



# Code of General Behaviour

Updated in February 2023

## INTRODUCTION

Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, Mercy education is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, including those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy education is committed to on-going whole-school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, staff, parents and the wider community. We, in Moyderwell Mercy Primary embrace this philosophy of Mercy Education as the ethos of our school.

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School has prepared and made available a Code of General Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

**The Code of General Behaviour of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School** has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

The Code of General Behaviour details:

Part 1:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil

Part 2: The school's Updated Anti-Bullying Policy (January 2017) in line with the DES *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools Sept 2013 (Circular 45/13)*

Part 3: The School's Attendance Policy (Updated in Jan 2017)

Part 4: Supervision of Children (Updated in January 2017)

Part 5: School Tours / Excursions (Updated in January 2017)

Part 6: Code of behaviour Ratification by Board of Management and Patron (February 2017)

## **POLICY FORMULATION**

In formulating this policy, the Board of Management completed the following steps:

- i. Staff worked in collaborative groups to evaluate the current Code of Behaviour (18/10/22 & 06/12/22) and suggest edits.
- ii. All feedback was considered and new Code of Behaviour drafted by Principal
- iii. Draft Code of Behaviour considered by ISM (24/01/23)
- iv. Parents and Staff were informed (19/4/23) that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available to view online and all were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- v. A specially convened meeting of the Student Council was held to seek pupil feedback.
- vi. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.

## **AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE**

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress happily, effectively and safely in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour, self respect, self-discipline and responsibility in 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 built on a relationship of trust, as outlined in this General Code of Behaviour ( January 2017), the Anti-Bullying Policy ( January 2017) and the Children First Child Protection Act (2011).
- To assist school staff, 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 a consistent, supportive team approach
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school fostering an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported

## WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by the principal, teachers, pupils, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

## STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

### Pupils

#### *General Behaviour*

Each pupil is expected to:

- Be well behaved and to show consideration and courtesy for other children and adults, as is the practice of all adults who work with the pupils of our school.
- Show respect for the property of the school and other children and their own belongings
- Be prepared to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict – “Kind hands; Kind words; Kind feet”
- Do their best both in school and for homework.
- Show willingness to keep the school rules
- Wear the *full school uniform* in line with our Uniform Policy.
- Only use mobile phone devices in exceptional circumstances with permission of the staff member in charge at the time. All mobile phones should be turned off and placed in school bag. **The school takes no responsibility for theft or loss.** The phone is confiscated and kept with the Principal or Deputy Principal until an appointment is made by parent/guardian to collect, if used in school buildings or school yards without permission.
- As stated in the School Policy for School Tours/Excursions (January 2017), the above statement is policy, even on daily school outings, *except for* overnight excursions i.e. The RDS Primary Science Fair in Dublin, where limited access to personal mobile devices is allowed in consultation with Adult Group Leader. Where appropriate photographs are taken, these may only be shared privately with the people in the photograph after the excursion, if one so wishes. All downloads (music, videos, games) must be age-appropriate, and is the responsibility of the parent to oversee, before the outing takes place).

#### **Classroom Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking

- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the adults, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

## **Playground Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

- play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous...no 'play-fighting/ no headlocking'.
- follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- remain – on school grounds in the appointed yard at all times
- obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods and for toilets
- respect – the yard supervisor and fellow pupils
- avoid – swearing/bad-language/play-fighting.
- never make any derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, family, physical condition, sexuality, inability, disability, or ethnic origin.
- Not engage in physical/verbal arguments
- Use the Stay Safe Procedure (Look at person's eyes / firmly say: "Stop....."- walk away – Get help from trusting adult, if own assertive intervention has not worked)
- Remember the motto 'Kind Hands ....Kind Feet.... Kind Words... Kind Gestures'.

Supervising staff use restorative questioning when helping to resolve conflict

- What happened?
- What have you been thinking since it happened?
- Who could have been affected by what you did and how?
- What could you have done differently?
- What needs to happen now to make things right?

