



# SCOIL BARRA

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### *1.1 Introductory Statement*

This policy was prepared following a review process involving school staff, parents, the Board of Management and pupils of Scoil Barra during Terms 1 and 2 of the 2005-2006 school year. A representative delegated subcommittee of teachers, parents and Board of Management representatives formulated a draft Revised Code of Behaviour which was made available to all members of the school community for consideration and response. The final Revised Code was prepared by the subcommittee having regard to the feedback received and was then presented to the Board of Management for formal ratification on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2006. A further review of this policy was undertaken during term one and two of the 2009/2010 school year. The updated/reviewed policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. A further review of this policy was undertaken during Sept. / Oct. 2017. The updated/reviewed policy was ratified by the Board of Management at its meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2017.

### *1.2 Rationale*

**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).**

**A review of the Code of Behaviour was considered necessary in order to comply with the Guidelines issued by the NEWB.**

### *1.3 Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school*

Scoil Barra's Code of Behaviour is inextricably linked to its Vision and Mission Statements:

***VISION:** In Scoil Barra, we are committed to nurturing the full potential of all who work and learn in our school community ...in a positive, inclusive, safe and happy environment.*

***MISSION:***

*To create a pleasant and orderly environment in which children feel happy and secure, in which their self-esteem is fostered, in which children make progress at their school work and where the uniqueness of each child is recognised and valued.*

*To provide a general, balanced education dedicated to the development of the whole child so as to prepare him/her for the demands of further education and the rapidly changing society in which we live.*

#### ***1.4 Aims of the Code of Behaviour***

- To ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment.
- To facilitate the development of self-discipline, respect and tolerance for others.
- To provide for the efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline so that there exists an effective and stimulating learning environment.
- To ensure the maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.
- To encourage good home/school communication and to foster a positive atmosphere in the school.
- To promote a positive learning environment in which all children may fully enter into the life of the school.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents 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
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

## **2 CODE OF CONDUCT**

### ***2.1 General Guidelines***

Scoil Barra is a community consisting of pupils, teachers, support staff, parents and other visitors to the school. Each member of this community must be treated with respect and tolerance. The dignity and individuality of each member must be respected. The well-being of the school as a community is dependent on this and also on the level of care and co-operation among its members. The Code of Behaviour provides a framework to support this sense of community and wellbeing. Within it, school rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard to the health, welfare and safety of all members of the school community. In formulating the Code of Behaviour account was taken of the variety of differences that exist among children and of the need to accommodate these differences. Every effort is made to emphasise the positive over the negative in terms of encouraging, monitoring and evaluating pupils' behaviour.

The Code of Behaviour also provides a framework within which positive strategies/techniques of motivation, reward and encouragement are utilised. Many forms of positive reinforcement are used within the school including praise, encouragement, acknowledgement, reward/merit stickers/cards/stamps, prizes, etc. as teachers and other members of staff seek to 'catch the pupil being good'.

### ***2.2 Rules for Good Behaviour in School***

1. We will show kindness and respect to everyone in our school.
2. Behaviour which puts myself or another in danger is absolutely forbidden.
3. Bullying is absolutely forbidden in our school.
4. We are expected to show respect for our own property, the property of others and of the school.
5. We will not use foul language within the school grounds.
6. We will co-operate with instructions given by teachers/other staff members.
7. We are expected to neatly complete all homework/schoolwork to the best of our ability.
8. We should not leave the yard/school without permission.
9. We will not enter the school or school grounds after school hours without permission.
10. We will keep our school clean and litter free.
11. We will line up in an orderly manner at all times.
12. We will use the paths at all times and avoid walking on the grass.
13. We will walk at all times within the school building.
14. Chewing gum is not allowed within the school grounds.
15. We will not use mobile phones or electronic devices during the school day.
16. The distribution of Birthday Party Invitations on school grounds is not allowed.

### ***2.3 Guidelines for General Behaviour on the Yard***

- a) We will respect the rights of others to enjoy their break times and understand that Play Time is a privilege which may be withdrawn.
- b) We will observe the 'Three Whistles Rule': (First whistle: all pupils 'freeze'; Second Whistle: all pupils walk in an orderly fashion to their Line and, in pairs, to form straight lines; Third Whistle: Silence in the Line). Children should then walk from the Yard to their classroom in an orderly manner.
- c) We will obey the 'No Running Rule' and lining up procedure pre-9.00 a.m. and at such other times as may be decided by staff.
- d) We will avoid any dangerous/reckless play/activity which might put their health and safety or the health and safety of others in jeopardy.
- e) We will request permission from the teacher on duty to leave the Yard.
- f) We will adhere to the Rules/Procedures regarding 'Lunchtime Pals Programme', Yard Helpers, the use of the Sports Field, and the use of games/equipment on the Yard.
- g) Understand that records of unacceptable behaviour are kept in the Yard Books. If a child's name appears in the Yard Book three or more times in any month, a Note re. same is sent to parents/guardians for signing, to be returned for filing.
- h) Where a pupil repeatedly refuses to obey these general guidelines, he/she may be removed from the Yard.

