

Gaelscoil na Laochra



Cód Iompair Code of Behaviour

(The Irish Language translation follows the English version)

Introductory Statement:

A Code of Behaviour committee met in December 2018 and January 2019 to develop this code. The policy was formulated in accordance with NEWB guidelines, *Developing a Code of Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools*, which encompasses all relevant legal legislation and legal instruments.

A review of this policy took place from March - May 2024 by the Board of Management, The Parent's Association and the pupils of Gaelscoil na Laochra.

Rationale:

It was deemed necessary to review our Code of Behaviour because:

1. We wish to ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school
2. To ensure that the existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practices as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.
3. That there will be an agreed approach by all members of the school community when encouraging good behaviour and discouraging bad behaviour
4. It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23(1) which refers to the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school.

Our School:

The mission statement of the school is as follows:

“Doras Feasa Fiafraí”

Our school is a place where children are encouraged to grow and to develop in a supportive, positive and enjoyable atmosphere. Our core aims are to provide a broad and comprehensive education, to recognise the needs and to develop the talents of each pupil.

We strive to live up to god values and to show genuine concern tor one another. We appreciate individuality and difference. We are committed to building a community, which respects the rights and uniqueness of each other.

Through this policy, we aspire to create a situation/environment whereby we can fulfil our vision as laid out above.

Aims and Principles:

The Aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

- To promote the safety and happiness of all children in the school
- To allow for the smooth and harmonious running of the school
- To promote self-discipline among the children attending the school
- To enhance the learning environment of the school by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community
- To increase the co-operation between home and school
- To outline a structure of fair and agreed sanctions that will be available to teachers in response to negative behaviour.
- To focus on the promotion of good behaviour
- To ensure that Gaeilge will be the language that is used in the school and that pupils and teachers and other members of the school community strive to do their best in ensuring this.
- This policy will be implemented taking the abilities of all pupils into account.

Standards of Behaviour in our School:

Pupils

Fellow students of Gaelscoil na Laochra expect that you will:

- Be kind and respect their differing personalities
- Not bully them
- Show acceptance
- Never insult or belittle them because of differences
- Respect their property
- Listen to them and acknowledge them
- Allow them to be part of the group
- Speak to them with courtesy and respect/speak as Gaeilge

Pupils of Gaelscoil na Laochra expect that their school will be:

- Safe
- Happy
- Suited to their learning style
- Encouraging and supportive
- Affirming of children of all abilities
- Able to deal with bullying and supportive of victims

Parents of Gaelscoil na Laochra expect that there will be:

- A safe and happy environment for their child
- Recognition and provision for the individual differences of pupils
- Support for children who need it
- Fairness and consistency in the way children are dealt with
- No labelling of their child
- An atmosphere of support and inclusion rather than criticism
- A willingness to listen to their viewpoint
- Suggestions and support about problems in school
- A class in which all are treated equally

Gaelscoil na Laochra expects that Parents of its Pupils will:

- Be familiar with the various policies and codes of the school
- Show support for teachers in their implementation of the school's behaviour policy
- Support your child in his/her schoolwork.
- Make an effort to use Irish
- Ensure the punctuality(9.20a.m.) and regular attendance of your child.
- Collect their children punctually when class ends at 2.00p.m. for Junior/Senior Infants and at 3.00p.m. for all other classes.
- Ensure that their child wears the school uniform
- Ensure your child has a positive attitude to and abides by the school and class rules and has the right materials for class.
- Never undermine the authority of the school or teachers
- Promote respect for teachers and other school personnel
- Give their contact number for use in an emergency
- Be available to discuss a problem
- Support the school in implementing its Code of Behaviour
- Exert firm discipline in cases where your child's behaviour is having a negative impact on others

Parents and Pupils of Gaelscoil na Laochra expect its staff to:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity
- Listen and encourage all children and to treat them all equally
- Behave professionally at all times towards pupils

Staff

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. However, each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. The teaching staff will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct.
- This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded
- Liaise with parents when issues of misbehaviour arise
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort. Parents/guardians should ensure that their children wear the school uniform each day.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment with the class teacher in the first instance to discuss their concerns. In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour, parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

The Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Behaviour

In Gaelscoil na Laochra, there is an emphasis on taking a whole approach to the promotion of positive behaviour.

Staff:

- Teachers will be involved in reviewing and updating the Code of Behaviour and are represented on the committee. The Principal has responsibility for reviewing and updating the code and all teachers are responsible for the promotion of positive behaviour within the school
- Regular termly staff meetings are held where concerns or issues are discussed
- All staff are presented with a copy of the code and are reminded of its content at the beginning of each year
- The Principal/Deputy Principal relates the code to new and temporary staff
- IEPs with behavioural targets are a strategy which we use to cater for children who may present with behavioural difficulties arising from their additional educational needs

Board of Management:

- The Board of Management are informed of the review and all members are part of the process
- The Board deals with issues as they arise in relation to the Code of Behaviour and in particular in the areas of Suspension and Expulsion
- The Board provides opportunities for staff development

Parents:

- Cooperation between staff and parents is encouraged through the Parent/Teacher meetings.
- The culture and climate of the school which encourage an open door policy is conducive to good cooperation between staff and parents
- The Parent's Association are informed of the review and members included in the review
- Parents will be given a copy of the draft policy and are invited to make constructive suggestions
- The Code will be provided to all parents on their application to Gaelscoil na Laochra as part of the enrolment process. They must agree to the code by signing the accompanying letter.

