

Introduction

Scoil Chaitríona Senior's Code of Behaviour and Relationship Policy reflects the vision and values of our school, its patron Bishop Brendan Kelly and the National Education Welfare Board Guidelines for Schools.

SCS's Code of Behaviour is being redrafted during the school year 2021/22 and will involve consultations among staff, parents, pupils, and Board of Management members, in compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

It translates the expectations of the school community into practical arrangements, routines and procedures which ensure that its aims are implemented and that the particular needs and circumstances of our school and community are met.

Parents can contact their child's class teacher about behaviour matters via email, phone, face to face meeting etc. In addition, the Principal and Deputy Principal are available to support the pupil, parents and staff in relation to the Code of Behaviour and Relationships policy (referred to as 'The Code').

The Code was formally ratified by the Board of Management on 1st February 2022.

Rationale

It is necessary to formulate a Code of Behaviour for SCS, in order to;

- i) Ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
- ii) Fulfil the requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school.

It details in Section 23 (2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:

- a) The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school.
- b) The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards.

- c) The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school.
 - d) The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.
 - e) The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.
- iii) Ensure that Scoil Chaitríona's Code of Behaviour is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*, NEWB, 2008.
- (iv) Evidence based programmes such as "The Incredible Years", "Restorative Practice", "NEPS-Continuum of Support", "Zones of Regulation" "Nurture" along with the SPHE policy etc. are utilized to strengthen pupils' capacity to be a good friend, a responsible citizen and an engaged learner.

Promoting good behaviour and good relationships with high levels of self-awareness is the goal of the code. Protecting personal safety and freedom from threat by raising children's self-awareness and intrinsic motivation is the success of the code.

The purpose of this Code is to establish clearly for the entire school community the areas of responsibility and the standards of behaviour that Scoil Chaitríona has set for its students.

The Code sets out the various areas of rights and responsibilities for the students and the expected standards of behaviour in the school, the classroom and the wider community.

It outlines the procedures and interventions that may be used to encourage responsible behaviour.

It is envisaged that all these elements will create effective co-operation between students, parents and staff.

Aims of the Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy;

The code will help to:

- Direct children to become self-aware and self-motivated in their respectful behaviour
- Create an environment conducive to learning.
- Ensure the rights of teachers to teach and students to learn.
- Promote, encourage and acknowledge responsible student behaviour.
- Ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Enable the school to operate smoothly to the benefit of all.
- To maintain a positive climate where mutual respect and co-operation are fostered throughout the school community. The code is a whole school approach.

- To actively support students with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged. (See Special Educational Needs Policy and DEIS Plan.)
- Model, and strive for justice and fairness in the implementation of rules, interventions and consequences. Our Code provides for every effort to be made in the implementation of rules, interventions and consequences in a fair and consistent manner for all students.
- **Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready**

When and Where Behaviour is Subject to the Code

The code will apply to all pupils in Scoil Chaitríona during school hours. In addition, the code will apply in any situation where the student, although outside the school, during or outside school hours, remains the responsibility of the school. Examples include; on social media, school tours, field trips, games and extracurricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school etc.

Our Vision for the Promotion of Good Behaviour and Relationships

This Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each child to their education in a relatively disruption free environment. The code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers and staff.

The emphasis is on the promotion of good behaviour and positive relationships with high levels of self-awareness is the goal of the code.

“Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready” is the foundation of the Code.

Staff in Scoil Chaitríona Senior concentrate on setting consistent behaviour standards and expectations through policy, practice and modelling. They understand that all behaviour is communication and endeavour to understand the child and the context. Expectations are high and boundaries are consistent.

As a team, we explicitly teach behaviours which will enable the child to be a successful learner in Scoil Chaitríona. Classroom management and effective teaching are of a very high standard.

We focus on recognising, affirming and rewarding desired behaviour. This positive approach to behaviour encourages children to behave at their best and encourages an acceptable standard of behaviour from each person.

The school recognises the differences that exist between each child, and the need to try to accommodate these differences. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation between teachers, pupils and parents.

When things go wrong, as they sometimes do, we endeavour to use the Restorative Practice (RP) **FRIENDS** approach;



Fair, Respectful, Inclusive, Empathetic, Nurturing, Did you... Safe

Teachers will be conscious of raising the level of self-esteem of each child and of giving all pupils a genuine pride in their work, in their school and in their community. Children will be encouraged to deal with conflicts, arguments and errors in judgement in a way that improves their self awareness and behaviour into the future.