### ***2.4 General School Rules for Good Order***

1. Pupils should arrive in good time for school. If late, a note of explanation from the parent/guardian is required.
2. No child may leave the school premises without the permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal. To leave the school, a letter, appointment card, telephone or personal call will be required before permission is granted. The child must be accompanied from the school by a responsible adult from the school.
3. Every absence of a child must be accounted for by means of a note of explanation from the parent/guardian to the school.
4. In the interest of orderly school management, all meetings between parents and teachers should be by means of prior appointment.
5. Pupils should be neatly dressed in full school uniform/school tracksuit at all times in accordance with school uniform policy.
6. Pupils will have in school each day the books, copies and other materials necessary to do their work properly. Pupils will take proper care of these items.
7. The school is not responsible for personal belongings left behind by pupils.

## **2.5 Acknowledging Good Behaviour**

Good behaviour is acknowledged in a variety of ways, which may include the following:

- Leabhar Órga
- Praise and Encouragement
- Token Rewards (Token awards are dispensed at the teachers discretion)
- Discipline for Learning Merit Sticker system
- Acknowledgement at assembly
- SALT Programme (Stop, Ask, Listen, Talk)

## **2.6 Guidelines for dealing with inappropriate behaviour:**

Inappropriate behaviour can range from misdemeanour to gross misbehaviour and is judged having regard to the pupil's age, temperament, range of ability and other relevant factors. When imposing a sanction the teacher will make it clear to the child that it is the inappropriate behaviour which is unacceptable and not the individual concerned.

The level of sanction to be imposed will be appropriate to the misbehaviour. As a general rule, a whole class is not punished because of one child's/small group's unacceptable behaviour except in exceptional cases. Inappropriate behaviour at break time is generally dealt with by the teacher on supervision duty on the Yard in accordance with Yard Sanctions (see 2.5.2.1). As a general rule, inappropriate behaviour in the classroom is sanctioned by the class teacher within the classroom using sanctions in 2.5.2, whereas inappropriate behaviour on the Yard is generally dealt with 'on the Yard' by the teacher on supervision duty.

### **2.6.1 Strategies to Affirm and Promote Good Behaviour**

The following strategies may be availed of by a teacher in order to bring about an improvement in a child's behaviour:

1. Discussion with the class regarding the need for appropriate behaviour.
2. Collaborative development of a set of Classroom Golden Rules.
3. Discussion with an individual pupil in order to ensure that the pupil understands why the behaviour is unacceptable.
4. The seating arrangement in the classroom may be changed.
5. Daily/weekly journal to inform parents/guardians of pupil's behaviour, both positive and negative.
6. A Behaviour Contract (agreed to and signed by the pupil, teacher, parents/guardians and Principal) may be formulated for a particular pupil with the aim of positively assessing the pupil's behaviour on an on-going basis. Particular targets are set, acknowledgement and reward for achievement are built into the process.
7. It may be desirable/necessary in some cases to refer a pupil for medical/educational psychological/psychiatric assessment with a view to further addressing the issues around a pupil's behavior. Referral to Child Protection Agencies may also be considered necessary to assist in the regulation of a pupil's behavior.

## 2.6.2 Sanctions

When a pupil displays inappropriate behaviour the following is a list of possible sanctions which may be used at the teacher's discretion:

1. Discussion/Reasoning with the pupil: the pupil is made aware that the behaviour is unacceptable.
2. The child may receive a verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
3. A child may be temporarily separated from the class group, peers, friends or others, and may be sent to another classroom or to the Principal/Deputy Principal's Office for a period of time (but will not be put standing unsupervised outside a classroom door).
4. A note in the pupil's Homework Journal to be signed by parents/guardians.
5. Loss of privilege, to include loss of playtime if the indiscretion occurs in the yard.
6. A pupil may be given a Reflection Sheet/Lines Sheet or written assignment regarding his/her inappropriate behaviour to be signed by parents/guardians and filed.
7. Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal.
8. Call a meeting with Parents.
9. Formal report to the Board of Management.
10. Suspension (see Section 3.1)
11. Expulsion (see Section 3.2)

## 2.6.3 YARD SANCTIONS

### Sanctions that may be imposed

- Discussion with pupil
- Verbal reprimand
- Withdrawal of Break Privileges: Small break or big break (recorded in yard book)
- Withdrawal of Break Privileges: Both breaks (recorded in yard book)
- Reflection Sheet/Lines Sheet: to be completed.
- Referral to the Deputy Principal/Principal
- 3 reprimands (recorded in the yard book): note to parents

### Rule Breaks:

#### Minor:

Running on grass, sitting on fence/gate, litter, running within building, talking in line (3<sup>rd</sup> whistle), delaying lining up (2<sup>nd</sup> whistle), not stopping on 1<sup>st</sup> whistle, using incorrect exit/entry door.

