

Code of Behaviour

This code was prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). It was drawn up by a representative group of staff, parents, students and board of management. The work of auditing and reviewing our existing code of behaviour was enriched by involvement of representatives from all of our school community. The representative group met on a regular basis from November 2012 to November 2013. It carried out an audit of the existing code, compiled surveys and involved discussions and staff development. The Code was ratified by the Board of Management on 06/12/13 and was reviewed and revised in November 2014.

Introductory Statement

St. Thomas' SNS is a co-educational senior national school with pupils ranging from 3rd class to 6th class. A culture of care, concern, support, interest and friendliness has evolved over many years and permeates all aspects of the life and work in St. Thomas SNS. We strive in cooperation with the parents to provide a, caring and secure environment where each child is encouraged to achieve to the best of his/her ability.

Aims

The aims of the code of behaviour are:

- to create an atmosphere that encourages good behaviour
- to set high expectations for good behaviour
- to create a happy and safe place for teaching and learning
- to encourage students to take personal responsibility for their behaviour
- to build positive relationships and respect among students, parents and staff
- to ensure the standards are clear, consistent and widely known and understood
- that pupils see the code works in a fair way

Mission Statement

St. Thomas Senior National School is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. While it is a school with a Catholic ethos it has due recognition for pupils of all other faiths or of no faith. Our school motto "Every Child is Valued" is inherent in everything we do. We are committed to creating a caring, supportive and respectful atmosphere at school where every pupil can achieve their full potential.

Our primary aim is to promote the academic, moral, physical, social and emotional development of our pupils appropriate to their age and abilities in a caring, safe and nurturing environment. The ethos of the school is reflected in our Code of Behaviour with the emphasis on respect for self, for others and for the environment. We commit ourselves to creating an ethos of care, concern support and respect throughout the school and we place an emphasis on the pastoral care of our pupils.

Roles and Responsibility

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the partners in education i.e. the Board of Management, principal and teaching staff, pupils and the parents/guardians of the pupils in St. Thomas' SNS.

Responsibilities of Board of Management

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Ratify the code of behaviour
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.

Responsibilities of Principal

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Responsibilities of Teachers

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil and affirm good work.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

Standards of behaviour expected of pupils within the school

- Do one's best in class
- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason
- Arrive on time.
- Do not leave during the day without permission
- Respect all school property
- Wear the school uniform
- Show respect for yourself and others
- Avoid swearing, fighting and name calling.
- Listen to messages given and do as requested.
- Participate in school activities
- Be willing to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict

- Keep the school tidy and litter-free.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Schools need the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline. Parents can help their children in the following ways:

- Parents should provide their children with positive models of behaviour
- Children need boundaries and rules about behaviour. Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Be interested in, support and encourage your child's school work.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Ensure the school has up to date contact information for parents / guardians
- Ensure an ordered, structured day for your child with regular meal times and bed times.
- Check your child has all their needs for class i.e. books, copies pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, etc.
- Share information with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress / behaviour.
- Behave in a respectful manner

School Rules

The school's standards of behaviour describe the behaviour expected of all members of the school community, staff and pupils, parents/guardians and visitors. These values are put into practice through simple, clear and consistent school rules and routines which are built on:

- respect for yourself
- respect for others
- respect for your school

The school has four core **School Rules** and four **Yard Rules**:

School Rules:

1. I come to school every day, on time and prepared.
2. I have respect for people and for property.
3. I do my best in class and allow others to do the same.
4. I behave in a proper manner around the school.

Yard Rules:

1. I stay in my own yard and away from windows
2. I keep my hands and feet to myself
3. I play safely and fairly
4. I line up as soon as the bell goes

These rules are brought to the attention of the children through the class teachers on a regular basis. Behaviour that does not conform to one or more of these rules can be considered unacceptable. The list of rules may vary slightly from time to time, depending on circumstances and as the need arises. For each rule we have certain expectations, and these are explained and taught to all pupils.

