

Scoil Bhailenóra

Code of Behaviour / Cód Iompar



Luke 6:31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

1.1 Introduction

This code of behaviour for Scoil Bhailenóra was formulated in 2020, following an audit and review process which involved parents, staff, pupils and the Board of Management. The process involved a number of meetings and consultations among the school's stakeholders and was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board. The policy was amended in 2020, following a review.

1.2 School Mission Statement

Scoil Bhailenóra strives to excel as an effective learning environment where the holistic development and well-being of each person is catered for through the combined efforts of teachers, children, parents and the local community, in an atmosphere which is happy, secure and characterised by Christian values.

The teachers, parents and children of Scoil Bhailenóra will work together to optimise the educational experience of each child. The school will also strive to promote the continued personal and professional development of each teacher. Parents are welcomed as partners in their children's education and the staff will ensure regular communication between school and home will be a constant feature of their work. Further involvement will also be encouraged through parenteral participation in school initiatives and in the Parents' Association.

The school, as an important element of society, will develop and maintain links with the local and wider community through involvement with various individuals and groups for the mutual benefit of all concerned, and in order to promote the ideals of citizenship and social participation among the children.

1.3 Our Vision For Relationships and Behaviour in Scoil Bhailenóra

Scoil Bhailenóra strives to build positive relationships of mutual respect and support among pupils, staff and parents. Such relationships enliven our ethos; creating a climate which encourages and reinforces good behaviour and leads to a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning. Our code of behaviour is an essential tool in furthering this vision and in helping the children in our care to mature as responsible, participating citizens.

1.4 The Ways In Which Our School Promotes Good Behaviour

If our vision is to be realised, our expectation of good behaviour should be matched by the promotion of same. To this end, we make use of a range of strategies at class and school level. These include:

- Positive daily interactions between teachers and students
- Good school and class routines
- Clear boundaries and rules for students
- Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
- Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour
- Exploring with students how people should treat each other
- Involving students in the preparation of our school and classroom rules
- Regular communication between school and home

1.5 Aims of our Code of Behaviour

- 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 effectively without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood by pupils, parents and teachers through the availability of policies online and an ethos of open, positive and constructive communication between all parties.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

Upon application for Enrolment, each parent/guardian shall be provided with a copy of our school's Code of Behaviour. In accepting a place in the school, parents/guardians also accept our Code of Behaviour as a condition of enrolment.

2.1 Expectations

Many people work together in our school every day and therefore a high level of courtesy, consideration and a willingness to co-operate with others is expected of all. Students, staff and parents can help each other to meet the standards expected in the school by ensuring that our code of behaviour is understood and supported by everyone. This can be done by discussing it at school, at home and by supporting each other's efforts to adhere to the code.

2.2 Expectations of Students

Students are expected to abide by our school rules, which are fair, proportionate and consistently applied. Behaviour which is ill mannered, annoying, dangerous or disruptive cannot be allowed, as it can threaten everyone's entitlement to work / learn in a safe and harmonious environment.

2.3 Expectations of Adults in Our Community

The adults encountered by the children (such as parents, teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, and visitors) in our school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in dealings with children and with each other. Our example has an important influence on our pupils.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote, 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
- Discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.

2.4 Where does the Code of Behaviour Apply?

- The Code of Behaviour applies at all school events.
- To any situation that has a demonstrable impact on teaching and learning for any individual in Scoil Bhailenóra – in line with the NEWB guidelines the pupils do not have to be the responsibility of the school at the time an incident occurred.
- To any incident that is deemed by management to bring the reputation of the school into disrepute.
- If parents are present at any event, they are ultimately responsible for their own children.

2.5 To whom does the Code of Behaviour Apply?

The Code of Behaviour applies to all pupils of Scoil Bhailenóra equally. While consideration will be given to developmental stage, the necessity for a safe and orderly environment where each pupil is treated equally is paramount.

3.1 School Rules

Our rules are designed to provide practical guidance for pupils in relation to the behaviour which is expected of them. They provide clear boundaries and describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop as mature and responsible individuals.

Every pupil of Scoil Bhailenóra is expected to:

1. Attend school regularly and on time
2. Wear the school uniform
3. Do one's best at all times
4. Take responsibility for one's work
5. Be truthful and honest at all times
6. Respect and show courtesy towards everyone in the school
7. Respect all school property, furniture and equipment
8. Complete homework assigned to the best of their ability.