Parents support the school in the implementation of the Code by:

- Accepting the Code and signing up to it
- Explaining it to their child
- Encouraging their child to abide by the Code of Behaviour and all its expectations

Pupils:

- Pupils are consulted at the draft stage to see if they agree with and understand the expectations upon them
- The pupils are involved in the promotion of the ethos of the school

- On an ongoing basis, pupils will implement the code by:
 - Helping the class teacher devise rules for the classroom
 - Taking part in Assemblies
 - Working on the Green Schools Committee

Positive Strategies for Managing Behaviour

The Classroom:

- The pupils of each class draw up their own class rules at the start of each year which they may be asked to bring home to be signed by their parents. These are displayed in the classroom for reference throughout the year.
- Teachers will, at the beginning of each term, remind the pupils of expected behaviours
- Teachers will have individual reward systems that are deemed age appropriate for acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour in the classroom, for example:
 - Homework passes
 - Class Teddies
 - Pupil of the week certificates

The teacher ensures cooperation and team spirit within the class

- Each week, pupils are rewarded at Assembly with “dalta na seachtaine” or “Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine” certificates. To ensure fairness and to keep pupils motivated, good behaviour throughout the week, is noted by the classroom teacher.
- The teacher places the child’s name in the “leabhar Órga” for “dalta na seachtaine”. A child’s name may be in there as many times as good behaviour is noted.

The Playground:

- The pupils are grouped into specific areas according to their age. Children are expected to remain within the boundaries of their specific play area.
- The children are provided with playground equipment e.g. footballs, hula-hoops
- Pupils are taught playground games, as part of the physical education curriculum
- The yard is supervised by a teacher and a Special Needs Assistant
- At Sos and Lón, a pupil with a concern, may report same to the teacher on supervision duty, who will investigate it accordingly.
- In the event of an incident occurring in the playground, the supervising teacher will inform the class teacher and upon investigation by the class teacher, if deemed necessary, an incident report will be completed in the yard book. Parents will also be informed as necessary.
- On wet days, children are supervised in the library and are provided with book, and board games
- Children are expected to form a line at the end of break and are fully supervised until the return of the class teacher

- Children must make the supervising teacher aware before leaving for the bathroom and on returning to the play area.

Other areas of the school:

In other areas of the school, good behaviour is promoted in the following ways

- Rules and expectations are communicated to the children in Assembly
- “Dalta na Seachtaine” is presented at Assembly

School related Activities:

We expect standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour to apply to any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. Examples include:

- School tours
- Matches, home and away
- Extracurricular activities which take place within the school
- Visiting the castle/library etc...

Rewards and Sanctions:

Rewards and the acknowledgment of good behaviour.

In our school, we will reward and acknowledge good behaviour in the following ways:

- The “Dalta na Seachtaine” photographs are placed in a Hall of Fame in the school
- The acknowledgment of classes for exceptional behaviour
- We will communicate good behaviour through the newsletter and via our social media channels

Responding to 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.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they

should behave. 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
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Engaging in rough play which escalates into physical or verbal confrontation between pupils
- Ignoring staff requests
- Interrupting class work
- Not wearing full uniform
- Being late for school regularly
- Littering the school
- Leaving a seat without permission during break times
- Not having homework signed
- Endangering self/ fellow pupils in the school yard at break times
- Bringing a mobile phone to school

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. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact – meeting initially by telephone or by note in journal; then face to face
- Behaviour contract
- Noting instances of yard misbehaviour in an incident book

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 regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and wellbeing 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.

- Constant disruption in class
- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging other pupil's personal property
- Being discourteous and back-answering a teacher
- Bullying, e.g. persistent name-calling, continuous bumping into one another, etc
- Stealing
- Telling lies
- Using inappropriate language
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult – back answering a teacher
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings
- Playing in "off-limit" areas during the school day

Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The following staged approach/steps is/are used for responding to such inappropriate behaviours:

1. A note/email will be written to the parent. Alternatively a phone call home may be made....all logged and dated by the teacher in the pupil's office file.
2. The class teacher meets one or both parents. The class teacher can request another teacher to be present when addressing a behavioural issue with a parent(s). The teacher logs the details of the meeting. The Principal is not required to meet the parents at this stage..... but is kept fully briefed by the respective teacher.
3. Finally, the pupil is brought to the Principal where a disciplinary sheet is issued for completion by the pupil and signing by the parent(s).
4. If there is no improvement in the pupil's behaviour, the Principal will meet with the parents concerning the misbehaviour.
5. A formal report of the behaviour may be made to the Board of Management, if considered necessary.
6. Written records of all meetings are to be kept and filed in the pupil's office file.