## **Behaviour in other School Areas e.g. halla, gym**

Each pupil is expected to:

- Walk - calmly
- Move - sensibly
- Show respect for themselves and others
- Use P.E Equipment with teacher supervision/permission only.
- Be aware of the importance of returning equipment in an orderly fashion ready for the next class/class-teacher's use.

## **Behaviour during School Outings/After-School Activities**

Each pupil is expected to:

- Follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times

- Remain – with the teacher/instructor/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- Behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- Observe – the rules of general good behaviour set out by the school
- Represent – our school and its high reputation
- Follow the school rule with relation to possession /use of mobile-phone and/or other personal technological communication objects (See General Behaviour Above).

### Staff Action

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. All adults model the behaviour that is expected of our students. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school as part of a consistent, supportive, positive team approach.

To this end, Moyderwell Mercy Primary School promote a SMART target per month that is outlined at assembly and implemented by staff and communicated to parents.



Teacher discretion is used to reward the class for making a good effort through the month and a clear ladder of sanction is implemented by staff to address those who are not adhering to the target. Each incident of non-compliance moves a child onto the next level.

Level 1 - Class teacher records non-adherence to the target

Level 2 - Visit to the deputy principal to discuss

Level 3 - Visit to the principal to discuss further

Level 4 - Communication between principal and parent(s)/guardian(s)

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. A positive strategy is employed

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of each term

- Ensure class rules are displayed in the classroom.
- Encourage self-respect, self-discipline, responsibility and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- The Class teacher will implement the class specific reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a **written record** of worrying incidents of misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition. The record will detail interventions used, contact with parents, and evidence of improved behaviour, sanctions imposed and reasons. Teachers are encouraged to use a Student Profile Folder/Ring-Folder for their use only. This includes a page per child in their class.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- **Report repeated instances** of serious misbehaviour to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

### **Support Systems:**

Individual class teachers may need support from colleagues from time to time to encourage positive behaviour: It is advised that class-teachers use the support of the parallel class teacher or a teacher within their year group ...Junior/Senior Infants; First/Second;, Third/Fourth; Fifth/Sixth.

### **Records**

Record Forms (Class Teacher's Behaviour Management Folder, Computerized and Passworded Behaviour System on the Shared Drive, Principal's computerized notes) are used to track an individual pupil's behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- Interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed.

Appendix 1 of the *Anti-Bullying Policy January 2017*, must be used by class-teachers, in investigating allegations of Bullying Behaviour. This can be used as a running record, acted upon as recommended above, and submitted to the Principal or Deputy Principal, after investigation/intervention. The *DES Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools Sept 2013* suggests the time frame for reporting/submitting to the Principal or Deputy Principal is 20 days, but we in Moyderwell work closely with the Principal or Deputy Principal in resolving serious relational conflicts, through immediate support and education.

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003...as outlined in Mercy Moyderwell Data Protection Policy.

### **Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special educational needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. This is particularly true of children in all special classes in the school. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place as required in consultation with parents. The class teacher, special needs assistant, SEN teacher, and/or Principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Language suitable to the child's cognitive development is required in all incidences. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be considered.

Classmates 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.

Professional judgement of teachers and S.N.A.s is always required in dealing with children with SEN. In line with the Mercy ethos, it is important to always maintain the dignity of the child.

### **Parents/Guardians Action**

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for punctuality and regular attendance, ensuring school uniform (without fashion accessories) is worn and by also ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Parents/Guardians are asked to comply with the Parental Guidelines on Behaviour (below). Modelling behaviour expected of the children in our school is advantageous. Should Parent(s)/Guardian(s) be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to **make an appointment** to discuss their concerns initially with the class teacher, principal or home-school community liaison officer. Some parents may need insight into factors that affect a student's behaviour in class and in school. Home values and parental attitudes can help or hinder a student's behaviour and learning in school. In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour, parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process. Reference to behaviour will be made at the formal Parent/Teacher meeting and in the end of year report.