Behaviours Which Are Unacceptable Include:

1. Bullying – or any nature (see anti-bullying policy)
2. Acts of aggression – verbal or physical.
3. Any behaviour which interferes with teaching and learning
4. Theft
5. Bad and inappropriate language, including swearing.
6. Name calling and personal insults.
7. Any behaviour which calls the good name or reputation of the school or of a staff member into question.
8. The wearing of make-up.

3.2 The Staff

- Will discuss the Code of Behaviour and devise a set of positive class rules at the beginning of each school year.
- Will adopt a positive and consistent approach to rewards and sanctions.
- Will discuss / review the code of behaviour annually.
- Will ensure to the best of their ability that the code of Behaviour is understood by children with special needs.
- Will contact parents in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Will record any formal written reports of behaviour.
- Will conduct all investigations in line with natural justice and fair procedures. See Appendix ii

3.3 The Parent

- Support the code of behaviour
- Model

Constructive respectful behaviour for their child

-

Communicate in a respectful way with school personal

-

Voice any concern through the appropriate procedure

4.1 Positive Strategies For Managing Behaviour

Teaching children to be a constructive members of their community is a one of the core goals of our code of discipline.. Thus, it is important that pupils recognised as making every effort to behave well be positively affirmed wherever possible. Strategies in this regard include:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's 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.
- A system of merit marks.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication

4.2 When Problems Arise

At early stages teachers will remain calm and may

- Offer choice
- Deflect

Scoil Bhailenóra commits to helping relevant pupils, parents and teachers when problematic behaviours arise. Pupils who are experiencing difficulties will be helped to overcome them by the class teacher in the first instance. However, a member of the school's learning support/resource staff may also become involved in the formulation of a plan to support behaviour,

if such intervention is deemed necessary. A pupil's parents will also be invited to become involved in the formulation and implementation of such plans. The school Principal will be available to help should the need arise.

Communication is as a rule more effective when early and constructive from both sides.

Synopsis from Parental Complaints Procedure (see online)

Class teacher – Principal – Chairperson – Board of Management

Informal Complaints: Parents with concerns or complaints about a behavioural matter, or any matter, should contact their child's class teacher at the outset. This is an integral first step in parental communication. The teacher will be happy to make an appointment to discuss relevant problems and to offer advice and suggestions as to the best means of resolving difficulties. In the interest of maintaining the integrity of class contact time and having a considered discussion it is important an appointment be made.

Formal Complaints: Problems/complaints of a more serious nature, or in relation to this code of behaviour can be formally raised in writing with the Principal, or with the Board of Management. The school will seek to resolve complaints as early as possible and as close as possible to the origin of the problem, whilst applying fair procedures and natural justice at all times. See parental complaints procedure on line.

4.3 Responses & Sanctions Following Unacceptable Behaviour

Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of other students, the school has to weigh the needs of that student with the needs of other students and staff. In this regard, the school may consider the use of sanctions with the aim of achieving a change in behaviour, to be appropriate.

The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear to all involved why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions □ There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences.
- The behaviour rather than the person exhibiting the behaviour, will be the focus
- Sanctions should be used appropriately, consistently and proportionately. Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment.

The following steps may be taken when pupils behave inappropriately. They are listed in order of severity with one being for a minor misbehaviour and ten being for serious or gross misbehaviour(s). The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the features by which sanctions should be characterised. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again, thus ensuring a safe, orderly teaching and learning environment.

In recognition of the Parent as the Primary Educator of the child, this ladder of intervention is anchored in Parental involvement at each stage. Early collaborative intervention by both home and school working together is essential. to help pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties and formulate realistic, practicable support plans.

Action	Communication
1. Reasoning with pupil	note to parent in homework journal to be signed
2. Reasoning with pupil	phone call to parent from teacher
3. Prescribing extra work	note in journal
4. Temporary separation from peers within class	note in journal
5. Loss of privileges	Note in Journal / phone call to parent
6. Referral to Principal	Parents telephoned and invited to meeting
7. Principal communicating with parents	Phone call from principal
8. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school*	Phone call and written letter from principal/Chairperson

*in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000.