The success of the school's code of behaviour depends on consistency in the implementation of these rules. This will be achieved as follows:

- Teaching of the School Rules
- Rewards and Incentives for keeping the rules
- Prevention Strategies
- Sanctions for Breaking the Rules
- Modelling the standards
- Have ways of ensuring that students with special needs understand what is expected of them

Promotion of the School Rules

All pupils are taught the School Rules when they start in third class and they are revised consistently throughout their remaining years in the school. Parents are given a copy of the rules at registration and they are encouraged and expected to talk to their children about the rules and to encourage their children to keep them.

Individual rules will be highlighted at regular periods (in the principal's memo and at assembly) for special attention.

The School Rules are promoted through the entire school community as follows:

- **Principal's Weekly Memo**
The Principal sends out a memo to staff each Monday to inform them of the week's events. Each week one School Rule will be highlighted for special attention.
- **Noticeboards**
The School Rules are displayed prominently in each classroom and on noticeboards throughout the school.
- **Assembly**
Assembly takes place once a month. It forms a valuable role in our whole school approach to developing self-esteem, promoting positive behaviour and effective discipline. Good work and achievements are highlighted, celebrated and rewarded. The school rules are emphasised and explained. Specific school routines for the classroom and yard are emphasised and explained.
- **Newsletters to Parents**
A newsletter is sent to home on a weekly basis to inform parents of events taking place in the school. The school rules will be highlighted in the Newsletter and parents encouraged to reinforce these with their children.

- **PA Announcements**

- **Parent Information Booklet**

All Parents / Guardians are provided with a copy of the school's code of behaviour before registration as required by Section 23(4) of the Education (welfare) Act 2000.

Parents are expected at registration to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by the child.

Promoting good behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of our code of behaviour. Our reward system acts as a positive reinforcement of good behaviour. Teachers will focus on and praise good behaviour rather than criticising poor behaviour. Teachers use rewards positively – once given, rewards will not be removed subsequently for unacceptable behaviour.

These are used to acknowledge and affirm good behaviour and good work and can consist of:

Individual Rewards:

Boy/Girl of the Week

- Certificate and picture on door
- Homework pass
- Pen licence
- Raffle tickets (Friday)
- Dojo points
- Jobs
- Note home in journal
- Stickers
- Horse riding – 5/6 children (target group)
- Passes (art & craft pass, music pass, garden pass, knitting pass)
- Bronze, Silver, Gold awards

Whole Class Rewards

- Golden time
- Homework off
- DVD
- Cookery
- Hot Chocolate

Group Rewards within the Class

- Table/row of the week
- Dojo points
- Lucky dips

- Jobs
- Points/stars/marbles
- Cookery pass
- Sweets
- Cushions on chair (for group of the week)
- Hot chocolate
- Homework pass
- Golden time

Whole School Rewards

- Pupil of the month
- Student of the week
- Extra yard time one day each week
- Jellies for lining up (Friday)

Prevention Strategies

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

It is important that we keep in mind that the behaviour expected in school may differ significantly from that accepted at home for some children. Recognising this, teachers will teach our pupils strategies that will enable them to meet the school's expectations.

Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

- Restorative Practice
- Circle time
- Organised football, skipping and other activities at break time
- Carrying out useful tasks
- Helping in the school garden
- Time Out
- Lunchtime Indoor Activity Groups
- Therapies e.g. Art Therapy, Drama Therapy
- Support team
- Use of individual behaviour plans

Additional Supports

Children with special needs may require assistance in understanding and respecting certain rules. Additional inputs and interventions may also be required to help some pupils manage their behaviour and to prevent them failing educationally. Such interventions could include

- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student
- Involving the pastoral care team
- Individual Behaviour Support Plans may be devised in consultation with parents, class teacher, support teacher, learning support / resource teacher, HSCL Co-ordinator and SNA. Professional assessments where available may inform and shape the plan.

Specialised Supports

A small minority of students may exhibit particularly challenging behaviour. The school, in cooperation with the student's parents will seek to avail of any local services that may assist in responding to the needs of the student. These services could include the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS), Lucena Clinic, Art Therapist, relevant professional counselling services, etc.