The Mission Statement of Scoil Chaitriona is

Mol an Óige; Believe, Achieve, Succeed

The Vision Statement of Scoil Chaitriona is;

We wish our young people to develop and grow as follows:

Morally

- That every child would have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- That each child be encouraged to live with honesty as members of a community, always showing respect for others.
- That children become aware of the consequences of their actions.

Emotionally

- That children would develop as emotionally well-balanced individuals, capable of expressing emotions appropriately and capable of reacting sensitively to the emotions of others.
- To provide the security for the children to develop confidence, self-acceptance and the acceptance of others.

Culturally

- That children be encouraged to value their native culture.
- That they be encouraged to develop an awareness and an appreciation of other cultures so as to allow them to embrace and celebrate diversity with understanding and respect.

Socially

- That every child would develop acceptable social skills in order to interact confidently with others.

Principles underlying the Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy

- The code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy of SCS lays out the expectations about how everyone will make the school a good place for teaching and learning, recognising that each person has a personal responsibility. It also makes explicit how we respond to behaviour that interrupts, diminishes or prevents teaching and learning in SCS.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that our Code is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner and that all members of staff adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.
- Staff understand that the climate and atmosphere of SCS is created and maintained by the actions and behaviours of everyone; staff, pupils and parents. Relationships based on trust have a powerful impact on behaviour.
- Other key policies and practices are reviewed to evaluate how they impact on student behaviour e.g. Health and Safety, Supervision Policy, SEN Policy, SPHE plan, DEIS plans, Attendance Policy etc.
- A balance of needs is required and accommodation of difference is required. Differences amongst our pupils e.g. Special Educational Needs/ Additional Educational Needs (SEN/AEN) pupils will be acknowledged and planned for.
- Student and staff safety and welfare is promoted by the Code of Behaviour to ensure the conditions for teaching and learning are optimal. Protecting personal safety and freedom from threat are the basis of the code. **“Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready”**
- A whole school approach will be adopted. This requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation and sense of ownership from all the stakeholders – Board of Management (BOM), teachers, SNAs, parents, pupils and ancillary staff.

- Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage in order to support their child.

Children who experience difficulties with their peers/ staff are brought through the Restorative Practice approach. The RP Questions are on display in the yard and in classrooms. They are;

What happened?

What were you thinking then/ since?

Who could have been affected by what you did, and how?

What could you have done differently?

What needs to happen right now to make things right?

The code of behaviour of our school will apply to all children including those with additional needs. Incidents of misbehaviour involving children with SEN will be dealt with on an individual basis, in close liaison with the support team working with that child.

The Code should be read and understood in the context of other school policies such as the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Code of Behaviour and Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)/ Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

It is recognised that some misbehaviour can arise from challenges experienced by children with additional needs. The following preventative measures/ interventions have been developed to provide positive support including the teaching of relevant skills for those students who are more vulnerable to behaviour problems.

SEN/AEN Provision

- Identification of pupils with SEN involves reviewing existing information on pupils' needs, using school based data and information from parents and professionals. Additional screening and data gathering is in place such as diagnostic tests, observations etc. Identifying pupils with AEN is a whole school approach and we match their needs to the appropriate level on the Continuum of Support.
- The Continuum of Support documents (targets) are updated, reviewed and shared with those working with pupils with SEN. Pupil voices are invited and included.
- Behaviour plans can be put in place in classrooms/ settings where pupils are not on the SET timetable. This gives a pathway for success/ clarity for all parties. Teaching replacement behaviours is a core part of this work.

