



Code of Behaviour

Scoil Mochua, Celbridge

1 Introduction

- The Code of Behaviour and Discipline (COB) for Scoil Mochua has been drawn up following a process of consultation between the Board of Management (BOM), teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), ancillary staff, children and parents. The code has been ratified by the Board of Management.
- Scoil Mochua aims to provide a happy, secure and inclusive learning environment, where children, parents, staff and BOM work in partnership.
- Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected and is facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive learning environment.
- The COB is informed by the principle of fairness and ensures a consistent and committed approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel.
- Our aim is to create a safe learning environment so that the school can operate smoothly for the benefit of all. In each individual case, the educational needs of a student whose behaviour is unacceptable will be balanced with the educational needs of other students and staff in the school.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that the school environment promotes a sense of wellbeing for every person.
- It is a condition of attendance at this school that pupils adhere to the COB. We hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents. We will ask that parents support the implementation of the code and make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by their child.
- We will ask our parents/guardians to read and to sign the COB with their child/children as a commitment to the school rules and the overall development of a harmonious school environment.
- 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 consistent implementation of the code of behaviour to ensure 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.
- The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2 Values and Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To provide a safe and happy learning environment.
- 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 and respectful attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To maximise teaching and learning by minimising disruptions.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood by the school community.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

3 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 and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. The emphasis will be on positive behaviour. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

4 General Guidelines 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 and uniform, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
- Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
- 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.

5 Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

The school's expected standards of behaviour express the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for teaching and learning. Central to this is the expectation that all relationships within the school community are underpinned by the values of trust, care, respect and integrity and that everyone has an understanding of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the COB as outlined below. Our school community is made up of principal, staff, pupils, parents/guardians and the Board of Management.

<p>Principal's Rights: <i>The Principal has the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in a respectful and safe environment • Be treated with respect and courtesy • Receive cooperation and support from pupils, parents and staff • Set high expectations for academic standards and implementing policies • Seek support and guidance from the BOM when issues arise • Receive direction, support and training from the relevant management bodies 	<p>Principal's Responsibilities: <i>The Principal has a responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Fair • Provide a respectful, safe working environment for staff • Provide a respectful and safe learning environment, appropriate to the needs of all pupils. • Provide support for colleagues in the implementation of the COB • Ensure the COB is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
<p>Staff Rights <i>Staff have the right:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in a respectful and safe environment • To work in an environment where every effort is made to minimise disruption 	<p>Staff Responsibilities <i>Staff have the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and implement the COB • Show respect to all members of the school community • Promote and practise a culture of equality, fairness and inclusion.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be treated with respect and courtesy • To voice concerns about pupil's behaviour and safety and to be listened to • To receive co-operation and support from parents and colleagues • To confidentiality • To relevant information on a pupil in order to best support their teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be consistent in the implementation of the COB • Implement the Continuum of Support where necessary • Keep a record of incidents in line with the COB • Provide support for colleagues in the implementation of the COB • Engage in an annual school review of the COB <p><i>Teaching Staff have additional responsibilities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive behaviours through effective and inclusive teaching • Lead the implementation of the Continuum of Support where necessary • Communicate with parents on issues concerning their child's learning and behaviour • Use relevant information on each pupil to support their teaching and learning
<p>Parents'/ Guardians' rights <i>Parents/Guardians have the right:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet with the staff/ Principal at a mutually agreed time • To be treated with respect and courtesy • To confidentiality • To updates on their child's progress • To have their concerns addressed as appropriate • To be consulted about disciplinary action at an early stage • To have access to the COB 	<p>Parents'/ Guardians' Responsibilities <i>Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the COB and support the school in implementing the COB • Provide firm, fair and consistent guidance for their children • Ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually • Raise concerns with the class teacher in a timely manner • Be fair, courteous and respectful towards pupils, staff, other parents • To support and encourage their children's school/home work

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend meetings at the school if requested • Maintain a positive attitude towards the school at all times
<p>Pupils Rights</p> <p><i>Pupils have the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be educated in a safe, happy and inclusive learning environment • To grow intellectually, emotionally, morally, spiritually and physically with an acceptance of differences • To be treated fairly and to be listened to • To be treated with kindness and respect • To feel valued in school • To express their emotions, concerns, beliefs and opinions in a respectful manner 	<p>Pupils responsibility</p> <p><i>Pupils have a responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat others fairly • Follow school, yard and class rules • Show respect for all members of the school community • Listen to teachers and follow instruction • To be organised for school to the best of their ability • Respect all school property and the property of others • Behave in a safe manner that does not endanger others • Behave in accordance with the Code of Behaviour when engaging in all school related activities • Take responsibility for misbehaviour and accept sanctions
<p>Board of Management Rights</p> <p><i>The BOM has the right to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uphold the ethos of the school • Support the Principal in the application of the COB in a fair and reasonable manner • Ensure all staff consistently and fairly implement and uphold the COB • Be informed of any children at risk of suspension 	<p>Board of Management Responsibilities</p> <p><i>The BOM has the responsibility to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fair • Review and ratify the COB annually • Support the Principal and staff in implementing the COB • Ensure that the whole school community have a safe, secure environment

