

# *Scoil Naomh Eoin*

Killenard, Portarlinton, Co. Laois, R32 F782.

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**Principal:** Stephen Donovan  
**Deputy Principal:** Anne T. Hillery

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR** **Scoil Naomh Eoin, Killenard**

### **Introduction:**

Under Section 23 of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students. The Act requires that the school code of behaviour is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). The NEWB Guidelines have their basis in law. The Code of Behaviour must be prepared in accordance with them. This Code of Behaviour was reviewed by a group which included the Principal, Deputy Principal, staff members, parent representatives and Board members, during the school year 2020/21. The revised code was discussed and ratified by the Board in September 2020/21.

### **Aims:**

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility & self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance 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 and pupils to learn without disruption.

### **Implementation:**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, will emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities:**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code.
- Ratify the Code.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Follow general school and class rules.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for every pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work or good behaviour.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Keep a confidential record of instances of misbehaviour & repeated instances of misbehaviour.

- Communicate with parents/guardians when necessary & provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Parents’/ Guardians’ Responsibilities**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s school work.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child’s behaviour is causing difficulties for others and communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child’s progress/behaviour.

### **General Guidelines for pupils for Positive Behaviour**

- Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable
- Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
- Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials.
- Pupils are expected to obey all teacher’s instructions and to work to the best of their ability.
- Pupils are expected to present assignments neatly and on time.
- Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence. **See Appendix 1: Reporting of Student Absences.**

### **General Rules:**

1. School starts at 9.20 a.m. Supervision is in place between 9a.m. and 9.20a.m. Pupils line up in their class groups and must keep schoolbags on. Lateness for school and absences require a note from parents.
2. On wet mornings children go into the school building. Those who go to the PE Hall(Junior & Senior Infants) must line up in assigned area for class. Those in classrooms must put away coats, sit down and read or chat quietly.
3. School ends at 2.00pm for Infant and Senior Infant Classes and at 3.00pm for all other children. It is important that children be collected

promptly at these times. Pupils are supervised on exit from school building by class teachers.

4. If pupils are collected during school hours they must be signed out by a parent/guardian.

5. Pupils involved in extra-curricular school related activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

6. It is a strict rule that all children walk into and out of school. Children should keep to one side of the corridors and respect teachers, fellow pupils and all other adults.

7. Pupils are encouraged to speak politely at all times. Foul language or aggressive tone of voice is not allowed and must never be used.

8. Games which are violent and involve kicking, punching, bullying, spitting, biting, or verbal abuse towards others are strictly forbidden.

9. No child may leave the playground during breaks without permission from the teacher in charge. This also includes the mornings (9am – 9:20am).

10. In the interests of safety, children are allocated play areas which vary in wet or fine weather. Children are made aware of their area and must play in these areas at break times.

11. We promote a Healthy School Lunch Policy. Chewing gum, crisps, fizzy drinks, lollipops, popcorn, cereal bars, biscuits, bars or nuts are not allowed. Lunch leftovers must be taken home. Glass bottles are not allowed because of the obvious danger they pose.

12. School tracksuit must be worn at all times.

13. Cycling in or around school grounds at any time is strictly forbidden. Cyclists dismount at gate and walk with bike to area for parking bikes.

14. All school property and furniture must be treated with respect. Parents will be asked to pay for any wilful damage caused by their children.

15. Smoking/Vaping in the school building and on the school grounds is prohibited by law.

16. Children are not allowed to walk on the perimeter wall or climb trees in the school grounds. Parents are asked not to allow smaller children accompanying them to the school to do so.

17. Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones, smart watches, ipads, ipods etc. to school.

18. Children may not enter or play on school property at any time outside of school hours.

## **Operation of the Code of Behaviour**

The Staff of Scoil Naomh Eoin promotes a caring attitude to child behaviour, and approaches difficult situations in an effort to achieve a positive outcome for all parties. High standards of behaviour are expected by all members of the school community and these standards have become the norm in Scoil Naomh Eoin.

### **Positive Approach:**

Every effort is made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.

Scoil Naomh Eoin places greater emphasis on encouraging positive behaviour rather than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.