- Planning for AEN includes identifying the methodologies best suited for the pupil (withdrawal, in class, small group teaching, etc.). Interventions are evidence based.
- The greatest need receives the greatest level of intervention with cognisance taken of time and staffing available. We consider individual needs across a broad range; including behavioural needs, academic needs and emotional needs.
- Staff make changes to the environment where necessary (visual, hearing, sensory, physical).
- Where available, we engage with other professionals and modify approaches/ the learning environment of pupils accordingly. (OTs, Speech Therapists, Psychologists etc.)
- Cross referencing the needs of pupils at School Support and School Support Plus levels occurs to consider the common needs that can be met by grouping (where possible) to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning approaches.
- Teacher allocation is considered carefully to cater for these individuals/ groups and teachers timetable carefully also.
- Class teachers and SET teachers collaborate on the setting of targets for incremental improvement, they choose interventions carefully and monitor the progress of the pupil, making adjustments where necessary. Parents and pupils are active participants in this process. In these instances, other services are called upon/ liaised with e.g. HSCL, SCP, Community Care Teams, COPE, etc.
- We have established an effective tracking and recording system by introducing the IT systems Google Workspace (formerly G Suite) and Aladdin Connect. Staff have been upskilled on this procedure. This information sharing is beneficial for preventing misbehaviour and strengthening relationships.
- All teachers and/or SNAs associated with the child will endeavour to assist him/ her with adhering to the Code. This team could include; the class teacher, special education teacher, HSCL, principal etc.

The BOM may also reserve the right, in consultation and with the consent of the parent, to reduce the length of day for a child, who exhibits challenging behaviour i.e. behaviour, which prevents other children from accessing the curriculum, or a child who is deemed to be a danger to him/herself or others. In this event, parents will be informed of the following circular 0047/2021 (available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/f49bd-0047-2021/>). The student being placed on the reduced school day will be notified to Tusla Education Support Service.

A Whole School Approach

Through whole staff meetings, SET meetings, Senior Management meetings and Continued Professional Development (CPD) events, staff are given opportunities to discuss and share their understandings about behaviour. Staff share best practice from attendance at courses, behaviour consultation clinics etc. Feedback from parents, pupils and other professionals are welcomed and included.

Roles and Responsibilities of the School Community in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour

Pupils/Children:

Children are more likely to support a code of behaviour when they have helped to develop it. Relationships of trust between teachers and students can grow stronger through the process. Through their involvement, students can:

- develop classroom rules; hear directly from teachers about what is needed for teaching and learning
- experience being part of a collective effort to make sure the school is a good place to teach and learn
- learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour and for each other's wellbeing and the wellbeing of the teachers
- learn essential skills of listening, negotiating and managing differences
- have their experience, insights and expectations recognised and used.

Every child must give a commitment to accept the Code of Behaviour and to fulfil the expectations as set out in the Code. This will ensure the creation and maintenance of a good learning environment.

Parents/Guardians:

i) Positive relationships are built from the time of enrolment with parents and they are encouraged to take an active role in the development of their child. Teachers work in collaboration with parents to develop any specific plans for behaviour needed for their child.

ii) There are clear channels through which parents can communicate any concerns they may have about their child (mutually agreed meeting times, phone calls, emails etc.)

iii) On enrolment, the Code of Behaviour of the school is shared via email/ Aladdin Connect app or direction to the policy on the school website. They are obliged to accept the code as a condition of enrolment. Parents are encouraged to share information about anything that might affect a pupil's behaviour in school at any time during their years in the school.

iv) Parents are notified early if there is a concern about a pupil's behaviour, so that ways of helping the pupils can be discussed and agreed upon.

vi) Parents are expected to:

- a) Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficiently healthy lunch and full uniform.
- b) Ensure pupils attend school regularly and punctually
- c) Be respectful towards pupils and staff
- d) Make an appointment through the school office to meet with a teacher/ principal
- e) Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same
- f) As per our revised Admissions Policy of May 2021, the signing and accepting of our Code of Behaviour is a condition of enrolment.

Teachers:

Each teacher has a responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour within his/her own class and shares, with every other teacher, a common responsibility for good order within the school and school grounds and on all school related activities before, during and after school.

Each teacher has the responsibility of teaching the Code of Behaviour to their class i.e. **“Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready”**, School Mission Statement.

Classroom Management strategies such as; Show me 5; 123, All eyes on me!; Steps/ Rewards, etc. will be explicitly taught.

Teachers participate in consultation, generate information, contribute to reviews/ evaluations and give ideas on how to improve.

Teachers are expected to adhere to the Code of Professional Behaviour and Practice for teachers as developed by the Teaching Council of Ireland.

As a staff we work together to devise reward/intervention/ consequences programmes as necessary and we undergo any professional development necessary to ensure that there is an agreement and understanding in dealing with behavioural matters.

The SPHE curriculum also supports our code of behaviour. This curriculum helps children to develop communication and problem-solving skills while fostering self- esteem.

