**Code of Behaviour**

**Scoil Mhuire Milford**

This policy was formulated by the staff at a meeting on February 10th 2020 and will be revised annually. It was necessary to review our Code of Behaviour to ensure the existing policy is compliant with legal requirements and good practice as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.

**Aims**

The school nurtures positive self-esteem and self-discipline in our pupils. Our provision of an emotionally secure environment enables the children to progress in all aspects of their development. The Code of Behaviour engages staff, pupils and parents/guardians in the co-operative pursuit of our goals, yielding a caring community anchored in Christian values.

The specific aims of this policy are as follows:

* To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
* To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
* To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
* To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
* To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
* To assist parents/guardians and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
* Our Code aims to provide an ordered and orderly environment in the school in which the children feel secure, valued and important – a place where they can learn and develop.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

* The Code of Behaviour is approved and sanctioned by the Board of Management. The principal of the school ensures that the Code of Behaviour is maintained by the pupils.
* The deputy principal and staff will assist the principal with implementing and maintaining the Code.
* It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to support the school in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
* The Board of Management reserve the right to modify the Code of Behaviour at short notice in response to circumstances that were not anticipated when the Code was drafted.
* The Code has been modified to incorporate the Covid-19 School Response Plan and was approved by the Board of Management on . Should the need arise it will subsequently be updated in line with current DES/ HSE advice.

**Content and Procedures**

**Guidelines for behaviour in the school**

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the Code of Behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school”.

Accordingly Scoil Mhuire expects each pupil to:

* Be well behaved and to show consideration for other pupils and adults at school or when representing the school.
* Be respectful of school property and other property belonging to themselves or others.
* Be in attendance on a regular basis and to be punctual.
* Do his/her best both in school and for homework.

**Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour**

The elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

* An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony.
* A teamwork approach to behaviour.
* A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management.
* An inclusive and involved school community.
* A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy.

Examples of incentives used to promote positive behaviour are:

**Junior and Senior Infants**

Star Chart with stamps given to each group who display good sitting, tidy table etc.

**1st and 2nd Classes**

Tickets for good behaviour, working well etc. Tickets drawn out and child picks a prize from prize box.

**3rd and 4th Classes**

Tickets for weekly draw for good behaviour/work/Best Table.

**5th and 6th Classes**

Pupils can earn Tokens which can be exchanged for subject off/night off homework.

Behaviour Bingo is also played as an extra incentive.

**Code of Behaviour**

The Code of Behaviour covers the following areas:

* Behaviour in Class
* Behaviour in the Playground
* Behaviour in the School Environment and Behaviour on School Outings
* Attendance at School/Compliance with the Education Welfare Act
* Homework after School and Extracurricular Activities
* Procedures outlined in the Covid-19 School Response Plan must be followed at all times.

**Behaviour in Class**

* Courtesy and respect are essential. Disrespectful behaviour towards other pupils or towards any member of staff (e.g. defiance, cheek, insolence) are unacceptable. Pupils must respect their classmates’ rights to learn and any behaviour which jeopardises this (including constant disruption, persistent distraction of others) is unacceptable.
* In order that pupils benefit from their work in class, full co-operation is required at all times. Pupils must cooperate with instructions given by the teacher.
* Be ready for class.
* Good manners are expected at all times.
* Pupils who wish to speak, should raise their hands, wait for attention and listen to the person
* Pupils should ensure that they are safe in class, and if they have a problem they should bring it to the immediate attention of their teacher.
* Pupils must practise hand hygiene, cough etiquette and social distancing where applicable.

**Disruptive Behaviour**

* Disturbing of class by arriving late.
* Being without books and materials.
* Talking without permission.
* Making noises of any description.
* Disregarding instruction.
* Using foul language.
* It includes any other behaviour that hinders teaching and learning.
* Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Pupils are encouraged to report any incident of bullying.

**Academic Behaviour**

* The school recognises pupils have different abilities.
* Pupils must work to the best of their ability.
* Pupils must produce homework when required.
* If homework is not considered satisfactory by the teacher or is not presented. the pupil may be asked to complete the work in question during break time. Repeated failure to present homework may result in a penalty sheet being issued.

**Behaviour in the Playground**

* Pupils should treat others as they would like to be treated themselves.
* Any behaviour which endangers or offends others is not permitted.
* Rough behaviour e.g. fighting, kicking, spitting, pushing is forbidden.
* Games or activities considered to be dangerous shall be prohibited.
* Any behaviour which interferes with other pupils’ play is not permitted.
* Pupils may not leave the playground for any reason during breaks without permission of the supervising teacher, this includes re-entering the school building.

T**he Essential out of Class Rules are:**

* Stay within the boundaries in the yard in line with Covid-19 School Response Plan.
* Play safely and fairly.
* Keep the yard and school environment litter free and tidy.
* Line up quickly and quietly and return to your classroom in an orderly fashion.

