



Scoil Naomh Molaise

Grange, Co. Sligo.

Code of Behaviour

Introductory Statement

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Scoil Naomh Molaise, we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day-to-day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

Our whole Code of Behaviour is underpinned by our school motto:

“Treat others as you would like to be treated”

Aims

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

Content of Policy

Responsibility of Staff / Adults

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

As adults, we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- Explain that physical aggression is not acceptable and encourage children to *'Treat others as you would like to be treated'*.

A Code of Behaviour for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

Behaviour we expect in our school

Our Motto - "Treat others as you would like to be treated"

1. We show respect for self and others.
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others.
3. We show respect for other pupils and their learning.
4. We are kind and willing to help others.
5. We follow instructions from staff.
6. We walk quietly in the school building.
7. We show courtesy and good manners.
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class.
11. We take responsibility for our own work.
12. We wear the appropriate uniform.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.
14. We are a Green School.

Code of Behaviour for Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their children attend school and are punctual.
- Equip children with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform.
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff.
- Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through the office or by emailing/sending the teacher a message on Aladdin.
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same.
- Label pupils' coats and other personal property.

School Rules & Expectations

1. Rules regarding Behaviour in Class

- Pupils are expected to respect the right of other pupils to learn and to avoid disrupting the work of the classroom.
- Pupils are expected to have respect for their teachers and follow instructions given by them.
- Pupils are expected to go to and from their classroom in an orderly manner.
- Pupils are to walk on the right hand side of corridors to avoid accidents.
- Pupils are expected to show courtesy and respect towards other pupils.

2. Rules regarding Behaviour in the Playground

- Pupils are expected to have respect for the person and property of others.
- Pupils are expected to avoid rough play and all types of bullying.
- Pupils are expected to obey signals at the end of break.
- Pupils are only permitted to re-enter the school building during break with the teacher/ SNA's permission.
- Bad language will not be tolerated in the playground.
- Pupils must remain in their own designated areas.

3. Rules regarding Behaviour in the School Environment

- Pupils are expected to move about the school in an orderly manner.
- Running in the corridor is not allowed.
- Pupils are to walk on the right hand side of corridors to avoid accidents.
- Pupils should not be on the school grounds outside of the normal school opening hours.
- Pupils are expected to show respect for school property.
- Pupils are expected to come to and from school with due care for other pupils, for property, for traffic and pedestrians.

4. Rules regarding Behaviour on School Tours and Outings

School tours and outings present particular challenges for the school. As well as the normal standard of behaviour expected from all our pupils, the following should be noted:

- Pupils must obey the instructions of teachers, drivers, tour guides, or any one person designated to be in charge of them during the course of the outing.
- Pupils are strictly prohibited from bringing a mobile phone on any school outing.
- Pupils are not permitted to absent themselves from the travelling group, except with the express permission of the teacher in charge.

5. Rules regarding Attendance at School

- Pupils are required to be regular in their attendance at school.
- When a pupil returns from absence, the reason for the absence must be given to the class teacher using Aladdin. On occasion, a parent may phone the school office to explain an absence if the child is to be out of school for a number of days - this must be followed up with a written explanation via Aladdin to the teacher on the child's return. Parents are required to explain absences to the school as the Principal is required by law to report absences of more than 20 days or where there is a concern, to Tusla.
- Pupils are expected to be on time for school each day and, in the event of a late arrival, an explanation must be furnished on Aladdin.

- Mitching from school is considered a serious offence and is reported to parents / guardians and to the School's Attendance Officer, Ms Haran.
- Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises for any reason, unless collected by parents or guardians. The collecting adult should inform the teacher in advance.

6. Rules regarding Homework

- Homework consolidates work already done in school.
- It is given on a regular basis and pupils are expected to complete it neatly.
- Parents/guardians are requested to ensure that homework, written and oral is completed. They are requested to check the assigned homework, and sign if requested by the teacher.
- If for some reason homework cannot be completed, then a note stating this should be sent to the class teacher via the noticeboard on Aladdin.