As outlined earlier, for children with Special Educational Needs, who may present with behavioural difficulties arising from their needs, special education teachers and class teachers liaise regularly to develop behavioural targets for such children consulting with National Educational Psychology Service as necessary.

This behaviour policy is circulated to all teachers and all temporary or new staff are also made aware of the policy and its content. Through regular staff meetings and good communication, the policy will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

SNAs and Ancillary Staff:

SNAs and all ancillary staff have a common responsibility along with the teachers to maintain good behaviour and good order within the school and school grounds and on all school related activities, before, during and after school and to share responsibility to teach children the Code by example. They will participate in consultation, generate information, contribute to reviews/ evaluations and give ideas on how to improve.

Principal:

The Principal has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school. The Principal ensures that implementing the Code is done in a fair, equitable and appropriate way.

The principal provides leadership, direction, communication and coordination of the Code. She arranges planning meetings for staff, gathers and reviews data/ feedback, identifies areas for continued professional development and arranges/ delegates the arrangement of these events. She provides guidance for staff in matters relating to the Code of Behaviour and Relationships policy.

She undertakes to continue to work on the standards set out in the 2016 DES Inspectorate Looking at our Schools 2016 (LAOS Document) e.g.

Domain 2; “Establish an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment, and maintain it through effective communication”

Domain 3; “Develop and implement a system to promote professional responsibility and accountability”

Domain 4 “Promote and facilitate the development of pupil voice and pupil leadership”

Leading the audit and review of the code of behaviour, and ensuring that it is implemented in the school, are important leadership tasks. It is the responsibility of the Principal, under the direction of the Board, to lead the work on the code of behaviour. Members of the Leadership and Management team are consulted in this process and are expected to volunteer their expertise in the area.

The Board of Management (BOM):

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared in the school rests with the Board of Management. Each school has its unique identity, ethos, values and culture. The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies. The Board should play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school’s ethos and responsibilities. The Board should make sure that all the members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in work on the Code.

The BOM formally provides input and approves the Code of Behaviour and Relationships policy and supports the Principal and staff in the implementation of the Code. The Board of Management supports

the staff in implementing the Code and provides as necessary professional development in behaviour management education and training. The Board of Management hears appeals by parents/guardians against the decision of the Principal to suspend or expel a student.

The BOM submits a copy of the ratified Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy to the Patron for approval.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

“Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready”

Expectations of pupils.

The school expects that pupils will:

Attend school regularly (and on time) with the necessary equipment

Not leave during the day without permission

Respect all school property

Wear the school uniform

Show respect for yourself and others

Avoid fighting or hurting others.

Avoid using bad language or name-calling

Listen to messages given and do as requested.

Participate in school activities

Move quietly around the school and avoid causing disturbance.

Keep the school tidy and litter-free.

Teachers expect that pupils will:

Accept her/his responsibility to teach and to impose consequences on those who behave inappropriately

Show her/him courtesy and respect

Come to school on time and have all the necessary materials.

Do your homework carefully and in full

Listen when others are talking.

Avoid distracting other pupils from their work.

Participate in class activities.

Follow the rules drawn up by your class.

Your fellow students expect that you will:

Be kind and respect their differing personalities

Never insult or belittle them because of differences.

Not bully them
Respect their property
Listen to their opinions
Share school equipment and resources with them
Do not deliberately exclude them
Speak to them with courtesy and respect

Expectations of Pupils And Parents

Children expect that school will be:

Safe for them
A happy place
Suited to their learning style
Encouraging and supportive
Affirming of children of all abilities
Prepared to deal with bullying and supportive of victims

Parents expect that the school will provide:

A safe and happy environment for their child.
Recognise and provide for the individual differences of pupils and educational support for children who need it.
Support for children's medical needs
Fairness and consistency in the way children are dealt with.
An atmosphere of support and inclusion rather than criticism.
Contact at an early stage to inform them of any problems
A willingness to meet them and to listen to their viewpoint.
Suggestions and support about problems in school.
Respectful of different cultural and religious backgrounds.

Expectations of the School:

The school expects that pupils and parents will:

Be familiar with the schools Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
Show support for teachers in implementing the schools behaviour policy.
Support your child in his schoolwork.
Ensure that your child comes to school every day and on time.
Collect your child promptly when school is over.

Provide an explanation when your child is absent or late.