4.4 Suspension

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhailenóra has conferred on the Principal the Authority to suspend a child for up to one day. Depending on the circumstances, the Board of Management or principal may opt to:

- (A) Suspend a pupil following unsuccessful staged interventions.
- (B) Suspend immediately, in exceptional circumstances. – eg. acts of violence/aggression.

(A) Suspension Following Unsuccessful Staged Interventions

In most circumstances, a decision to suspend a pupil will only be considered when the above interventions have been tried and deemed by the school to be unsuccessful. See Appendix 1.

Factors which will influence a decision to suspend include:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- The interventions made to date.
- The appropriateness of suspension in the particular instance.
- The possible impact of the suspension.

A decision to suspend will be only be taken on serious grounds such as:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils e.g. shouting at teacher, being disruptive,
- A refusal to work, not allowing others to work, taking up teacher's teaching time due to inappropriate behaviour.
 - The pupil's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to the safety of pupils/teachers e.g. physical fights in school yard, leaving school premises without permission, serious consistent incidences of bullying or racism, use of bad language towards any member of school community.

4.5.1 Procedures To Be Followed In Relation To Suspension Type A

- School's behaviour committee will convene a meeting. The committee will include the Principal, Deputy Principal and class teacher. Fair procedures, based on the principles of natural justice, will be followed. These procedures apply to:
 - The investigation of alleged behaviour that may lead to suspension.
 - The process of decision making as to whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and what sanctions to impose.
- Once the preliminary investigation confirms that the behaviour warrants suspension, parents and pupils will be informed about the complaint. This will be done initially by phone, followed by a letter.
- A meeting will be organised as quickly as possible to allow parents an opportunity to respond.

(B) Immediate Suspension

A single incident of gross misbehaviour such as those noted hereafter, may constitute grounds for immediate suspension. In our school, if a preliminary investigation establishes the case for the imposition of an immediate suspension, the Principal is authorised to do so.

Examples of Gross Misbehaviour which may warrant immediate suspension.

- Aggressive, violent behaviour towards a pupil/staff member.
- The deliberate circulation of any material relating to a staff member, without their permission, via the internet or through other means, which in the opinion of the BoM, is unfair and potentially damaging to the staff member's good name and/or reputation.
- Deliberately damaging or setting fire to school property.
- Deliberately leaving taps/fire hose turned on. □ Possession of alcohol/drugs.

4.5.2 Procedures To Be Followed In Relation To Immediate Suspension

- A preliminary investigation will be conducted by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Class Teacher to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension.
- Parents of the suspended child will be notified and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected.
- A formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.

4.6 Period of Suspension

Parents can appeal both the Principal's and B.O.M.'s decision to suspend a pupil. Should the pupil be suspended for a total of 20 days or more in the school year, parents may appeal the decision under Section 29 of the Education Act and facilitated in doing so, if required.

4.7 Implementing the Suspension (Type A & B)

The Principal will notify the parents and the pupil in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm: □

The period of the suspension.

- The reasons for the suspension.
- The study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school e.g. commitment re. adhering to Code of Behaviour, special contract or pupil report card for a one week period.
- Provision for appeal

4.8 Reintegration of Pupil

The school will make every effort to help a student to catch up with work missed. An opportunity to discuss feelings will be facilitated by the school. The pupil will be given the opportunity and support to make a fresh start.

4.9 Records and Reports

Formal written reports of Behaviour are kept on a pupils profile on Aladdin in respect of:

- The investigation.
- The decision and rationale for same.
- Duration and any conditions attached to suspension.

All suspensions are reported to the Board of Management and to the National Education Welfare Board.

4.10 Expulsion

A decision to permanently exclude a pupil from Scoil Bhailenóra will be made solely by the Board of Management. Expulsion is a very serious step, is only taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and only after the school has taken significant steps to address the behaviour. These steps include the following:

- Meeting with parents and pupil to explore ways of helping the pupil to change his/her behaviour.
- Making sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, (if it should persist).
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been explored.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies e.g. National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive (HSE), Community Services, National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS).
- The grounds for expulsion and the factors which need to be considered are similar to those for suspension. However, where expulsion is concerned the school will already have tried a series of other interventions including suspension, before contemplating this course of action.