6 School Rules

Scoil Mochua have agreed rules on which the class and yard rules are based. These can be summed up as follows:

- **We listen**
- **We are kind**
- **We are honest**
- **We are respectful**
- **We try our best**
- **We look after each other**
- **We look after property**
- **We follow instructions**

Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

6.1 Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based on the "School Rules". 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.

6.1.1 Incentives/Reward System

Scoil Mochua strives to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for life. Our reward systems seek 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. Behaviour and effort is praised. Reward systems vary from class to class and may change throughout the year.

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

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Positive note to parents
- A visit to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class

The following are some examples of incentives/reward systems:

- Sticker Chart

- Homework Pass
- Lucky Dip
- Golden Time
- Extra Yard Time
- Class Points System
- Certificate

6.1.2 Unacceptable Behaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: *Minor*, *Serious* and *Gross*. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour, parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour. A guide and examples of unacceptable behaviour (Minor, Serious and Gross) are outlined in Appendix 1. Please note this list is not exhaustive and is intended as a guideline only.

6.1.3 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.
- reinforcing the boundaries set out in this COB
- signalling to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is prioritised

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

- prevent serious disruption to teaching and learning
- ensure the safety of all concerned.

6.1.4 Strategies for Dealing with Unacceptable Misbehaviour in the Classroom

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach and to encourage good behaviour among pupils in the school. When this fails, a series of Behaviour Checks will be implemented. The aim of these behaviour checks is to encourage the children to become aware of and to monitor their own behaviour.

For the main part, incidents of misbehaviour will be dealt with in the classroom. However, in certain circumstances, e.g. for serious misbehaviour or for sensitive matters, the teacher may deem it more appropriate to speak to a child/children outside the classroom door. Where this is the case, it is to safe-guard the child's dignity and self-esteem and/or to maintain confidentiality. The classroom door will be left open at all times.

The following table is a guideline to the stepwise approach to misbehaviour employed by teachers in the school. In dealing with behavioural issues, the teacher's professional judgement is crucial. The teacher knows the children, and is aware of the individual needs in the class. In order to minimise the disruption to the teaching and learning in the class, the teacher must have the autonomy to deal with each situation in the best possible way for all involved. Each teacher's approach to misbehaviour will be based on the following table, but will vary based on the needs of the children and their stage of development. At all times, the principles of fairness and consistency will apply.

6.1.5 Behaviour Checks

Stage	Behaviour Check
1	<p>First Warning Child is reminded of the appropriate expectation and asked to stay on task.</p>
2	<p>Second Warning If the behaviour continues, the child's name is noted by the teacher.</p>
3	<p>Classroom Sanction If the behaviour continues, the class teacher may use an appropriate sanction at this stage. This should be discussed with the children and should be consistently used throughout the year.</p> <p><i>Following steps 1-3 above, teachers may choose to communicate with parents informally if they feel the behaviour does not warrant the sanctions at Step 4. This may be done at home time, by making a phone call after school or by writing a short note home. At this stage, a short punishment exercise may also be assigned for completion at home.</i></p>
4	<p>Note to Parents and Discipline Sheet Teacher may write a note in the child's Homework Journal explaining that steps 1-3 were followed but the behaviour did not improve. As a result, the child must complete the discipline sheet assigned and both must be signed by a parent. Discipline sheets will be kept on file. The discipline sheet will only apply from 2nd – 6th class In infants and 1st Class parents may be requested to meet with the class teacher to discuss the behaviour and agree appropriate course of action.</p>

5	<p>Child is sent to the Principal's Office</p> <p>For repeated or serious inappropriate behaviour or if Step 4 is reached twice in two weeks. The issue is discussed between the Principal and the child. Following discussions, parents are notified by Class Teacher or Principal (depending on the issue).</p>
6	<p>Parents requested to come to the school.</p> <p>If no improvement apparent, further consultation with parent and other sanctions agreed.</p>
7	<p>Suspension</p>

The following is a guide to matching the misbehaviour with the appropriate behaviour check:

1. **Minor Misbehaviour** (Follow Steps 1-3)
2. **Serious Misbehaviour** (Follow Steps 3-5)
3. **Gross Misbehaviour** (Follow Steps 5-7)

6.2 Yard Rules

We have 4 separate yards at Scoil Mochua. These are:

- Junior and Senior Infants: Junior Yard
- 1st and 2nd Classes: Middle Yard 1
- 3rd and 4th Classes: Middle Yard 2
- 5th and 6th Classes: Senior Yard

We operate a strict rota for yard supervision, ensuring adequate cover in each yard every day. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard given to the age of the pupils, to individual difference and to special educational needs.