Ensure he has the necessary materials

Try to ensure your child has a positive attitude to and abides by the school and class rules.

Give a contact number where you can be reached in an emergency.

Be available to discuss a problem.

Other parents expect that you will:

Support the school in implementing its code of behaviour.

Help your child when his/her behaviour is having a negative impact

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

The guidelines have been kept to a minimum and are clearly stated below. In the interest of good school organisation, we encourage parents to read this document with their children and to ensure that they understand the school organisation and procedures fully.

Being ‘RESPECTFUL RESPONSIBLE AND READY’ are the values and rules we live by in the school.

Scoil Chaitríona Senior opens for pupils each morning at **8.40am**. Classes begin at **8.50a.m**. Class dispersal time is **2.30 pm**. There are breaks during which children are supervised by teachers and, in some cases, SNAs are also on supervision. The school insurance does not cover unsupervised children who are on the school property outside of school hours.

The school cannot accept any responsibility for children who arrive at school before the official opening time at 8.40 am or for children who remain in school grounds after 2.30 pm.

Parents should ensure that, if at all possible, they can be contacted by phone during school hours in the event of their child becoming ill. If parents are not contactable the school should have an alternative phone number of a person who will take responsibility for your child in your absence. **You are requested to make adjustments on the Aladdin Connect app when your contact details change.**

We have a STRICT policy forbidding pupils to have mobile phones/ tablets/ smart watches that can take/ make calls in the school. Using the above devices will result in sanctions being imposed. No responsibility will be assumed for lost/stolen phones. Devices will be returned within a reasonable time frame at the discretion of the principal.

Strategies to Promote and Affirm Positive Behaviour

In Scoil Chaitríona Senior, we use a variety of reinforcements of positive behaviour. Strategies for promoting positive behaviour in the school include a balance of approaches from; creating a caring classroom environment, to cooperative learning, to holding high expectations for all, to explicit teaching of appropriate behaviours, to teaching social skills and self-control, to the teacher acting as a role model, mentor and supporter. This is done through the following activities:

Input of pupils into the code

Consistent implementation of the code and high expectations for pupil behaviour

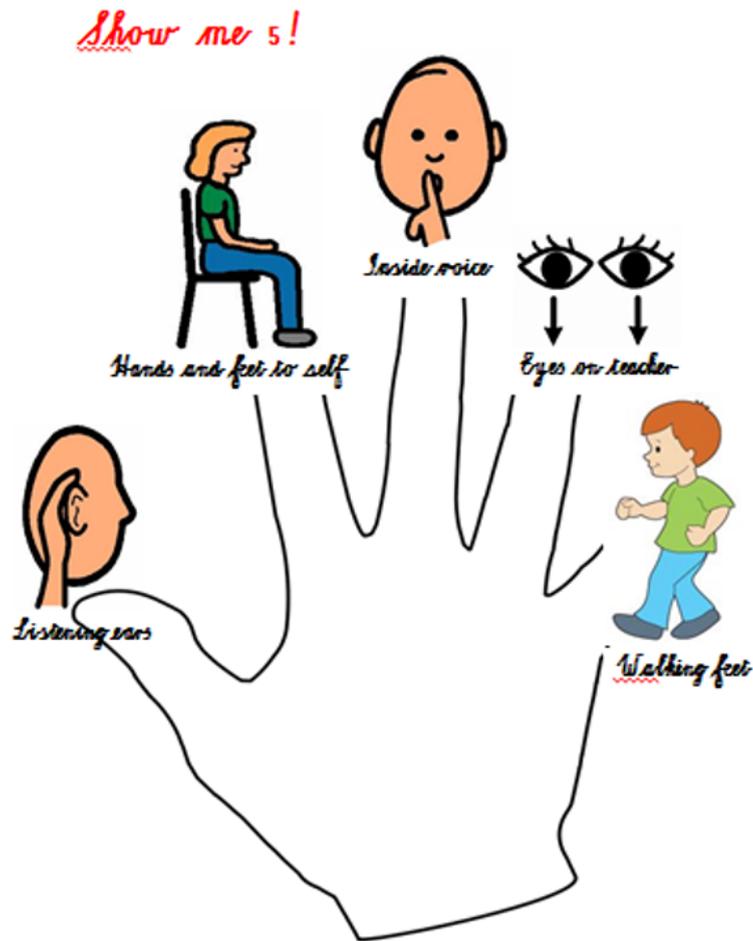
Adults who model respectful behaviour

Positive interactions

SPHE programmes are used throughout the school to promote self-esteem, healthy choices and establishing and maintaining friendships.