- Restorative practices are encouraged throughout the school.
- We encourage the children to take pride in themselves, their work, their school and community.
- Children are encouraged in each class and throughout the whole school to be positive and well-behaved towards each other.
- The Stay Safe Programme, Walk Tall Programmes, Weaving Well-Being and Welcome to Well-Being are taught throughout the school. Good behaviour, good attendance and achievements are acknowledged in the school.
- In the Grow in Love Religion programme there is great emphasis on respect and love for one another. In each class lessons are taught to promote positive behaviour.
- Parents and guardians play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour in our school and in the community. Please take full advantage of all formal and informal channels of communication made available by the staff. If you wish to discuss some issue with a teacher please ring the school secretary at 057 8626217 or email [office@naomheoin.ie](mailto:office@naomheoin.ie) to make an appointment.
- When children are registered in Scoil Naomh Eoin, each parent must read the Code of Behaviour and sign it stating that they accept it and will support its implementation.

**Difference:** The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. In the application of this code the school recognises that sanctions will be

applied in a manner which is appropriate to the cognitive level of understanding of the child.

**Bullying:** The word “**bullying**” must be used with care and does not properly describe many incidents and interactions that occur in school each day. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school’s **Anti-Bullying Policy**.

### **Affirming Positive Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline.

### **Strategies/Incentives to affirm good behaviour**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in a child’s exercise book.
- A visit to another class or to the Principal’s office for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group/ at Assembly.
- Individual class merit awards.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent/guardians.
- Classdojo or behaviour charts

### **Dealing with instances of misbehaviour**

Where there is a serious incident or a consistent pattern of breaches of discipline by a child, or where the child has received **3 PENALTY SHEETS (Appendix 4)**, the parents will be invited into the school to discuss their child’s behaviour. This discussion would involve the class teacher and the principal/deputy principal. This meeting would outline the pattern of unacceptable behaviour to the parents or details regarding the incident, and a strategy would be discussed on how to best address the needs and behaviour of the child.

If necessary, there may be further meetings with the parents to discuss progress. 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.

### **Inappropriate Behaviour**

The following are **some examples** of what is regarded as inappropriate behaviour.

**Minor: (including but not limited to)**

- talking out of turn
- shouting
- talking during work time,
- interrupting teacher or distracting other pupils
- walking in groups in the corridor
- walking around classroom without permission
- bumping off others
- swinging on chairs
- incomplete homework or assignments

**More Serious Misbehaviour : (including but not limited to)**

- **Repeated instances of minor misbehaviour** outlined above
- reacting aggressively to appropriate feedback
- failing to follow instructions given by staff members
- giving cheeky or impertinent responses
- temper outbursts
- repeated or aggressive shouting
- making hurtful comments or name-calling
- hitting
- biting
- stealing others' possessions
- damaging property
- throwing objects

**Gross Misconduct :**

- **Repeated instances of more serious misbehaviour** outlined above
- Inappropriate language i.e. swearing
- Hitting/biting
- Spitting
- Leaving the school premises without permission

The above are considered to be major breaches of our Code of Behaviour as are any of the other behaviours occurring on a repeated basis.

Where a serious behaviour problem exists, parents must act on advice given to them by the class Teacher which is supported by the Principal and the Board of Management.

## **Strategies for Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age, emotional development and cognitive level of understanding. The sanctions which are operational in the school are reasonable. The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour.

### **Level 1: Minor Misbehaviour - Sanctions**

- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Second verbal reprimand and reasoning with pupil.
- Temporary separation from peers within class
- Loss of point on ClassDojo or similar behaviour reward system.
- Note in journal, email or message on Aladdin to parents

### **Level 2: Continued Minor Misbehaviour- Sanctions**

- Temporary separation from peers within class
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of Privilege

### **Level 3: More Serious Misbehaviour or Persistent Minor Misbehaviour- Sanctions**

- Loss of privileges. Parental co-operation can be of great value here to withdraw some privilege at home to reinforce home-school link.
- Referral to Principal / Deputy Principal.
- Penalty Sheet

### **Level 4: Persistent Minor Misbehaviour with no evidence of improvement, (Where 3 Penalty Sheets have been issued) -**

- Class Teacher communicating with parents/guardians.
- Behaviour plan agreed between school, parents/guardians and child.
- Referral to Principal / Deputy Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents/guardians.
- Referral to Board of Management

### **Level 5: Suspension (Appendix 2)**

### **Level 6: Expulsion (Appendix 2)**

## **RECORDS AND REPORTS**

Each teacher maintains his/her own confidential records of any incidents that occur in the classroom. The Principal also keeps a record of incidents that are brought to his/her attention and where parents are contacted. These reports are maintained in the Principal's office or in digital form in line with the Data Protection Policy of Scoil Naomh Eoin.