Once a month (or more if necessary) teachers will revise all rules relevant to their class.

6.2.1 Yard and Activity Areas: Rules and Procedures

Lists of rules for each yard to be drawn up and circulated to each relevant class in September.

1. No rough play.
2. Exclusion of a child/children from games is not permitted.
3. Children must follow the instruction of the teacher/SNA on duty at all times.
4. Children are not allowed to go back into the building during break times except with the permission of the teacher or SNA on duty.
5. No queuing for toilets within the building. In Middle Yards 1 & 2, queue at the bottom of the ramp.
6. Children are not allowed on ramps, steps or near any bars or railings.
7. Children are only allowed to go on grassed areas in Senior Yard in summer time and only when the sign indicates it is dry enough.

8. All children must stay within the boundary of their yard and must ask permission if they need to cross the boundary for any reason.
9. No running in the yard.
10. As far as possible, food should be eaten before going to yard. Any food brought to the yard must be eaten or brought back to classroom at the end of break. Do not throw food or wrappers on the ground.
11. Only the 6th class children designated to move benches may do so.
12. All equipment must be looked after and shared. Specific rules for individual activity areas must be followed. These will be displayed in the relevant areas and will be explained to the classes in question.
13. Kicking of balls is not permitted.
14. Children freeze on the first whistle.
15. Children walk to their line on the second whistle and line up with a partner.
16. Unacceptable behaviour or breaking of yard rules will result in consequences as outlined in paragraph entitled *Strategies for Dealing with Misbehaviour in the yard* (pg 11, Code of Behaviour, 2019).

6.2.2 Strategies for Dealing with Misbehaviour in the Yard

Children are given one oral warning and are clearly informed that the next step is time out by the wall for 3-5 minutes. If the child is then sent out by the wall for the 3-5 minute interval, he/she must return to the wall at the end of break. This allows the class teacher, who has overall responsibility for each child in his/her class, to monitor patterns of behaviour. The class teacher will take any further action required, taking into account previous patterns of behaviour and frequency of sanctions to date.

In cases of serious or gross misbehaviour, e.g. behaviour that poses a danger, then the above approach will not follow and the child/children may be immediately removed from the yard for the safety of everyone concerned.

6.2.3 Class Rewards for Yard

We reward and incentivise classes from Infants to 6th on a daily basis for lining up. From Infants – 1st Class, a 'Star Line' is awarded to the best class in each stream at the end of each break. Class teachers use their own reward system to acknowledge the 'Star Line' award. From 2nd – 6th, the class teachers monitor their own class line and organise an appropriate reward, e.g. 10 minutes extra yard time at the end of the week.

6.2.4 Unacceptable Yard Games/Behaviours

- Running
- Rough Play – wrestling, kicking, punching, "pretend" fighting etc.
- Physical play such as lifting other children, piggy backs etc.
- Biting, spitting, pulling hair
- Kicking or throwing of balls at other children or teachers
- Excluding others from games

- Name calling
- Bullying and/or intimidation
- Use of explicit and/or bad language
- Other behaviours listed in Appendix 1 below

7 Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Scoil Mochua fully supports the National Parents Council and the IPPN when they refer to the partnership between home and school in their publication *“Supporting Each Other”*:

“Where effective partnership exists between home and school, the benefits are clear:

- Children learn more, behave better and are happier at school
- Teachers are more effective when they are supported by parents”

Teachers are encouraged to develop a positive relationship with parents/guardians and to enable them to help their child as much as possible. We hope that this approach will have a positive impact on pupil behaviour in our school. When parents/guardians wish to address an issue regarding their child, they should, in the first instance, arrange to meet with the teacher and try to resolve it at class level. Failing that, they should make an appointment to speak with the Principal.

Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents/guardians have been established and are being reviewed regularly. Parents/Guardians 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:

- Formal and informal parent/teacher meetings
- Notes in child’s journal
- Letters/notes between school and home
- School newsletter
- School web-site
- Email
- Twitter
- Text-a-parent
- Phone calls
- Apps/Websites such as Class Dojo etc.