### **Parental Guidelines on Behaviour**

- Be aware that there is supervision in the yard from 8.45 a.m. to 9 a.m. daily. Children are not allowed inside the school gates before this time.
- Parents are not permitted onto school grounds without prior appointment/arrangement. Children are received by staff members and accompanied by staff to class as/if required each morning.
- As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents may not approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.
- Classes begin at 9 a.m. and finish at 2.40 p. m. (1.40p.m. Infants).
- Ensure your child is wearing the correct school uniform. Please consult the school uniform policy.
- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials.
- Observe the 'Healthy Eating Policy' of our school.
- Do not expect an immediate meeting with the teachers/principal. Request a meeting through the school office or by email.
- Account for the absence of your child by communicating with the class teacher by email (from Sept 2023 via the Aladdin App). Remember that absences of more than 20 school days (Explained and Unexplained) must be reported to the Education Welfare Officer.
- Provide a written note/email if your child requires a mobile phone before/after school. (all phones must be switched off before entering the school grounds each day)
- If you need to collect your child during the school day, please call to the office. The sign-out book must be used.
- Collect your child at home-time from the gate of the assigned school yard.
- Respect school property and encourage your children to do the same.
- Supervise younger children on school premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school.
- Family pets/dogs are not allowed onto school premises (even on a lead).

## PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Part of the vision of Moyderwell Mercy is to help children achieve their personal best - academically, intellectually and socially. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements.

As a general rule, adults in school endeavour to create a **consistent environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward**. The "*Incredible Years Programme*" which is a holistic approach to early intervention, promoting children's social and emotional competence, is an integral part of the Code of Behaviour of this school. This positive and systemic approach involves 3 strands: home, school and the child. From November 2009 – March 2012 all teachers and SNAs took part in the Incredible Years Training Programme facilitated by NEPS Psychologists. Retraining took place for all staff in 2016-2017 and staff have applied for further retraining in 2023/2024.



Some teachers have been trained in 'Zippy Friends', 'Fun Friends' and the 'Friends for Life' Programmes. All teachers enforce positive development through the SPHE Programmes, which incorporates the Stay Safe and RSE Programmes.

School staff use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive Behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor Behaviour so that not only good Behaviour but also improvement in Behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive Behaviour will be used by each teacher. Rules are phrased in a positive manner in line with our Incredible Years training and rewards are earned. Examples include;

- 'Congratulations', 'Good News', 'Happy-Gram' notes sent to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Personalised letters to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Special privileges e.g. stickers, merit marks, computer passes, golden time, whole class park outing, homework voucher
- Delegating a special responsibility or privilege
- Class Dojo Reward points (always positive, points are never deducted)

Class teachers will use their discretion to choose the system that best suits their context

**Assemblies** give priority to promoting and affirming good behaviour, setting high expectations and fostering trust between teachers and students. Assemblies with the Principal are held on the 1st Monday of every Month. Items from the Code of Behaviour are included for mention as "reminders" at these assemblies and the SMART target for the month is clearly communicated. An assembly template is filled out by each teacher so that the principal can reinforce positive behaviour and celebrate achievements.

To promote positive behaviour, explicit class lessons are taught in SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) and RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education). Children learn to understand themselves, others and their reciprocal relationship. Empathy is the key to positive behaviour.

## INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response, the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed when a student interrupts, diminishes or prevents the teaching and learning or orderly harmony of our school.

### Level One

Level 1 behaviours are those that **interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas**. Students learn through their mistakes. Responses to these occasional minor behaviours will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive and will be attended to routinely and effectively through the classroom management strategies of teachers. Children will be clearly and repeatedly taught by the class teacher what behaviour is expected in the class (WILF - What I'm Looking For).

Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers, without an acceptable written excuse from parents
- On time for school but late for class
- Running in the hallways and not moving sensibly
- Disturbing the work in the classroom
- Disturbing the 'play' of others in class or yard
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner to another child or staff member.
- Ignoring/challenging staff requests
- Not lining up quietly when instructed to
- Littering
- One-Off/incidental name-calling
- Incidental provocation of others
- Being out of bounds e.g. in a different yard from the prescribed yard or out of classroom without permission during indoor 'wet' break times
- Leaving their class/yard/gym without permission from the adult in charge.

### Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. **Teachers will discipline students at level 1, taking into account the mitigating circumstances/developmental stage the child is at.** Examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Proximal praise - catch another child being good
- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)

- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- “Cooling Off and Thinking Time” (C.O.T.) including being sent to another parallel classroom
- Temporary separation from peers within the class
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact via email/Aladdin App
- Prescribing additional work
- Behaviour contract
- Bullying Behaviours are recorded using Appendix 1 of the *Anti-Bullying Policy 2014* and policy procedures are followed

Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment

Sanctions at level 1 should be used in a respectful way that helps students understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour.

They should:

- Defuse and not escalate a situation
- Preserve the dignity of all parties
- Be applied in a fair and consistent way
- Be timely
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

## **Level 1 Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Open Circle or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes, in the class-teacher’s Student Profile Folder/Ring Folder, regarding incident/intervention/date. This information is useful should a problem persist.

## Level Two

Level 2 behaviours are those that **seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well-being of the students and staff**. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Non-compliance with Level 1 Behaviour Contract
- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention e.g. persistent class disruption; persistent disobedience; persistent disregard, persistent misbehaviour in the toilet area.
- Physical aggression(e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting, kicking, head-locking, choking)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Verbal aggression
  - Use of profanity or offensive inappropriate language
  - Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, family, inability, disability, or ethnic origin
  - Disrespectful language, tone, manner or behaviour toward a staff member (during or after school hours, on or off-site)
- Threatening "Bullying" type behaviour
- Bribery / Cheating
- Minor theft, fraud, dishonesty.
- Breaches of the school's AUP.
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Use of mobile phone and/or other personal technological communication objects inside the school gate and/or ignoring policy on Mobile Devices during Away Trips/Excursions and Overnight Trips.

## Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. **The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Deputy Principal and/or Principal**, and include the notification of parents. Examples of Level 2 responses are:

- Recording of these behaviours in Office Discipline Book and/or computerized system.
- Parent contact via personal letter/ phone-call
- In school supervised detention administered by Deputy Principal or Principal which is appropriate and proportionate
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Immediate Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the Behaviour. (exclusion of a student for part of the school day, or asking a parent to keep a child from school as a sanction **is** considered a suspension and will follow the guidelines relating to suspension).
- Implementation of extensive Behaviour management plan

- Bullying Behaviours are recorded using Appendix 1 of the *Anti-Bullying Policy 2014* and policy procedures are followed
- Board of Management informed of all bullying incidents being investigated at next meeting.

## **Level 2: Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Meeting with Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to discuss how best to support the child to improve their behaviour.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive Community Services (HSE), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

## **Level Three**

Level 3 behaviours are considered **the most serious violations of an intentional nature. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school.** They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention e.g. persistent bullying behaviour (silent or physical) inside or outside the school premises which involves the pupils in our care
- Gross deliberate damage
- Assault on an adult or pupil
- Possession or use of weapons, as well as dangerous objects which may cause harm- such will be confiscated and dumped
- Violent /out of control fighting causing physical harm to others.
- Gross disrespect e.g. discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, sexuality, physical condition, family, disability, inability or ethnic origin (See *Anti-Bullying Policy* with regard to public cyber usage).
- Theft, fraud, dishonesty at a grossly serious level.

### **Level 3: Disciplinary Actions**

Behaviour at Level 3 **involves suspension from school**. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour (A child who has been suspended previously may incur a longer suspension upon reoffending). Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**  
This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.
- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**  
This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.
- **Expulsion:**  
Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

### **Level 3: Supportive Interventions**

Listed below are some examples of Level 3 supportive actions:

Upon return to school:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Meeting with Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to discuss how best to support the child to improve their behaviour.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Health Service Executive Community Services (HSE), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), National Council for Special Education (NCSE), Kerry Diocesan Youth Service (KDYS), Garda Youth Diversion Programme, School Completion Programme (SCP).
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment or Art Therapy (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).
- The possible use of a 'Retracking Programme' with a SET ('Retracking' by Jenny Bates... a photocopyable resource stored in the Deputy Principal's Room. A 'Social Skills' Programme such as 'Social Skills Training' by Jed Baker, also stored in the Deputy Principal's Room. Education Desty©, facilitated by a Staff-Mentor, may also be considered a suitable recalibration tool.
- Family Support through H.S.C.L. teacher.

## PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

### Suspension

**Definition of Suspension:** *Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days* - Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Automatic: No choice

Immediate: Investigation and decision as a result

#### Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' or 'Automatic Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. These suspensions may be for a period of **one to three school days** depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

#### Automatic Suspension:

The Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension'. An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension **imposed for named behaviours in the code of Behaviour Policy**. The Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Gross deliberate damage
- Assault on an adult or pupil
- Possession or use of weapons or use of dangerous objects to cause harm
- Violent /out of control fighting or causing physical harm to others.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of **one to three school days** depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

#### Immediate Suspension

*"Immediate suspension can provide respite for the staff and student, give the student time to reflect on the link between the act and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping students change unacceptable behaviour"* (NEWB 2008)

Prior attention will be given to the possible exacerbation of any educational vulnerability or alienation of the student.

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that **the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school.** An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension up to three days by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will be issued in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- Any study programme to be followed (if deemed appropriate)
- The arrangements for returning to school,

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting with the principal to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct

The Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

#### **Procedures in Respect of Longer Suspensions:**

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;



Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant a longer suspension than 5 days, the Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/Guardian(s);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision.

The letter will confirm:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed (if appropriate)
- the arrangements for returning to school.
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

## Suspension Types

<p>Automatic 1-5 days</p> <p>Sanctioned by principal</p> <p>Approval of Chairperson of BOM required for 4-5 days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gross deliberate damage</li> <li>● Assault on an adult or pupil</li> <li>● Possession or use of weapons or use of dangerous objects to cause harm</li> <li>● Violent/out of control fighting or causing physical harm to others.</li> </ul>
<p>Immediate 1-5 days</p> <p>Sanctioned by principal</p> <p>Approval of Chairperson of BOM required for 4-5 days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Repeated or serious instances of Level 2/3 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention e.g. persistent bullying behaviour (silent/physical/cyber) inside or outside the school premises which impacts the pupil while in our care</li> <li>● Gross disrespect e.g. discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, sexuality, physical condition, family, disability, inability or ethnic origin (See <i>Anti-Bullying Policy</i> with regard to public cyber usage).</li> <li>● Theft, fraud, dishonesty at a grossly serious level.</li> </ul>
<p>Longer suspension</p> <p>Sanctioned by BOM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Where a preliminary assessment of the facts by school staff (including the principal) confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant a longer suspension than 5 days, the Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.</li> </ul>

## **Expulsion**

### **Definition of Expulsion:**

*'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'*

Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

### **Authority to Expel:**

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

### **Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
  - iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond
- b) The Principal (or BOM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
  - ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
  - iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
  - ii. the principal (or BOM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
  - iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
  - iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose
- d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer

- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now precede. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

## Template for Recording Alleged Bullying Behaviour

**1. Name of pupil allegedly being bullied and class group**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in alleged bullying behaviour**


**3. Source of alleged bullying concern/report**

Pupil Concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

**4. Location of Incidents Reported**

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Halla/Gym	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

(tick relevant box(es))

**5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern**

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**6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \***

Physical Aggression	
Damage to Property	
Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion	
Malicious Gossip	

Name Calling	
Other (specify)	

7. Where behaviour is regarded as **identity-based bullying**, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of alleged **Bullying Behaviour and its Impact**

9. Details of **Actions Taken**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

## **POLICY APPROVAL/RATIFICATION**

This Reviewed Code of General Behaviour was ratified by Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary School at its meeting held on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

The contents of this policy have been approved since 2012 by St. Senan's Education Office, acting on behalf of the Patron.

Reviewed in February 2023