7. Rules regarding Misc. items

- Pupils are expected to wear their school uniform.
- Tracksuits and runners are essential for physical education.
- Jewellery other than watches and stud earrings are not allowed in school.
- Make-up, fake tan and fake nails (including gel nails, acrylic nails etc.) are not allowed in school.
- Hair should be tied back to avoid the spread of headlice.
- Mobile phones are strictly prohibited in the school at all times.
- Toys, trading cards, any devices including smart watches etc. may be allowed on occasion if permission is given by the class teacher.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules/ class agreements with the children. The children usually help to come up with these rules as it gives them all a sense of ownership and shared responsibility. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Incentives / Reward Systems

Part of the vision of *Scoil Naomh Molaise* is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Praise for behaviour is as much valued as praise for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal.

- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation.
- A word of praise in front of a group or class.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- ‘Bualadh Bos’ in class or a special mention at assembly.
- Use of stickers to reinforce good work/behaviour.
- A special mention over the school’s intercom system.
- School assemblies are an important time to acknowledge and affirm achievements and good behaviour.

A variety of reward systems are in operation in classrooms throughout the school.

Unacceptable / Inappropriate Behaviour

Some examples of this type of behavior are (refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy):

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation).
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Refusing to comply with direction/instruction from a teacher or member of staff.
- Threats or physical hurt to another person.
- Damage to property.
- Littering.

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

1. **PHYSICAL:** includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
2. **VERBAL:** name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
3. **PSYCHOLOGICAL:** threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner. **The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.**

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, an email to the class teacher or a message on the noticeboard in Aladdin to arrange a convenient time for both parties. This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Misbehaviours

Maintaining standards of behaviour will also involve, in some instances, the application of sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. When sanctions are invoked, pupils should understand that what they have done is unacceptable and it is the misbehaviour that is rejected.

Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behavior.
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- Keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Reflection Sheets

In Scoil Naomh Molaise, we use *Reflection Sheets* as a means of encouraging children to consider their own behaviour. The teacher discusses the negative behaviour with the pupil(s), the impact of the behaviour on others, alternative actions that could be taken in future similar situations and the pupil(s) is given the opportunity to make amends with any other party involved. In this way, the pupil reflects on his/her actions, writes about it in his/her own words (having discussed it with a teacher) and both the pupil and the teacher sign the Reflection Sheet. Pupils must bring this sheet home to discuss the incident with their parent/guardian(s) who must also sign the sheet before returning it to the class teacher.

In the event that a parent/guardian does not sign the Reflection Sheet or it is not returned by the pupil to the class teacher, the teacher will follow up with a brief email informing the parent of the reason that the Reflection Sheet was given. This email will serve as a record for the class teacher.

The following are samples of unacceptable behaviours and the sanctions for such misbehaviours. This is not an exhaustive list and there may be occasion where professional discretion must be used on the part of the teacher/principal in assigning a sanction, depending on the individual needs of the child involved and the nature of the misbehaviour.

1. **MINOR MISBEHAVIOUR**

- Answering out of turn.
- Interrupting others
- Throwing items.
- Eating in class.
- Generally messing.
- Wasting time.
- Disobedience.
- Rough play.
- Running in corridor.
- Telling lies (i.e. white lies).
- Late for school without good reason.
- Homework not done and no note.
- Interfering with others.
- Rudeness.
- Belittling personal comments.
- Not wearing uniform.
- Swinging on chairs.
- Not making an honest effort at class work.
- Knick Knocking (*knocking on door & running away*)
- Leaving their desk without permission.
- Refusing to respect the classroom & school property.
- Climbing trees.
- Any other similar in nature.

SANCTIONS FOR MINOR MISBEHAVIOUR

1. Reasoning with pupil – up to two warnings given to amend behavior.
2. Final warning for pupil – after two warnings, pupils receives a 3rd and final warning.
3. A reflection sheet is given to child if behaviour is not amended after a final warning. This must be signed by parents.
4. After 3 Reflection sheets, a meeting between parents and teacher is called. Principal is informed.
5. After 2 subsequent Reflection sheets (5 in total), meeting with parents, teacher & principal is called.