**Behaviour in the School Environment and Behaviour on School Outings**

* Respect and courtesy to others is essential.
* Any kind of verbal or physical abuse of other pupils is unacceptable.
* Use of foul language among pupils is unacceptable.
* Bullying or intimidation of other pupils is prohibited and is always regarded as a serious offence.
* Pupils are encouraged to be respectful of each other on their way to and from school.
* When on school outings pupils are expected to behave in an orderly manner and show respect for public property.
* Pupils should always co-operate fully with their teachers and special needs assistants.

**Attendance**

* Full attendance each school day is required.
* Any absence requires a note of explanation either completed on Aladdin Connect or on a separate sheet signed by a parent/guardian.
* Notes for absenteeism must be given to the teacher on the day of return or completed on Aladdin Connect on the day of return.
* A student must receive permission from class teacher/principal to leave school during normal class hours. The reason for the absence must be written and signed by parent /guardian in homework journal/Aladdin connect.
* Parents/Guardians must sign out pupils who are collected early from school.
* Mitching is regarded as a serious breach of school discipline.
* When a pupil has been absent for 20 days the school is obliged to inform TUSLA.

**Punctuality**

* Students must be punctual at all times.
* Students arriving late for school must have a note of explanation.
* From September 2020, the school opens to receive pupils at 9.15 am and no responsibility can be taken for children arriving before this time. Class ends each day at 2.45/3.00 pm and the school does not accept responsibility for the children after 3.05 pm. Class ends each day for junior and senior infants at 1.55 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. respectively and all these children should go home at this time. For the first two weeks of Term 1 2020 the junior infants will go home at 12. pm.
* In the case of children travelling by bus, the school does not accept any responsibility for the children’s behaviour on the bus or for escorting them from the bus to the school or from the school to the bus.
* Pupils may not leave the school grounds until dismissal time i.e. 1.55 p.m. (junior classes), 2.45/3.00 p.m. (senior classes) except with written permission of their parents/guardians.
* All children must enter and leave, via the designated entrance and exit only, in line with the Covid-19 School Response Plan.

**Uniform**

* Complete school uniform must be worn at all times in school or when students are representing the school.
* Complete uniform is dark grey trousers/tracksuit bottoms/skirt, light blue polo-shirt and navy jumper.
* Students not wearing full school uniform must have an explanatory note.
* Track suit tops and hoodies are not allowed under any circumstances.
* Track suit bottoms/leggings with logos are not allowed under any circumstances.
* If a student is out of uniform without an adequate explanation the school will contact the home.
* Make-up is not permitted.

**Property**

* There should be no sharing of equipment in line with the Covid-19 School Response Plan.
* Mobile phones are not allowed in school. However if a child requires a mobile phone for use after school he/she will be asked to hand it up to the class teacher for safe keeping and it will be returned to them at 3 p.m.
* If children are found in possession of a mobile phone their parents/guardians will be informed and reminded of school policy. The mobile phone will remain in the school until a parent / guardian collects it.
* iPods and electronic games are not to be used in school.
* Children are expected to co-operate in keeping the school building, grounds litter free.
* Glass bottles and canned drinks are not allowed. Plastic containers are recommended.

**We have six Golden Rules in Scoil Mhuire**

**(which are prominently displayed in each classroom)**

* I will listen – I will not interrupt.
* I will work hard – I will not waste time.
* I will be kind – I will not hurt people’s feelings.
* I will respect property – I will not waste or damage things.
* I will be honest – I will not hide the truth
* I will be gentle – I will not hurt anyone.

**Strategies and Sanction**

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

1. Reasoning with the pupil
2. Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
3. Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
4. Loss of privileges
5. Detention during a break
6. Prescribing additional work
7. Referral to Principal Teacher
8. Communication with parents/guardians
9. Suspension (temporary)
10. Expulsion

**Sanctions in the Classroom (Examples)**

**Junior and Senior Infants**

Verbal Warning.

If a pupil is very disruptive in class he/she may be asked to sit at the Quiet Table or lose Golden Time.

**1st and 2nd Classes**

Tick on Board.

Name on Board.

Pupil asked to move from his /her table.

**3rd and 4th Classes**

Verbal Warning .Name on Board.

Extra Work/ or Penalty Sheet.

Note in Homework Diary*.*

Contact parents/guardians

**5th and 6th Classes**

Verbal Warning

Yellow Card.

Orange Card

Red Card.

**Playground Sanctions**

**Junior Infants - 6th Class.**

Misdemeanour recorded in Misdemeanour Book in the principal’s office.

If a pupil has 3 entries on his/her card the card will be sent home to inform parents/guardians and to be signed. Every pupil begins each term with a clean record.

**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.  Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For very serious unacceptable behaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. The parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case.

Where there are repeated instances of very serious unacceptable behaviour, 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 the principal.  If 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.  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 very serious unacceptable behaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils and staff, 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/guardians.