*Sanction: Stand out next break.*

**More Serious:**

Leaving the yard without permission. Damage to property.

*Sanction: Stand out 2 breaks +office +lines*

**Unacceptable Behaviour:**

**Rough Play:**

Pushing, pulling, tripping, fighting, and catching a pupil around the head, kicking.

*Sanction: Stand out 2 breaks +office +lines*

**Other Inappropriate / Unacceptable Behaviour**

Inappropriate language/gestures, inappropriate/banned objects brought on to yard (including chewing gum, mobile phones), spitting, mocking, goading, bullying, disrespect for teachers/other adults.

*Sanction: Stand out 2 breaks +office +lines*

***The list of rule breaks and unacceptable behaviours above is not an exhaustive one.***

#### **2.6.4 General Procedure to be followed when a behaviour problem arises**

1. The class teacher/teacher in charge deals with it and may impose a sanction. If a parent/guardian wishes to make a complaint regarding a child's behaviour, it is expected that such a complaint would in the first instance be addressed with that child's class teacher and/or with the class teacher of their own child.
2. If the problem is not solved/resolved the class teacher/teacher in charge shall consult with other teachers, and/or the Principal and/or the parents/guardians of the pupil(s) with a view to helping the pupil(s) overcome the difficulty.
3. If the problem persists or in the case of serious misbehaviour as outlined above it may be necessary to have on-going discussions between the parents/guardians, teacher(s) and Principal/Board of Management to monitor the situation and to deal appropriately with it, always with the objective of helping the child.
4. In the case of an incidence of gross misbehaviour or 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 Principal. The Board of Management authorises the Chairperson or Principal to suspend the child for a period of time up to a maximum of 3 school days initially if such is deemed appropriate.
5. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of suspension up to a maximum of 10 school days. Parents/guardians may meet/may be required to meet with representatives of the Board of Management to discuss the matters relating to the child's misbehaviour prior to the authorisation of this second period of suspension. In exceptional situations, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of suspension in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.
6. The ultimate sanction of expulsion shall be exercised in accordance with relevant guidelines and current legislation.

#### **2.6.5 Serious Misbehaviour**

Instances of serious misbehaviour will be recorded and filed and may involve contact with the child's parents. Repeated instances of serious misbehaviour and individual instances of gross misbehaviour will be recorded, filed and discussed with the parents of the child, and may result in referral to the Board of Management who will deal with the situation in accordance with the Rules for National Schools, The Education Act 1998, and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. The issue of suspension and/or expulsion may arise. Recompense is expected to be made by pupil/parent/guardian for damage, loss or theft of property.

### **3 SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY**

In accordance with the Department of Education and Science guidelines and current legislation, the following general guidelines and procedures shall apply when a child is being considered for suspension/expulsion or is to be suspended/expelled from the school:

#### ***3.1 Suspension***

At the earliest possible time, the parents/guardians shall be informed of the difficulties regarding their child's behaviour, the nature of the misbehaviour, and the sanctions being considered/to be imposed on the child. If necessary a meeting shall be arranged with the parents/guardians and the teacher(s), Principal and/or member(s)/Chairperson of the Board of Management. If suspension is to be immediate (e.g. in the interest of health and safety) parents/guardians may be informed by phone, with written notification later.

The following guidelines shall apply in all cases involving suspension:

- The suspension shall be in accordance with the terms of Scoil Barra's Code of Behaviour, a copy of which is made available to all parents/guardians at the time of the child's enrolment in the school, or thereafter if the Code is revised.
- Notification of suspension shall be given in writing by the Principal and/or the Chairperson BOM to the parents/guardians, to include notice of the suspension and the reasons for same, effective date of the suspension, duration of the suspension, expectations of the pupil while on suspension (if appropriate), importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter, statement that the pupil is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians while on suspension, and, *if appropriate*, details of the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer, information on Appeal rights, and requirements which need to be in place when student returns (e.g. written apology, written assignments, written commitment to improved behaviour, etc.). If consideration is being given to proceeding to expulsion, then the letter shall also make this clear. The period of suspension may operate and extend until the next Board of Management Meeting (which shall be held at the earliest possible date) if/where the expulsion of the pupil may be considered.
- Where the cumulative duration of suspension exceeds 19 days in the school year, then the parents/guardians shall be informed of their right to appeal under current legislation. The parents shall also be informed of the name and contact details of the Education Welfare Officer assigned to the school, who may assist the parents/guardians in the formulation of the appeal.
- If a student is suspended from Scoil Barra for a period greater than 5 days, then the Principal shall inform, by notice in writing, the Educational Welfare Officer.