**For serious incidents the following procedure is followed:**

Formal written records are kept of:

- the investigation (including notes of all interviews held) / the decision-making process

**Report to the Board of Management:** The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension. The Principal will give a confidential report to the Board where there is a child safety, protection or welfare issue in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures of Scoil Naomh Eoin.

**Report to Tusla/TESS:** The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, section 21(4) (a)).

**Communication:**

The policy will be uploaded to our school website

<https://killenardschool.weebly.com/> and a copy distributed to each family on Aladdin.

**Success Criteria**

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

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

**Ratification:**

This policy was ratified at a meeting of the Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Eoin in September 2020.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**  
**Chairperson**

## **Appendix 1: REPORTING OF STUDENT ABSENCES:**

Under the Education Welfare Act (2000), a school is obliged to report to the Tusla when:

- a student has reached 20 days' absence cumulatively
  - a Principal is concerned about a student's attendance
  - the Board of Management decides to expel a student
  - a student has been suspended for 6 days or more cumulatively
- Where teachers have concerns relating to a child's attendance and/or punctuality the following procedures will be followed:
- Note home or phone call checking reason for child's absence or late arrival at school – reminding parents/guardians of their responsibility to provide notes explaining absences.
  - Meeting with parents/guardians to discuss the situation.
  - Further monitoring of situation.
  - If there is no improvement the school will contact the Education Welfare Officer with NEWB. The school will inform the parents/guardians that it is taking this action.
  - Where the school has fears that there is an issue of neglect, the school may contact the Duty Social Worker with the HSE.

**Appendix 2:**  
**Suspension/Expulsion-NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour**  
**Guidelines**

Chapters 10, 11 and 12 of *Developing Codes of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* deal with the issues of suspension and expulsion from primary schools, including the legal and procedural requirements. Schools are advised that in drawing up or reviewing their Codes of Behaviour, they should follow the advice set out in these Guidelines. The Guidelines acknowledge a child's right to education, but also the occasional need for schools to suspend or expel pupils where serious misbehaviour occurs. Schools are reminded that decisions to suspend (for a total of 20 days or more in the current school year) or expel are open to appeal (under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998) and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court. A school should ensure that it has a policy and procedures around the use of suspension and expulsion, and these should be widely communicated.

**Fair Procedures (see Chapter 10 of the Guidelines)**

In the investigation of alleged misbehaviour, and in decision making around what, if any, sanction should be imposed, it should be clear that fair procedures are adopted. Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- The right to be heard; and
- The right to impartiality.

The principles of fair procedure always apply, but the degree of formality required will depend on the gravity of the alleged misbehaviour and the seriousness of the possible sanction. Procedures must be fair, and be seen to be fair. The need for confidentiality and timeliness in dealing with suspension and expulsion are also set out.

**SUSPENSION: (See Chapter 11 of the Guidelines)**

The Board of Management of a school has the authority to suspend. 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 has authorised the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension. Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally other interventions will have been tried before suspension and the school staff should have

reviewed why these interventions have not worked. However, a single incident of misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

A decision to suspend a student requires that:

- The student and parents/guardians are informed of the complaint; and
- Parents/guardians and students are given an opportunity to respond.

A student should not be suspended for more than **three days**, except in exceptional circumstances, where the Principal considers that it is warranted to achieve a particular objective. Where a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board. A Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of **up to five days** in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions. The Board should normally place a **ceiling of 10 days** on any one period of suspension imposed by it. Pupils should not be suspended for an indefinite period. Schools should notify the parents/guardians and the student of decisions to suspend **in writing**. When the suspension ends, a plan should be made to reintegrate the student into the class, and pupils should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour where suspension is being considered, parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. The Chairperson will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested, **in writing**, to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. Where the parents/guardians 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. If such an undertaking is given, behaviour of the pupil will be monitored for an agreed period of time. Where there is an improvement suspension will not be imposed. Where there has been no improvement the Board will proceed with suspension procedures. Prior to suspension 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. Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case.

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

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents/guardians 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.

### **Expulsion (See Chapter 12 of the Guidelines)**

#### **EXPULSION**

**Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the NEWB Guidelines.** Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, this authority should not be delegated. Expulsion should be proportionate to the student's behaviour and should only be invoked in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school should have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour, and be satisfied that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour. There may be exceptional circumstances where a board forms the opinion that the student should be expelled for a first offence, e.g. actual violence or physical assault.