Sanctions for Classroom Misbehaviour

The school strives to solve issues at the lowest level possible. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve issues themselves. Most issues will be resolved at this point. Where sanctions are imposed they will be graded and reflect the seriousness of the behaviour. (*See Appendix A for examples of behaviours*)

Yellow and Red Cards

The school operates a yellow and red card warning system.

- Yellow cards are given for serious / disruptive misbehaviours.
- Red cards are given for very serious misbehaviour.
- All warning cards are sent home to be signed by parents.
- Yellow or red cards may be given for a single incident of misbehaviour.

IMMEDIATE YELLOW CARDS GIVEN FOR:

- Defiance, refusal to do as asked by any member of Staff
- Bad/Abusive language or gestures directed at another person.
- Racist remarks
- Throwing an object directly at someone with intent to hurt them.
- Writing/Graffiti on school property
- Involvement in a fight
- Spitting at someone
- Threatening someone
- Fighting/hurting someone

IMMEDIATE RED CARDS GIVEN FOR

- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Unprovoked physical violence to another person
- Organising (planning), encouraging a fight.

- Unprovoked racist remarks.
- Deliberate damage/destruction of school property
- Use of obscene/abusive language to a member of staff

1. Dealing with Minor Issues

Where issues occur the class teacher may employ any of a number of strategies to respond to, or divert children's inappropriate behaviour in order to prevent it escalating into something more disruptive to learning and more difficult to manage. These strategies may include:

- Gesture / Look / Whisper
- Tactical ignoring
- Carrying out a useful task in the school
- Catch pupils being good
- Rule reminder
- Teaching rule to class or class recitation of the rule
- Expressing disappointment or disapproval, or using humour.
- Change of place

2. Dealing with more Serious Issues

Disruptive behaviours waste time and impinge on the good order and discipline in the school. When behaviour issues arise that require a sanction either because of the level of disruption, upset or hurt caused, or the persistence of the disruption the following sanctions will be used in a graded system to show disapproval and to discourage such unacceptable behaviour. Deputy Principal/Principal may be involved in investigating incidents which happen in the classroom as necessary.

1. **Verbal Warning** – the teacher will indicate the behaviour and the rule broken
2. **Warning 1** – Reflection sheet completed at desk. Brought home to be signed and returned the next day.
3. **Warning 2** – Discipline sheet completed away from desk Reflection Sheet completed at desk. Brought home to be signed and returned the next day.
4. **Yellow Card** – Pupil sent to another class with a reflection sheet and work. Reflection sheet and yellow card to be brought home, signed and returned. Pupil in another class until teacher feels pupil is ready to try and improve behaviour. Parents will be notified if pupil is out of class for more than rest of day/one day. Pupil will be given work to complete.
5. **Contact Home** – Where a pupil receives 2 yellow cards in any 5 day period the teacher will also make contact with home by phone.
6. **Red Card** - Where a pupil gets 3 yellow cards in any 5 day period the pupil is sent to the deputy principal / principal and gets a red card. Parents are contacted and a meeting held with Principal/Deputy Principal and class teacher if necessary. Behaviour contract is drawn up.

Walk with an adult in yard for a minimum of two days. Loss of privilege (not a curricular area). **While one red card may lead to suspension, a number of red cards in a period of time will lead to suspension.**

7. Suspension

8. Expulsion

Sanctions for Break Times and School Yard

The school yard is always supervised during breaks and the teachers in charge deal with problems that arise during play using Restorative Practice where appropriate. The teacher records yard incidents and action taken in the Yard Book which is checked by the Deputy Principal and appropriate sanctions decided.

The emphasis is on promoting good behaviour and to support this football games and skipping activities are organised for all classes. The yard rules are taught to pupils at the start of each school year and pupils are constantly reminded of them.