What “Be Respectful , Be Responsible, Be Ready” looks like in SCS			
Location	Be Respectful	Be Responsible	Be Ready
In the Classroom	Use Indoor Voice	Bring your equipment	Be in school
	Feet on the floor	Look after your own and others property	Be on time
	Hands to self and Raise hand to speak	Ask for help if you need it	Eyes on teacher
	Keep bathroom rules	Try your best	Listening ears
Outside the classroom	Walk on the left	Follow teachers instructions	Show me 5
	Be mannerly	Keep school tidy	Enjoy break time/ excursions safely
	Include all who wish to be included	Tell an adult if someone needs help- be an up stander	Follow line up procedures

	Use social media appropriately- Be Kind	Have parental controls/ supervision for online activity	Report online abuse Remove yourself from dangerous situations- Tell
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STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule, inappropriate behaviour in the classroom is dealt with by the class teacher within the classroom, whilst taking into account any behaviour management strategies that may be in place for individual children.

Inappropriate behaviour can range from misdemeanour to gross misbehaviour and is judged having regard to the pupil’s age, temperament, range of ability and other relevant factors. When imposing a

sanction, the teacher will make it clear to the child that it is the inappropriate behaviour which is unacceptable and not the individual concerned. Staff in SCS use a solution based approach.

The level of sanction to be imposed will be proportionate and appropriate to the misbehaviour and follows these steps on the ladder of intervention below. (Some misbehaviours may escalate the pupil further up the ladder of intervention).

The objective of the sanction is always to help the pupil learn. Problems are addressed as early as possible.

Each response below is empathetic, detached and objective. Each child will receive two stars at the beginning of the day and will be encouraged to develop self-awareness and motivation to keep their stars/points. The aim for the child is to maintain these stars which lead up to individual and group rewards.

These stars can be logged on class dojo or on star charts (flexibility is given to individual teachers here).



image from: <https://www.kissclipart.com>

Ladder of Intervention

Step 1: Verbal warning. This is a clear instruction as to what the child should be doing. (Teacher gathers information, understanding the context and factors that may be affecting behaviour and makes adjustments).

Step 2: Written warning. This will be recorded by the teacher. The pupil is involved in problem solving, generating ideas about possible solutions (using restorative questions).

Step 3: Move to another area in the classroom/ support room

Step 4: Restorative Questions* oral/ written with a letter home to parents for signature.

Step 5: Class teacher communication with parents

Step 6: Meeting with principal, class teacher, parent and pupil.

Step 7: In School suspension, subject to BOM approval.

Step 8: Out of School suspension, subject to BOM approval.

As a general rule, a whole class is not punished because of one child's/small group's unacceptable behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour at break time is generally dealt with by the teacher on supervision duty on the yard. As a general rule, inappropriate behaviour in the classroom is dealt with by the class teacher within the classroom.

Behaviour Plan

For certain pupils with recurring behavioural difficulties an Individual Behaviour Plan will be put in place. Behaviour plans are suitable for children without a specific diagnosis also. The plan will assist the teachers and child to find alternative desirable behaviours. The NEPS continuum of Support will be used. This plan will be drawn up in consultation with the parents, class teachers, special education teachers and school psychologist (if appropriate). Behaviour plans for children without SEN diagnosis will be written in consultation with the class teacher, pupil and parent.

More Serious Misconduct may include: disruptive behaviour, skipping class, mocking work of teacher, stealing, mocking efforts of other student, refusal to obey reasonable request of teacher e.g. change seat, hand over mobile phone that was visible/not turned off, throwing an object, persistent minor offences, etc.

These will be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal/ Assistant Principal, without delay who will speak to the pupil, contact parents/guardians and impose sanctions.

Gross Misconduct

In such circumstances, the parents will be immediately requested to meet the Principal. The Board may authorise the Chairman or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a formal investigation and discussion of the matter with the parents.

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 temporary period of up to three school days in accordance with Rule 130 (5) of the Rule for National Schools, as amended by circular 7/88 and the N.E.W.B. 2008 guidelines Chapters 10 and 11.

