe and valued will prevail when all members of the school community treat each other in a positive manner, are honest in their dealings and mindful of others' needs.

1.5 Roles and responsibilities of staff members in relation to behaviour.

- All staff members share the responsibility in promoting good behaviour within the school.
- The Principal of the school has overall responsibility in promoting good behaviour within the school.
- Class teacher is responsible for discipline in his/her class.
- Teachers on yard duty are responsible for discipline on the yard.
- S.N.A who observes children misbehaving should bring the matter to the attention of which ever teacher(s) is on yard duty.

1.6 The following are general guidelines for acceptable behaviour within the school:

- Listen carefully
- Work quietly. Do not disturb others.
- Respect others. Be kind with your words.
- Respect school and personal property.
- Work and play safely.

2. RATIONALE

2.1 Acknowledging & Promoting Good Behaviour

As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

The school operates on a policy of rewarding and acknowledging good behaviour as an incentive to maintain a positive attitude in the school.

- How best to meet the expectations of students, staff and parents and how they will treat each other.
- How students, staff and parents can help promote a happy school.

Others forms of promoting positive behaviour in St.Mochulla's:

- Magic Book for the junior classes to reinforce positive behaviour.
- Children are sent to the office with their homework journals. The teacher writes a positive comment in relation to the child's behaviour or work ethic that week and it is signed and acknowledged by the Principal.
- Children who win medals or have any achievements inside or outside at school are encouraged to show their medals/trophies to the other classes.
- Achievements and recognition of positive behaviour are recognised during assembly and Junior and Senior level.
- SPHE lessons work in conjunction with the vision of the school in recognising and promoting positive behaviour.

Throughout 2009/2010, the school reviewed the Code of Behaviour. As part of this review we looked at ways of rewarding positive behaviour and recognising the children's achievements.

The following reward system for promoting positive behaviour will be administered in two different categories:

2.2 Junior Code (for Infants to 1st class)

- The students in Junior Infant Class up to 1st Class will go to the hall every second Friday for assembly.
- At each assembly the class teacher will nominate a number of pupils whose behaviour and achievements will be recorded in the Magic Book. This will recognise some achievement on the child's behalf, for example, neat hand-writing, playing nicely, listening in class and for kindness and respect towards others. Every effort will be made to promote positive behaviour. The categories will be decided by the class teacher.
- Also at each assembly, one class will sign a song or recite a poem.
- Good and improving work/behaviour will also be acknowledged by being sent to the principals office.

2.3 Senior Code (for 2nd class to 6th class)

- The class teacher, together with the children, will identify a trip/outing that the class will go or a treat that they will receive at the end of term, as a reward for good behaviour.
- There will be three times for these trips/treats – Halloween, Christmas and Easter.
- Only one of these trips should incur a cost and at least one must be local.
- In order that a class should go on its trip or receive it's class treat, it must earn 10 stars from the teacher, the principal or any other teacher in the school. Each teacher can give only one star per week to a class.

2.4 How To Earn A Star

Type of behaviour	Examples
Good manners	Being helpful and cooperative, having positive attitudes and enthusiasm generally.
Effective communication	Expressing oneself in a polite and proper manner and listening to and respecting others.
Development of empathy	Considering other people's feelings / caring / looking out for others / sharing / taking turns / group playing / being supportive to one another.
Full participation	Participating in class and in all school activities.
Showing respect	Self respect. Respect for teachers and pupils. Respect for property.
Attendance and punctuality	Emphasis on good time keeping

These ideas were drawn up following a meeting of parents and Alanna O' Beirne, Health Promotion Officer for Primary Schools, on 24th November'08.

2.5 Pupil Responsibilities

Inappropriate behaviour is behavior where a child acts contrary to school, class or yard rules.