***Decisions to expel are subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act***

#### **Decisions to expel should follow fair procedures including:**

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, including informing the Education Welfare Board of its opinion. (The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 days from the date that the Tusla receives this written notification).
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

## **Appendix 3: Procedures for Breaktimes / Playground & Astro**

### **Playground Organisation:**

Rotas are in place for supervision in the playground during break times. Supervising teachers will circulate the yard when supervising. They will keep a record of behaviour on the yard. ***The class teacher must be notified of incidents of misbehaviour at the end of each lunch period.***

Special Needs Assistants (SNA) are present during breaks to provide assistance to on-duty teachers. S.N.A.s are mindful of certain individual pupils and assist them. If there is a difficulty the SNA will inform one of the teachers on yard duty.

Zones are created within the playground, providing sections for specific class groups.

Pupils who fall or feel ill should tell the supervising teacher.

### **GENERAL RULES:**

- Teachers and SNA's on yard supervision must be obeyed at all times. Report any problems/incidents to the teachers on yard duty.
- No re-entering the school building during the breaks without the permission of a teacher. Only enter the school building to go to the toilet after having received permission from a teacher on Yard Duty.
- When the bell rings at the end of break-time, pupils are to line up in an orderly manner until told to go inside by the supervising teachers.
- When the bell rings at the end of break pupils must stop playing and hold footballs and basketballs. Only soft balls allowed for games, on tarmac areas.
- Play safely – no rough play, "piggy backs" or lifting. No gymnastics/handstands, pyramids or wheelbarrows allowed on the tarmac or grass.
- No swinging off basketball stands/fences/goal posts.
- No rough play.... No mess fighting.... No verbal abuse.
- Skipping is permitted. Skipping rope safety- teachers will ensure that suitable ropes are used and that appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Pupils are permitted to run. However, pupils must not behave in a way which endangers themselves or others.
- There are 4 yards – junior yard/middle yard/senior yard/Astro. Pupils must remain in their designated yard.

- Collectible cards, cards for swapping or personal toys are not allowed to be brought out to the yards.
- Enter and exit the Astro via the path. No jumping or stepping over the fence.
- Stay off the grass unless permission is given by teacher on yard. (9am – 9.20am stay off the grass)
- No cycling in the school yard. Children are not allowed to form chains/trains.

**REMEMBER:** Yard “Out of Bounds” areas: ie. the grass, unless permission given / the hedges / the front of the school / the car park / any area that is out of view of the supervising teacher.

Children must ask the permission of a supervising teacher to retrieve a ball from the car park.

### **Sanctions**

- A period of “time out” will be imposed where a student who is misbehaving will be asked to remain in a specified place until told to return to play.
- The class teacher will be informed who may then decide to impose a further sanction depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour.
- Parents of children who are continuously aggressive or generally misbehaving in the school yard may be requested to take their children home for the duration of the lunch break.
- Parents will be notified of a child’s misbehaviour and assurances will be sought as to a child’s future conduct.
- Children who are continually unruly or disruptive while on yard may not be allowed on school tours.
- For serious misbehaviour a penalty sheet will be issued.
- Where concerns are raised re behaviour on the yard, a system of shadowing is implemented – records are maintained, what happens immediately before incident/during incident/after incident  
A Pupil Behaviour Plan will be set up for those pupils for whom this is deemed necessary.



**On wet days pupils are expected:**

- To stay seated in their classrooms at all times, unless given permission to do otherwise by the supervising teacher or class teacher.
- Not to use rulers, tin-whistle or any other dangerous implements.
- Not to leave the room except in the case of an emergency.
- Ask permission to use the toilet.
- A pupil must not start or take part in any activity which could endanger themselves and/or others.

Teachers will arrange group activities before leaving the room.

**Procedures on the Astro/Grass.**

- The emphasis will be on safety, at all times.
- The children must not go onto the pitch without the supervision of a teacher.
- For organized matches suitable gear must be worn.
- Children must not swing from crossbars or leave gear bags on pitch.
- The wearing of any jewellery is strictly forbidden when playing.
- Football boots must not be worn in the school building.
- Expectations regarding fair play, team rules etc. apply.

**Appendix 4: Penalty Sheet**

Today \_\_\_\_\_ (date) I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name)  
broke a school rule.

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**I am sorry.**

**I will not do this again.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Parents/Guardians**

Please note-If a student receives three of these letters home the Principal will request a meeting with the Parents/Guardians.