1. Dealing with Minor Issues

For minor misbehaviour in the yard the following graded sanctions will apply:

1. Verbal Warning – Reminder of yard rule “In our School we..”
2. Walk for up to 2 minutes with staff member
3. Name in book - to be followed up by the deputy principal

2. Dealing with Serious Issues

For serious misbehaviour in the yard the following will apply
Name in Yard Book immediately

Yellow Card for:

- Defiance
- Racist remarks
- Bad/abusive language to another pupil
- Throwing an object directly at a person with intent to hurt them
- Writing/graffiti on school property
- Fighting/hurting someone
- Threatening someone
- Spitting at someone

Red Card for:

- Unprovoked racist remarks
- Planning, organising, encouraging a fight

- Use of bad language to a staff member
- Deliberate damage to school property
- Unprovoked physical violence to another person
- Leaving school grounds without permission

Red card = Possible Suspension. Walk with an adult on yard for two days.

The following actions may also be taken:

- **Taken Off Yard** - If necessary for health and safety reasons the pupil will be removed from the yard immediately.
- **Football Ban** - For serious misbehaviour at football a pupil may also be banned from football for a period decided by the Deputy Principal / Principal in consultation with the teachers organising the football.

A single incident of misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.

For repeated serious misbehaviour on the yard arrangements may be made for the pupil:

- not to go to yard at break time
- go home for break time

School Trips and Outings

Pupil's behaviour on tours will comply with the standard set down in the school's code of behaviour. Where it is felt that a child's conduct would pose a safety risk or inhibit the educational benefit for self or others, the school management reserves the right to refuse the child permission to travel on school trips / tours / outings. Parents will be advised of this in advance.

Inappropriate Sanctions

Inappropriate sanctions include:

- physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment
- ridicule, sarcasm, or remarks likely to undermine a student's confidence
- public or private humiliation
- applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small group wrong doing
- leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. corridor) while in the care of the school
- persistent isolation of, or ignoring a student in class
- sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way

Suspension

Only in the most exceptional circumstances will suspension be considered. Having regard to the values of this school, attempts will always be made to bring out the best in pupils and to discriminate between disapproval of wrongful actions and the value of each individual in the school community.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal. Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil.

When the code of behaviour applies

The school's code of behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular classes or events, at swimming classes, at all fund raising and social events organized by the school, on school tours, and at all events organised by, on behalf of, or in the name of St. Thomas SNS whether during school hours or outside of school hours.

Bullying

In dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, teachers have regard to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and are drawn up in accordance with Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary Schools (2013).

Absences / Communication

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 18, requires parents to notify the Principal of a school of the reasons for a child's absence. In compliance with these sections, the following procedures apply. For absences of pupils from school parents will send a note (in school journal) upon the return of the child to school outlining the reason(s) for absence or contact the school in person or by phone.

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) requires a School Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more. Additionally, Section 21(4) authorises the School Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a child "is not attending school regularly".

Contact

Where any parent has a concern about any aspect of behaviour the school should be contacted either by phone, in person or in writing and the matter brought to the attention of the child's teacher or the principal/deputy principal as appropriate.

Review

Our Code of Behaviour will be next reviewed in January 2016.

Reviewed and revised by Board of Management on 28/11/14
Date

Signed Mary Dale

Chairperson, Board of Management

Appendix A

Rules of the School Explained

1. I come to school every day, on time and prepared.

This means:

- That you attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- That if you miss school you bring in a note in your journal.
- That if you must leave school during the day, you must have a note and in the case of 3rd & 4th class pupils, you must be collected.
- That if you are unavoidably late, you bring in a note from your parent / guardian.
- That you behave yourself on your way to and from school.
- That you have the proper pens, books and copies required for class.
- That you will be careful with library books, your own books, pencils, markers, crayons.

Because:

- Time missed is hard to make up.
- The school is entitled to an explanation for your absences.
- The school is responsible for you during the day.
- It is expected that a late arrival to school be explained out of courtesy.
- The school expects that all pupils can come to and go home from school safely.
- It wastes time if you have not got your pens, copies, and books.
- Having items not needed for class causes distraction and wastes time.
- Most of our books are rented and will need to be passed on to another pupil at the end of the year. If we don't keep our belongings in good condition they won't last for the year.