Very Serious/ Gross Misconduct may include: fighting, bullying, racist/sexist/homophobic/cyber bullying/ abuse, absence from school without permission, bad language or sexual innuendo directed at or used to embarrass or upset anyone, gross verbal abuse to staff, aggressive behaviour toward a staff member, abuse directed at a staff member outside the school, any wilful act that could injure another student or himself, vandalism on way to/from school, possessing/buying/selling a prohibited substance on the school grounds, persistent ongoing minor offences that have not been resolved after repeated interventions by teachers.

Suspension

In accordance with the Department of Education and Skills and current legislation the following general guidelines shall apply when a child is being considered for suspension or is to be suspended from the school. Suspension will be an appropriate response to the behaviour causing concern. The BOM will deal with the issue in a confidential manner.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chaitríona Senior has the authority to suspend a pupil. Where this authority is delegated it shall be done so in writing.

Situations in which suspension will be considered include:

1. The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of others
2. The students' continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety
3. The student is responsible for serious damage to property
4. A single serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

Fair procedures will be employed based on;

(i) the right to be heard i.e. that student and parent/s are fully informed about the allegation, the procedures used to investigate and decide the matter and are given the right to respond, before a decision is made and a sanction imposed.

(ii) the right to impartiality in decision making in regard to possible suspension.

In the case of internal suspension, the child's parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and to explain the process of internal suspension. A copy of the letter of internal suspension will be given to the parents and retained on the child's file.

Determining the appropriateness of suspending a student

The following factors should be considered before suspending a student

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

What is the precise description of the behaviour?

How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?

Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour

What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?

What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?

What is the age, stage of development and cognitive ability of the student?

Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour

How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?

What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?

Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

The interventions tried to date (unless it is an immediate suspension)

What interventions have been tried? Over what period?

How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?

What has been the result of those interventions?

Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?

Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?

Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?

Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?

Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Family Support, School Completion Programme, Child and Adolescent services)?

Whether suspension is a proportionate response

Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?

Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of suspension

Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?

Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?

How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?

Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

Procedures in respect of suspension

Informing students and parents

At the earliest possible time, the parents/guardians shall be informed of the difficulties regarding their child's behaviour, the nature of the misbehaviour, and the sanctions being considered/to be imposed on the child.

Opportunity to respond

A meeting/ phone call shall be arranged with the parents/guardians and the teacher(s)/ staff member, Principal and/or member(s)/Chairperson of the Board of Management (where available), to allow the parent and child an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

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 this is to be the case, the principal will refer the matter to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

Procedures relating to immediate suspension

If a suspension is to be immediate (e.g. in the interest of health and safety) a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension.

The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified, and arrangements made with them for the child to be collected.

- The student is to be supervised until the suspension takes effect.
- The student will not be sent home during the school day, unless suitable arrangements can be made for the pupil to be collected by a parent/guardian.
- Parents will be requested to attend with the student on the day of his/her return to school.
- Written undertaking of a letter of apology answering the Restorative Practice questions is requested and a parent signature of the Contract of Future Behaviour is essential.
- The school, in consultation with the parents, will put together a behaviour plan for the student following the suspension where it is deemed necessary.
- On pupil's return, the class teacher /principal/ assigned teacher will provide support to the student during the reintegration process.
- Written records will be kept.

Appeals

- A suspension can initially be appealed to the suspending body, Principal/Board of Management, by means of a formal letter/email.
- The Chairperson of the Board may set up a sub-committee of three members to hear any formal appeal. This committee has the right to deal with any disciplinary matter up to but not including permanent exclusion.
- At all times the Board shall adhere to the principles of natural justice.
- The school may insist that the student remain at home while any appeal on a suspension is in progress.

- All appeals will be heard as soon as is practically possible.
- If an appeal has been successful and the suspension has already been served, it is possible that the only remedy available is to have the suspension removed from the student's file or record.

The maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of ten school days to allow for consultation with parents/guardians to continue.

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student should be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under section 29 of the Education Act and should be given information on how to appeal.

Implementation of a Suspension

In the case of suspension, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will notify the parents of the decision to suspend, or, in his absence; this may be delegated to the principal.