(Please note, warnings last for the day they are given only. The slate is wiped clean the next day).

2. **SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR**

- Blatant bad manners.
- Theft.
- Deliberate lies.
- Disrespect.
- Bad attitude.
- Name calling.
- Exclusion.
- Answering back.
- Defiance.

- Insolence.
- Fighting.
- Bullying (alienating friends, etc.).
- Intimidation.
- Bad language.
- Spitting.
- Jocking (*pulling down trousers*).
- Truancy.
- Kicking others.
- Hitting others.
- Threatening other pupils.
- Teasing or inciting others.
- Bringing lewd material into school.
- Bringing any dangerous object into school e.g. knives, penknives, razor, blades etc.
- Damage/ defacing of school property.
- Leaving school premises without permission.
- Having a mobile phone or any other smart device in school.
- Damage to others' property by being careless.
- Any item listed under minor misbehaviour when repeated continuously.

SANCTIONS FOR SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR

1. No warnings. Reflection sheet given immediately and must be signed by parents. Teacher may also decide that it is appropriate to contact the parent and inform them of the incident. The Principal is also informed.
 2. After 2 reflections for serious misbehaviours, a meeting is arranged between the parents, teacher and principal. The pupils may be brought into this meeting.
3. **GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR (i.e. likely to lead to automatic suspension)**
- Any item listed under serious misbehaviour repeated continuously.
 - Head butt.
 - Any physical assault on members of staff.
 - Unprovoked physical assault on pupils.
 - Bad language as verbal abuse to other pupils and staff.
 - Deliberate damage to others' property.
 - Serious threatening of other pupils and staff.
 - Deliberate lies against pupils' or staff (to injure character).
 - Bringing objects deemed dangerous into school e.g. knives, blades etc. with an intent to hurt or do harm to another person or school property.
 - Using a mobile phone or any smart device for any reason.
 - Deliberate recording of teachers.

SANCTIONS FOR GROSS MISBEHAVIOUR

1. Child, parents and principal have a meeting.
2. Board of Management informed.

ADDITIONAL SANCTIONS

In some incidents, teachers and/or parents may feel that a pupil needs to experience an additional sanction for exhibiting a particular negative behaviour. This list is not exhaustive, it is merely an example of the sanctions that may be employed:

- Extra homework assignment
- A few minutes standing out at lunch-time
- Loss of *Golden Time*
- Loss of IT privileges
- Loss of class rewards e.g. trip to the playground, school trip etc.
- Loss of responsibility e.g. position on Green Schools Committee or Student Council

Record Keeping

Reflection Sheets are kept by the class teacher until the end of the school year. Reflection sheets will then be filed in the office for safekeeping.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice in our school provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where suspension occurs, the school will use restorative practice involving all parties affected to help repair the harm done.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

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

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

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

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

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

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

Children with Special Needs

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

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs to adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

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

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

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent-teacher meetings
- Through the child's homework journal/folder
- Letters/homes from school to home and from home to school
- The noticeboard on Aladdin
- Phonecalls
- School emails/newsletters/school website

Success Criteria:

We will evaluate the success of this policy using the following criteria:

- Analysis of the success of our objectives
- Analysis of Reflection Sheets
- Staff Observations
- Parental feedback
- Pupil feedback

Roles and Responsibilities:

The principal and staff will be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the policy. Any feedback received from staff, pupils, parents, Board of Management or any external agency will be taken into account for the purposes of evaluation and review.

Timeframe for Implementation:

This policy was first implemented on the 29th August 2019.

Time frame for Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Responsibility for Review:

- Board of Management
- Principal
- Staff of the school

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was ratified by the BOM on: 24th June 2019

This policy was reviewed on: 21st September 2023

Signed: *Fr Christy McHugh*

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: *Louise O'Connor*

Principal/Secretary, Board of Management

The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM, staff of the school, our parents and is available to the wider school community through the school office and on our school website, www.molaise.com.