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.

**Appeals**

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents/guardians are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02).

**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 their own safety or that of others. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required, and will re-admit them formally to the class.

**Procedures in Respect to Expulsion**

1. Detail investigation by school principal
2. Recommendation by principal to BoM
3. BoM considers principal’s recommendation and holds hearing
4. BoM decision, is expulsion appropriate? If BOM recommends expulsion, the BOM will propose a date which will allow a 20-day cooling off period
5. Education Welfare Officer is informed of proposal to expel pupil and effective date of that proposal
6. Parents/Guardians of the pupil are informed of rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998
7. Education Welfare Officer arranges consultations
8. Confirmation of decision.

This procedure may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

**Grounds for Expulsion**

* Behaviour is persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
* Continued presence of pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
* Pupil responsible for serious damage to property.

**Automatic Expulsion**

The Board of Management may sanction automatic expulsion for certain prescribed behaviours:

1. Sexual Assault
2. Possession of illegal drugs
3. Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school
4. Actual violence or physical assault
5. Serious threat of violence against another pupil or staff.

**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 who will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given.   Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought, also, from support services within the wider community e.g. Community Care services provided by HSE. The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs 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/Guardians**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach when dealing with children. Parents/Guardians 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.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 stipulates that the school must be notified of all absences and an explanation must be given. Absences can be submitted through Aladdin Connect or by sending a note in with your child.  A doctor’s cert is obligatory for long absences due to illness. Absences in excess of 20 days are automatically referred to TUSLA as required by the Education Welfare Act 2000.

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/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:

* Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings
* End of year school reports
* Communication via Aladdin Connect
* Through children’s homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check bags for notes)
* Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
* Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
* TextaParent service via Aladdin Connect

**We promote a whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour in the following manner:**

**Staff**

**All staff participated in the review of our Code of Behaviour and have committed themselves to the following strategies:**

* The creation of a positive learning environment.
* Positive relationships with pupils and their parents/guardians.
* The promotion of positive behaviour through a variety of methods.
* Informing newly appointed teachers of our Code of Behaviour.
* Discussion of student behaviour at staff meetings where necessary.
* Appropriate work to be provided for pupils to promote a work ethos. Staff will adapt the curriculum to the needs of the pupil.
* SPHE and Religious Education curricula to be used to help promote positive behaviour. Programmes such as Walk Tall and Stay Safe are used to support the curriculum.
* Class teachers will discuss class rules with children at the beginning of each year and Class Charters to be drawn up and displayed in the classroom.
* Class Teachers will pass on information on individual needs of pupils to the next teacher.
* Teachers to support children with SEN in interpreting the Code.
* Staff will teach social skills using social stories e.g. Circle Time / Reactions to Conflict.
* Staff will report positive behaviour to parents /guardians.
* Staff will set up a buddy system in the yard for "at risk" pupils. (where necessary)

**Board of Management**

* The staff and parents'/guardians' representatives of our school worked together to review and update our policy.
* The staff and parents' /guardians' representatives presented their work to the B.O.M. The work was discussed and ratified.
* The B.O.M. support the Code of Behaviour and the staff with its implementation.
* The B.O.M. provide opportunities for the staff to obtain training to support the Code where necessary.
* The B.O.M. works with the staff and principal to deal with serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour.

**Parents /Guardians**

Parents’/guardians' representatives from B.O.M. took part in the Code of Behaviour review.

* Parents/Guardians are given a policy booklet containing school rules/Code of Behaviour at enrolment.
* Pupils will co-operate with the Code of Behaviour fully as parents/guardians and teachers work together to implement the code.
* Parents/Guardians sign a declaration on enrolment to co-operate with the school’s Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.
* Parents/Guardians ensure their children attend school regularly (as per the school calendar year) and punctually.
* Parents/Guardians encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
* Parents/Guardians are aware of and cooperate with the school’s rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
* Parents/Guardians attend lunchtime meetings at the school if requested and P/T Meetings also.
* Parents/Guardians help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
* Parents/Guardians ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.

**Pupils**

* Teachers work with children in discussing school rules and setting class rules/ class charter
* SPHE is used to teach the Code – Circle Time, Music and Drama.

**Reference to other Policies**

Our school Ethos and school policies that have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour include the following:

* SPHE plan
* Anti-bullying
* Enrolment
* Record keeping
* Health and Safety
* SEN Policy

**Success Criteria**

The success of this policy will be evaluated through the following:

* Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment.
* Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
* Positive feedback from teachers, SNA’s, parents/guardians and pupils.

**Roles and Responsibility**

The staff will coordinate and monitor the implementation of this policy and accept feedback from parents/guardians, pupils and BOM for future review.

**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.

**Ratification and Communication**

The BOM ratifies this policy as part of the School Policy Booklet every May.

**Review**

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and/or as the need arises.