2. I have respect for people and for property.

This means:

- That you will be helpful and treat other students and all staff with good manners and respect.
- That you will keep unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to yourself.
- That you will call others by their preferred names.
- That bad language, biting, bullying, kicking, punching, spitting is unacceptable behaviour.
- That you will respect the instructions of all the school staff.
- That you will not pick on or bully others.
- That you use the litter bins.
- That you respect school property and the property of other people.
- That you have respect for other cultures, religions and differences.

Because:

- Everyone is entitled to good manners and respect.
- Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery.
- Offensive or abusive language shows disrespect and can cause hurt.
- Keeping the school environment pleasant and litter free is everyone's responsibility.
- Spitting makes the school grounds unpleasant and may spread infections.
- You would expect the same respect for your property.
- Everyone has the **right** to your respect

3. I do my best in class and allow others to do the same.

This means:

- That you work to the best of your ability, and allow others to do the same.
- That you listen to your teachers.
- That you do not disturb the class.
- That you sit with the four legs of your chair on the floor at all times.
- That you do your homework each night, written and oral.
- That you always have your journal with you and take down your homework in it.
- That your parent/ guardian signs your journal / work each night.
- That you put your chair up on the desk at the end of the day and help tidy the room.

Because:

- Everybody has a right to learn in a caring, safe and respectful environment.
- The teacher is trying to help you.
- Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn.
- It is dangerous to swing back on the two legs of your chair.
- Homework is a back up to the work done in class.
- Your journal helps you remember what you have to do and is a means of communication between school and home.
- Getting your journal signed lets your parents see how you are getting on.
- It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves.

4. I behave in a proper manner around the school.

This means:

- That you must obey promptly
- That you walk in an orderly way around the school.
- You must line up properly and wait quietly for your teacher.
- That eating or drinking is allowed within the school building only at specified times and in specified areas.
- In the yard and on wet days in the school you should obey instructions of the teachers on duty.
- That you don't break, damage or deface school property.
- That chewing gum is totally forbidden in the school building and grounds.
- That mobile phones must remain switched off at all times.

Because:

- This keeps the school safe for everyone.
- Lining up quietly is safer.
- Specified times and areas for eating/drinking helps to keep the school clean and pleasant.
- Obeying break time rules and teachers' instruction is safer and helps with supervision.
- Others have to use school property and repairs / replacements are expensive.
- Chewing gum messes up school furniture and flooring.

Appendix B

Examples of Behaviours

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Continuous talking.
- Fidgeting.
- Inattention.
- Pushing and talking in the line
- Writing and passing notes
- Bringing food to the yard
- Being in wrong yard area
- Spitting on ground
- Interfering in others games
- Disrupting Junior School classes at windows
- Chasing games
- Deliberate delaying while going to class lines on bell.

Examples of serious misbehaviours include:

- All minor misbehaviours when on a persistent basis
- Behaviour that disrupts the learning of others in class
- Refusal to do work
- Telling lies
- Slagging / Name calling
- Swearing / bad language
- Throwing food at other pupils
- Rough play / chasing games
- Leaving the school without permission

Examples of very serious misbehaviour include:

- Persistent disruptive behaviour
- Persistent slagging / name calling
- Persistent defiance and disrespect.
- Hitting or other aggressive behaviour (unprovoked)
- Throwing objects that could cause injury or harm
- Racist / bad / inappropriate language deliberately directed at someone.
- Inappropriate harassment and bullying
- Uncontrolled behaviour
- Angry / aggressive play at football
- Fighting
- Deliberately spitting at another child

Appendix C
Yard Rules and Routines

1. Pupils must obey the teachers at all times when out on the yard / astro.
2. Pupils must respect teachers, assistants and fellow pupils by not using violence at any time.
3. Pupils must not use bad, rude abusive language to teachers, assistants or other pupils.
4. Pupils are not allowed to go into the school at yard time unless accompanied by a teacher or assistant or have been given permission to by a teacher.
5. In the morning pupils should line up in their class lines and are not allowed on the Junior School yard or the Astro Pitch
6. No MP3 players, phones or phones used as MP3 players are allowed on the yard.
7. No food is allowed on the yard at any time..
8. Pupils must go to their lines promptly when the bell / whistle sounds.
9. Pupils must take a time-out when asked to by a teacher / other adult in charge.
10. Pupils must stay in their own yard area.
11. Pupils must walk to their lines.
12. Pupils must line up in a quiet and orderly fashion.