8 Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised.

8.1 Suspension

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

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and/or the Principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking to support the school in trying to bring about modification in the child's behaviour, 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.

8.1.1 Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, where it has been alleged that the pupil poses a threat to the safety of others in the school, 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.

8.2 Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000, and in line with *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB 2008*. 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.

9 Individual Behaviour Plans

If a child is not responding positively to class supports in relation to his/her behaviour, the teacher will begin the process of drawing up a Behaviour Support Plan in line with the Continuum of Support as laid out by the Department of Education and NEPS. Behaviour plans will be drawn up on a case by case basis. This plan is usually worked out with the parent/guardian so that the teacher can get a greater understanding of the rewards/sanctions that may work best for each child.

If the poor behaviour continues, the teacher will meet with the child's parents/guardian again.

If there is no improvement following the second parent/teacher meeting and if the child is still behaving inappropriately, the parent/guardian will be called to meet with the Principal where the situation will be discussed in detail. Guidelines will be drawn up for future behaviour in the school and yard. Very occasionally, this may include a request from the teacher/Principal that the parent/guardian of the child supervise their child in school or during a school outing.

The school reserves the right to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians of a child at any time, should the child's behaviour be deemed to be unacceptable.

If a parent refuses to meet with a class teacher the matter will be referred to the Principal. Any refusal to meet with the Principal will automatically be referred to the BOM and will be regarded as a serious breach of co-operation in our school behaviour policy.

10 School Trips - Including Sporting Events, Swimming and Educational Field Trips

Children are expected to uphold the school's ethos when they are on a school trip during the school day. The school's COB applies during such excursions.

If a child's behaviour is considered to be a health and safety risk to themselves or others, they will not be permitted to go on school trips e.g. if a child has consistently misbehaved in

school, extra supervision will not be provided by the school to deal with such behaviour on school outings.

11 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/guardians and the class teacher, special education teacher, and/or Principal. The school will work closely with parents/guardians to ensure that optimal support is given. However, the health and safety of all students will always be the overriding priority.

In dealing with instances of misbehaviour, Cognitive development will be taken into account, as will professional advice from psychological assessments where relevant. Professional support may be sought from the National Disability Service (NDT), National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and the Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) if deemed necessary. Preparation and special consideration will be provided for all children with special needs who need it when normal routine is not happening e.g. school tour

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 individual differences.

Rewards for students with special needs should take account of their particular needs. In the case of students with sensory processing needs, the reward should be selected in ways that take account of that. For all students, and especially those with special needs, rewards will have an impact when they are closely linked in time to the behaviour that is being rewarded.

12 Review

This Policy has been reviewed and ratified by the BOM in 21st October 2019
and will be reviewed again in October 2020 or sooner if deemed
necessary.

Signed: 
Chairperson

Date: 21/10/19

Signed: 
Principal

Date: 21/10/19

Appendix 1: Examples of Unacceptable Behaviours

Please Note: This is by no means an exhaustive list but is to be used as a guideline

Minor Misbehaviour <i>As defined by the teacher</i>	Serious Misbehaviour <i>Persistent Minor Misbehaviours become Serious Misbehaviours</i>	Gross Misbehaviour <i>Repeated Serious Misbehaviours become Gross Misbehaviours</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not doing or completing assigned work either in school or for homework without good reason. • Ignoring Teacher's instructions. • Distracting or talking to other pupils. • Inappropriate responses to teacher correction e.g. ignoring, back answering etc. • Late arrival to school without good reason. • Unruliness on corridors and school grounds. • Breaking of school rules/classroom rules. • Not wearing appropriate uniform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeatedly not doing or completing assigned work either in school or for homework without good reason. • Repeatedly ignoring teacher's instructions. • Repeated distracting and constant talking to other pupils. • Consistently late arrival to school without good reason. • Repeated unruliness on corridors and school grounds. • Repeated breaking of school/ classroom rules • Consistent incomplete uniform. • Regularly telling lies • Use of bad language and offensive gestures. • Dangerous behaviour that is liable to cause injury. • Continued and repetitive inappropriate responses to teacher correction. • Throwing items around the classroom in an aggressive way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault on a teacher or pupil (verbal, emotional or physical) • Theft • Serious damage to property • Bullying or intimidation • Posting or endorsing a derogatory comment online about any member of the school community • Sending group text messages or group private messages which are hurtful to another child • Pupils leaving school grounds without permission • Persistent breaking of school rules. • Racism. • Aggressive behaviour, aggressive verbal outbursts and/or grossly offensive gestures • The unauthorised use of electronic equipment or mobile-phones in school