#### **3.1.1 Grounds for removing a suspension**

The grounds for removing a suspension are as follows:

- 1. The Principal/Board of Management agree that another sanction be applied after discussion with parents.*
- 2. Successful appeal to the Board of Management.*
- 3. Successful appeal under appropriate legislation, currently Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.*
- 4. New circumstances/information comes to light.*

5. *Such other grounds as the Principal and/or the Board of Management deem appropriate having regard to their responsibilities to the whole school community and to the Principles of Natural Justice.*

### **3.2 Expulsion**

If the possibility of expulsion is going to arise it shall be considered within the context of Scoil Barra's Code of Behaviour, a copy of which is made available to all parents/guardians at the time of the child's enrolment in the school, or if the Code is revised.

1. At the earliest possible time, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be informed in writing of the concerns around their child's behaviour, the nature of the misbehaviour, the case against their child, and the sanctions being considered.
2. Parents/Guardians shall be invited to attend a Meeting with the Board of Management and shall be given reasonable advance written notice of the Meeting.
3. The parents/guardians may make a written and/or verbal submission to the Board of Management Meeting.
4. The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given the option of having another person of their choice to attend with them at the meeting (not the Education Welfare Officer or Legal Counsel).
5. The Board of Management shall not consider the possibility of expulsion before hearing the parents'/guardians' case for the pupil's retention in Scoil Barra.
6. If the Board decides to expel the pupil, the parents/guardians shall be so informed in writing of this decision, the reasons for the pupil's expulsion, and of the parents'/guardians' right to appeal. (Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians).
7. Where the Board of Management has decided that a student should be expelled from Scoil Barra it shall, before expelling the student, notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of the reasons for its decision.
8. The pupil shall not be expelled before the passing of 20 school days following notification to an Education Welfare Officer of the Board's decision.
9. The Board of Management shall take such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school and that the safety of students is secured' during this 20 'school days' period.
10. The Board of Management shall facilitate the work of the Education Welfare Officer at all stages of the above process.
11. The Board of Management shall only authorise the removal of the pupil's name from the school register when the pupil has been registered in another school/education facility.

## **4. ANTI-BULLYING and CYBER-BULLYING POLICIES:**

*See separate Anti-bullying and Cyber-bullying Policies which should be read and understood in the context of this Code of Behaviour.*

## **5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION**

### ***5.1 Roles and Responsibility***

- Each teacher has primary responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order and behaviour within the school premises and grounds.
- If inappropriate behaviour occurs at break times or at any other time when another teacher is in charge, the teacher on supervision duty/in charge shall deal with it and may impose a sanction and inform the class teacher of same.
- The Principal has overall responsibility in relation to maintenance of discipline within the school and encourages the involvement of all members of the school community in the implementation of Scoil Barra's Code of Behaviour. It is understood that the class teachers/teachers in charge will address and deal with the day-to-day behaviour issues and will only involve the Principal when the behaviour problem is serious and/or on-going.
- The active involvement of pupils and parents in promoting good behaviour and in implementing the Code of Behaviour is required within the school. In particular, parents are encouraged to support the actions taken by the school.
- The Board of Management delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the Code of Behaviour to the Principal and the teachers of the school. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility for the development and maintenance of a positive learning environment within the school so that all pupils may fully enter into the life of the school. The Board of Management (or some members thereof as appropriate) may be directly involved in the investigation and adjudication of particularly serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour as outlined above.

### ***5.2 Pupil Registration and the Code of Behaviour***

It shall be a condition of the registration of a pupil in Scoil Barra, from the date of formal ratification of this Code of Behaviour by the Board of Management, that all parents/guardians seeking to have a child enrolled in Scoil Barra shall confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided 'is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child'. Failure to do so may result in refusal to enrol the child in Scoil Barra.

### ***5.3 Ratification & Communication***

The Board of Management officially ratified this Code of Behaviour at its meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. 2017.

The Code was circulated to all staff members and made available to parents.

This Code of Behaviour shall be included in the Booklet 'School Guidelines' presented to parents of all newly registered pupils in Scoil Barra.

**5.4 Implementation Date**

Implementation of this Code of Behaviour shall commence with effect from the 24th Oct. 2017.

**5.5 Timetable for Review**

It is the intention of the Board of Management to review the Code of Behaviour from time to time. In this regard feedback from all members of the school community is encouraged.

**Signed:**

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**Paddy Staunton (Chairperson, BOM)**  
2017.

**Dated:** 23rd Oct.