Expulsion for a First Offence

The following kinds of behaviour may warrant such expulsion.

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or staff member.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying of drinks/ drugs.

4.11 Procedures To Be Followed in Respect of Expulsion.

STEP 1: A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. Pupil and parents will be informed in writing regarding the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and informed that the outcome of the investigation could ultimately result in expulsion. Parents and pupil will then be invited to a meeting and given every opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is made.

STEP 2: A Recommendation to the B.O.M. by the Principal to Consider Expulsion.

The Principal will inform parents and pupil that the B.O.M. is being asked to consider expulsion. They will be given ample notification of the date of the hearing and invited to attend. Parents will also be advised that they can make a written or oral submission to the B.O.M.

STEP 3: Consideration by the B.O.M. of Recommendation and the Holding of a Hearing.

The B.O.M. will be provided with the same records of the investigation as the parents. The B.O.M. will review the initial investigation and must satisfy itself that fair procedures were upheld. It reviews all documentation. If the B.O.M. decides that an expulsion is warranted, it will hold a hearing. At the hearing, the Principal and parents will be invited to address the board. After both sides have been heard the B.O.M. will be left alone to make its decision. Parents and Principal will be asked to leave at this time.

STEP 4: B.O.M. Deliberations and Actions Following the Hearing.

Having heard from all the parties it is the responsibility of the B.O.M. to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and if so whether or not expulsion is the appropriate action. The Board informs the parents of its conclusions and of the next steps in the process e.g. notification of decision to the Educational Welfare Officer. If the B.O.M. deems it necessary to expel the pupil the NEWB will be informed in writing via a Notice to Expel Form. The intention to expel a pupil does not take effect until 20 days have elapsed after NEWB have received written notice. This allows the Educational Welfare Officer time to intervene before the decision takes effect.

STEP 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer during 20 day period.

- Individual consultations will be scheduled with all parties, where feasible.
- Arrangements will be made for joint meeting of all concerned.

The purpose of the consultation and meetings is to ensure that arrangements are in place for the pupil to continue in education. The B.O.M. may suspend the pupil during this process if there are concerns that the continued presence of the pupil will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils and staff.

STEP 6: Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Parents will be notified immediately by the B.O.M. and informed re. their right to appeal the decision to expel. The standard appeal form will be given to parents. A formal record of the decision to expel will be made.

4.12 Appeals

Parents may appeal the decision to expel to the Secretary General of DES. The appeals process under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 begins with the appointment of a mediator. An appeal may also be brought by NEPS on behalf of the pupil.

Absences/as láthair

5.1 Procedures re. the notification of a child's absence from school.

Under the Education and Welfare act 2000 schools are required to monitor school attendance and report on pupil attendance in certain circumstances. The school reports 4 times a year to the national Education and Welfare Board, which was established to support school attendance and to follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.

5.2 The Role of Parents / Ról na dTuistí

Parents are required to provide a written note of explanation to the relevant class teacher for all absences, either at the beginning or end of the period of absence. Any available medical certificates in respect of an absence due to illness, should also be passed on to school.

Parents will be contacted by the school if:

- A pupil is at risk of developing school attendance problems.
- A pupil has missed 20 school days.
- Parents fail to explain a pupil's absence.
- A pupil is regularly late for school.
- A pupils name is to be passed on to National Education Welfare Board.

Attendance records of children who transfer to Scoil Bhailenóra will be sought from previous school.

Attendance records of children who transfer to another primary school will be passed to the Principal of the school as soon as notification of transfer has been received.

Attendance records of pupils transferring to Second Level schools will be sent to the school as soon as enrolment has been confirmed.

6.2 Reference To Other Policies

- Anti-Bullying
- Harassment
- Sexual Harassment
- Enrolment
- Health & Safety
- Learning Support Policy

6.3 The Board of Management of Scoil Bhailenóra gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following in the formulation of this code:

- Teaching and Ancillary staff
- Pupils
- Parent Representatives

Conclusion

The essence of our Code of Behaviour is valuing people and encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to develop self-discipline.

This policy was ratified by the board of Management on **18/09/25**

It will be reviewed as per NEWB guidelines, as appropriate for September 2026

Signed *Barry O'Sullivan*
Chairperson

Luke Foley
Principal