Written notification

Should a suspension be imposed the Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will outline:

- Notice of the suspension
- Starting date of the suspension
- Length of suspension
- Reason/s/ copies of reports for the suspension
- Expectations of student while suspended (restorative work/ study programme)
- Importance of parental assistance in dealing with the breach of the Code
- The arrangements for returning to school including commitments to be entered into by student and parents
- A statement that the Education Welfare has been informed (if the suspension is six days or longer, or if the student has been suspended for 20 days or more during the school year)

- Requirements, which have to be in place when the student returns to school (written apologies, school work, etc.)

Respectful engagement for a restorative practice;

Where a decision to suspend has been made, respectful engagement between parents, student, principal/ representative will help the pupil during the restorative phase and his/ her successful return to school and future behaviour. Where parents/ guardians do not agree to meet/ engage with the principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

Grounds for removal of a suspension may include the following:

- Successful appeal to the Board of Management.
- The student and parent/s have met the specific conditions as laid down by the Principal/Board of Management during the initial suspension meeting.
- Successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- New circumstances come to light. Other grounds considered relevant come to light.

Expulsion

In accordance with the Department of Education and Skills guidelines and current legislation, the following general guidelines and procedures shall apply when a child is being considered for expulsion or is to be expelled from the school.

If the possibility of expulsion is going to arise it shall be considered within the context of Scoil Chaitríona Senior's Code of Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

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.

Authority to expel

The Board of Management of Scoil Chaitríona Senior has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, that authority should be reserved to the Board of Management and should not be delegated.

The grounds for expulsion

- Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour.
- Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. 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.

Automatic expulsion

A Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction. However, a general decision to impose expulsion for named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

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 substances to other students in the school
- sexual assault

Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour

What is the precise description of the behaviour?

How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?

Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour

What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?

What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?

Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour

How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?

What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

The interventions tried to date

What interventions have been tried? Over what period?

How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?

What has been the result of these interventions?

Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?

Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?

Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?

Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services)?

Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

Whether expulsion is a proportionate response

Is the student's behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?

Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of expulsion

To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the student?

Will the student be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?

In the case of a student who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

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.

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

It is a matter for the Board of Management of SCS to decide, on a case by case basis, which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

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

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

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

Parents should be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know. This also ensures that parents are very clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Parents and the student must have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents is essential. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school should record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

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

- i) inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii) ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- iii) provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents

- iv) notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- v) advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- vi) ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

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

It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student). Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be impartial as between the Principal and student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

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

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)). The Board of Management should refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

An appeal against an expulsion under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Educational Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with section 24(1) or that

twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion (Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, s4A).

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

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

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

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

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, a Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)). A Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension should only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the

Chairperson and the Principal). Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record should be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

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

The appeals process

The appeals process under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (Department of Education and Skills). For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

Review of use of expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

Who to Contact on Behaviour Matters.

- Children report incidents in the yard to teachers on yard duty.
- Incidences in the classroom to be reported to class teachers, or to teachers on corridor duty.
- Parents wishing to raise any matter relating to behaviour are to email the class teacher or contact the school secretary to arrange an appointment with the class teacher or principal.

Keeping of Records

- Teachers will keep a written record of instances of misbehaviour in their classes.
- Instances of misbehaviour, action taken and people informed, (Principal, parents, other agencies) etc. to be recorded.

In summary, the Code of Behaviour can be organised into

Pupil's Rights and Responsibilities,
the Ladder of Intervention and

Show me 5!

This document should be on display in each classroom and adopted by all pupils (see below).

PUPILS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS:	RESPONSIBILITIES
I have the right to be happy and to be treated with understanding.	I have the responsibility to treat others with understanding, not laughing at, teasing or trying to hurt their feelings by hurtful remarks.
I have the right to be treated with respect and politeness.	I have the responsibility to treat others with understanding and to respect the authority of the principal, teachers, all staff and parents.
I have the right to be safe.	I have the responsibility to make the school a safe place by not threatening, striking or attempting to injure anyone in any way.
I have the right to expect my property to be safe.	I have the responsibility not to steal, damage or destroy the property of others.
I have the right to obtain maximum benefit from my time in class - Other pupils will not deprive me of this by their behaviour.	I have the responsibility to cooperate with my teachers. I will not behave so as to interfere with other pupils' rights to learn.
I have the right to preserve my own good health.	I have the responsibility to refrain from smoking, drinking or taking drugs. I must never encourage other pupils to experiment with cigarettes, alcohol or drugs.

Present Review Date: 2022.

Signed: _____ (B.O.M.)