- Each pupil must behave in such a way that they get to go on the trip/or receive the class treat. Should a pupil receive 7 ticks for misbehaving, they will not be permitted to go with the class, they will remain in school while the class goes on trip or not receive the class treat (includes end of year school tour). Ticks may also be rescinded should the teacher deem that the pupil has made an effort to improve on their behaviour. Tick count will return to zero at the beginning of each new term. Once a child reaches 5 ticks, the class teacher sends for the parents and the possible consequences are explained. (Major incidents of misbehaviour will be dealt with separately under the code of discipline).
- **How or why a student gets a tick:**
A student will receive a tick for breach of school rules, a yard rules or classroom rules. The class teacher along with the children will draw up their own personalised reasons as to why someone is deserving of a tick. The class teacher will record the ticks and the reason why a child got the tick.
- **Appeals Process.**
Teacher, principal and parent meet to discuss the matter. If the teacher still believes, having taken into consideration the vulnerability of the child, that the sanction is appropriate, then that decision will stand.

The following are the rules that the children are expected to observe:

2.6 School rules

1. Best behaviour in school and on outings.
2. Be polite and well mannered.
3. Walk quietly in the corridors.
4. Enter and exit the school carefully.
5. Respect school property.
6. Full participation in school.
7. Work to the best of your ability.
8. School P.E. equipment cannot be borrowed at play time.
9. Correct uniform and appropriate P.E. gear must be worn.
10. When the bell rings, line up quickly and quietly.

11. Mobile phones and electronic devices if brought to school are to be left in the school office as per mobile phone policy.

2.7 Yard Rules

- Play in designated play areas.
- Play safely and nicely.
- Ball play on the field is allowed only when togged out.
- Include, don't exclude.
- Be kind, leave the bullies behind.
- If there is an issue on the yard, tell the teacher on duty.
- Permission must be sought to leave the yard.

2.8 Sanctions – for breach of school and yard rules.

A staged approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour in the school and yard

1. 5 minutes standing out by wall (yard) or a child is given a warning (school)
2. Sent to the office where other sanctions may be enforced, namely, isolation from peers, or parents being contacted.
3. Student will receive a tick.

2.9 Classroom Rules

- To be drawn up by teacher and pupils. Classroom behaviour contract to be drawn up by class teacher and pupils. This contract will be signed by pupils, teacher and the principal.
- The school rules, the yard rules and the classroom rules will apply to all classes throughout the school.
- School rules shall also apply during all school related activities.

See Appendix 1 Code of Behaviour Acceptance Form

2.9(a) Supportive Interventions

- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding an incident/invention/date. This information would be useful if the problem persists.
- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National education Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, The National Behavioural Support Service, Child Adolescent Mental Health services, National Council for Special Education.

- Referral of a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with parent(s)/guardians(s) consent.

3. Procedures for raising a concern or bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter.

- Parents/guardians should bring matter to the attention of the class teacher.
- If dissatisfied with the outcome, parents should bring the matter verbally to the Principal.
- If parents/guardians feel the matter is not resolved they should verbally contact the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- Parents/guardians should put their concerns to the Board of Management, in writing, if they feel unhappy with the resolution of the issue

4. BULLYING (See Anti Bullying Policy)

The Board of Management of St. Mochulla's have in place an Anti Bullying Policy which complies with the requirements of the Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools which were published in September 2013 and is available on request.

4.1 Introduction

St. Mochulla's National School is aware that bullying is an unacceptable behaviour and it will not be tolerated. Bullying, by its very nature, undermines and dilutes the quality of education and imposes psychological damage. As such, it is an issue which we in St. Mochulla's, positively and firmly address through a range of school based measures and strategies to effectively deal with this behaviour.

Bullying in Ireland is a behavioural problem which affects the lives of thousands of schoolchildren and their families. The humiliation, fear, frustration, social isolation and loss of self esteem which children experience when bullied results in absenteeism from school, poor or deteriorating schoolwork, personality changes, illness and sometimes depression.

4.2 Definition:

Repeated aggression, either, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others.

4.3 Types of bullying

- Name calling
- Isolation
- Intimidation
- Extortion
- Damage to property
- Physical
- E-Bullying/ Cyber Bullying.