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal wellbeing 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
- Setting fire to school property
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin
- Aggressive, threatening, or violent behaviour towards staff or other children, with or without a weapon
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones
- Deliberately leaving taps/hoses on

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. 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. Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6) i.e.

“No pupil can be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of patron and until alternative arrangements are made for enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality”

Involving the Parents in Managing Problem Behaviour

- There is an open-door policy in the school for parents to contact teachers or the Principal should they have any concerns. A parent who has a concern should first approach the class teacher with a view to discussing the concern.
- If after discussing with the class teacher, the parent still has concerns, then he/she should approach the Principal, as per Complaint Procedures (updated as of January 1st 2024)
- It may be requested for parents to make an appointment, if any issue cannot be dealt with informally
- Parents are contacted early in the process if necessary. Not all disciplinary issues will involve parental contact, as they may be resolved directly with the child.
- The school will contact parents with a note or email or by phone call
- Depending on the severity of the inappropriate behaviour, the parent will be contacted earlier by the class teacher or by the Principal.
- In certain cases, it may be deemed suitable for the child to be present. This will be discussed in advance by the school and the parents.

Managing Aggressive or Violent Misbehaviour

In our school, instances of aggressive or violent behaviour will be treated very seriously. We use the following strategies:

- Individual Behaviour Plans are in place for children who have been assessed by psychologists to have severe emotional issues. Case conference meetings are regularly scheduled to ensure success of the IEP Plan and the child's integration into mainstream education.

- The Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) is contacted for appropriate support
- Teachers and Special Needs Assistants in the school work as a team monitoring pupils who have higher incidents of aggressive or violent behaviour
- There will be a mentoring system for newly qualified teachers in the school to support them and make them aware of school policies in relation to behaviour
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil themselves or to another pupil or staff member, the school will follow the steps as outlined in the pupil's Individual Behavioural Plan.
- Teachers are required to complete an incident report, which is filed securely and confidentially in the child's file in the office.
- Incidents of violent, threatening or aggressive behaviour will lead to suspension or expulsion from the school.
- Under Health and Safety legislation, any pupil's behaviour, that has a seriously detrimental effect on the capacity of the school to provide educational services to both the pupil and other pupils, will not be accepted or tolerated

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'

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Laochra has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. 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.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. 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.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

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.

An '**Automatic Suspension**' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Laochra 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;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff

or

- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

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.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension 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 issue 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
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

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 to discuss;

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

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Laochra acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is 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.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

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

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Laochra 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 Gaelscoil na Laochra 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
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- 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 Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

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);

- i. Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
 - 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
- 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 proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Laochra 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.

Keeping Records

In line with the school's policy on record keeping and Data Protection Legislation, all records in relation to a pupil's behaviour are kept confidentially in his/her file in the office. All records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

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

Class Level:

- Each teacher will endeavour to keep parents up to date on all behavioural issues. Pupil's behaviour will be discussed with the parent at Parent-Teacher meetings and reports will be sent home at the end of the academic year.
- A standardised and age appropriate Pupil Profile is held securely and confidentially by each class teacher. This facilitates the recording of all behaviour, both positive and negative
- Depending on the severity of the behaviour, the Principal will be notified should the parents need to meet with the class teacher.

Playground:

- In the event of an incident occurring in the playground, the supervising teacher will inform the class teacher and upon investigation by the class teacher, if deemed necessary, an incident report will be completed in the yard book. Parents will also be informed as necessary.
- Staff are reminded about consistency in application and the interpretation of the rules at regular staff meetings

School Records:

Should it be deemed necessary for a teacher to write an Incident Report, this report will be kept securely and confidentially in the pupil's file in the office. Such Report will contain:

1. Incidents of misbehaviour

2. Interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardians or referral to other agencies
3. Evidence of improved behaviour
4. Any sanctions imposed and the reason they were imposed

Factual Reports of particular incidents, communication between school, home and outside agencies, and the Board of Management are kept in the pupil's file. Documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29 are also kept on the pupil's file.

Procedure for the Notification of a Child's Absence from School

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by letter / using the school journal
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register.

The school is obliged to notify the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) of pupils who are absent for more than 20 days in any academic year. The NEWB officer can come to the school at any time and audit the attendance records.

Reference to other Policies

A number of policies developed or being developed in our school will have a bearing on this Code of Behaviour. These policies include:

- Anti-Bullying
- SPHE/RSE
- Enrolment
- Health & Safety
- Child Protection

- Communication

Circulation

The following members of our school community will be consulted for their contributions during the reviewing of this policy:

- Board of Management
- Staff – Teachers and Special Needs Assistants
- Parent's Association
- Students

Success Criteria

- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
- Observation of positive behaviours in the classroom, playground and school environment
- Observation of consistency in the application of practices and procedures listed in this policy

Implementation & Review

This policy will be reviewed, as deemed necessary by the Board of Management, relevant Post Holders, Principal and Staff of the school.

Ratification

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Gaelscoil na Laochra at its meeting on 29/5/2024.

The contents of this policy document will also be approved by the patron of the school An Foras Patrúnachta

Signed: *Sandra Beaubien*

Date: 29/5/2024

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: *Manik Uí Chléirigh* Principal

Date: 29/5/2024