4.4 Signs & Symptoms of Bullying

The following can be key indicators to a child suffering from bullying:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school.
- Unwillingness to go to school.
- Deterioration in educational performance.
- Patterns of physical illnesses; for example, headache, stomach pain etc.
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour particularly before returning to school after long weekend breaks or school holidays.
- Visible signs of anxiety, of distress, stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bed-wetting.
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers.
- Personal possessions either missing or damaged.
- Increased requests for money or stealing money.
- Unexplained bruising, cuts, or damaged clothing.
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling them.

These signs may suggest that a child is being bullied. They do not necessarily mean that the child is being bullied. If repeated or recurring in combination, these signs warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

4.5 Strategies for the Prevention of Bullying.

- The creation of a positive school climate which focuses on respect for the individual.
- Encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying.
Tell Tell Tell.
- It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report

incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but they are behaving responsibly and that they will be dealt with sympathetically.

- Parents are strongly encouraged to inform the Class Teacher/Principal if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- Comment box for 5th and 6th classes during Lent.
- Contract of behaviour for 2nd to 6th classes.
- Workshops for 6th class in November and May.
- Regular assembly where children will be encouraged to **Tell Tell Tell.**
- Bullying awareness week
- Continued implementation of Walk Tall programme

4.6 How will St. Mochulla's deal with instances of alleged bullying.

- Class teacher is told by child or parent that the child is being bullied.
- Teacher investigates by discussing with victim and alleged bully.
- Teacher records this and observes.
- Parent is advised to report back in 2/3 weeks.
- If after 2/3 weeks it continues, then Class Teacher informs the Principal.
- The Principal meets with both children involved and both sets of parents, with a view to resolving the situation.
- If bullying persists, both sets of parents are invited in to meet with the Principal once more.

4.7 A staged approach to dealing with bullying behaviour

Where it is found that a child or children have been bullying another then some or all of the following sanctions may be imposed:

- **Temporary separation from peers.**
- **Detention during breaks**

- **Prescribed additional work**
- **Suspension**
- **Expulsion.**

In the case of suspension or Expulsion the BoM will be consulted.

Behaviour on The School Bus.

Bus Eireann is responsible for behavioural issues on the school bus. For guidelines for discipline and procedures for dealing with alleged misbehaviour on school transport, see: <https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/School-Transport/Guidelines-for-Discipline-and-Procedures-for-Dealing-with-Alleged-Misbehaviour-on-School-Transport.pdf>

5. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

5.1 Definition of Suspension:

'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'

Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

5.2 Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of *St. Mochulla's* has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances

5.3 Immediate Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school.

5.4 Procedure in respect of Immediate Suspension

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an *Immediate Suspension* by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration 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 pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be

completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of *St. Mochulla's* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

5.5 Procedures in respect to an Automatic Suspension:

An '*Automatic Suspension*' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of , having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
or
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration 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 pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of St.Mochulla's acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of St. Mochulla's will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *St. Mochulla's* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- iii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration 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 pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

6. Expulsion

6.1 Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a 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.'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

6.2 Authority to Expel:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

6.3 Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

- b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

Expulsion (Cont)

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. Inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians 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
- iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or B.o.M's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing:

1. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
2. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
3. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that:

1. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
2. the principal (or B.o.M. nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
3. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
4. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

1. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
2. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
3. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
4. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
5. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely 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 pupils or staff.
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.

Expulsion (Cont)

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of St. Mochulla's acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Before you speak
will your words harm others?
Before you act
will your actions harm others?

APPENDIX 1

Code of Behaviour Policy

Acceptance Form

Please review the attached Code of Behaviour Policy, sign and return this acceptance form to the Principal.

Pupil

I accept the steps outlined in school's Code of Behaviour Policy

Pupil's Signature: _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian

As the parent or legal guardian of the above pupil, I have read and accept the Code of Behaviour Policy of St. Mochulla's N.S.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Code of Behaviour Review (Development procedure)

Process