Appendix D

Procedures for Suspension

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil. The authority to suspend a pupil for up to 3 consecutive school days has been delegated by the Board of Management in writing to the principal. The Principal is accountable to the BOM for the use of that authority.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for immediate suspension.

Suspension

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the principal will:

- Inform the student and his/her parents about the complaint either by phone or in writing
- Give the pupil and the parents an opportunity to respond
- Remove the pupil from the class until a determination is made about suspension.

Parents will be given an opportunity to respond, to make their case for lessening the sanction and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the pupil's behaviour.

Immediate Suspension

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

The principal has been authorised in writing to impose an automatic suspension where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff or any other person or for any one of the named behaviours listed below:

- The student's behaviour has had a detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The deliberate destruction of school property

In the circumstances of an immediate suspension, the parents will be notified and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected from school.

In the circumstances where an immediate suspension is considered by the principal to be warranted, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. A formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of an automatic suspension during

which the suspended pupil will be invited to the school to be interviewed by arrangement in the school either in the presence of his/her parents or not.

Period of Suspension

A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal recommends to the board of management that a period of suspension longer than 3 days is needed to achieve a particular objective.

The Board of Management considers the following circumstances are ones where the principal would consider recommending 5 days rather than 3 days as an appropriate suspension. Any one of the following on its own may be considered appropriate to warrant a recommendation of 5 days suspension:

- when the pupil fails to recognise or acknowledge the seriousness of the events leading to a proposed suspension
- where injury has been inflicted on another person to such a degree of severity as to warrant medical attention and/or a visit to a doctor
- where the pupil continues to display belligerence, hostility or aggression

If a suspension longer than 3 days is being recommended by the principal the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

The Board of Management has authorised the principal in writing, with the approval of the Chairman of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the board of management cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance already provided to the principal concerning such suspensions.

The board of management will not impose a suspension of more than 10 consecutive school days on a pupil at any one time.

The Board of Management will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which a pupil has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more.

Appeals

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal a principal's decision to suspend a pupil for 3 days. If an appeal is to be considered before a suspension is to take place, then the pupil will be removed from class until the appeal is complete and the appeal decision is relayed to parents.

If the appeal against the decision to suspend is not upheld or if the period of suspension is altered but not set aside, then the suspension will begin as soon as practicable after the decision on the appeal is relayed to parents, normally starting the next school day.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

Parents will be notified of this right at the time when they are being formally notified of such a suspension. Information on how to appeal will also be provided.

Implementing a Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious behaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

1. Inform the students and their parents about the complaint
2. Give parents and student an opportunity to respond.
3. Where the parents do not agree to meet with the principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a sanction.

The principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend their child and the letter will confirm:

- the period of 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 commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parents in relation to reaffirming their commitment to the code of behaviour
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

Suspension as part of a Behaviour Management Plan

Suspension if implemented will be part of an agreed plan to address a student's behaviour. The suspension should:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals for the student and their parents
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour

Removing a Suspension

A suspension may be removed or altered either immediately or retrospectively if the Board of Management decides, or, if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs it to be removed under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*

Reintegrating the Pupil

The principal will arrange for a member of staff to provide support for the pupil during the reintegration process. The pupil will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. The school will then expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

Recording and Reporting

A record of the behaviour and sanction imposed will be kept which will include:

- The investigation including notes of all interviews held
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

Report to the Board of Management

The principal, if acting on the written delegated authority to suspend, will report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to NEWB

The principal will report all suspensions to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in accordance with NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 21(4)(a)*)

Review of the use of Suspension

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

APPENDIX E

Expulsion Procedures

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal.

Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil including, as appropriate:

1. Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
2. Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, if it should persist.
3. Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
4. Seeking the assistance of support agencies, if appropriate

A proposal by the Board of Management to expel a student requires serious grounds, such that:

1. The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
2. The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
3. The student is responsible for serious damage to property
4. While the grounds for expulsion may be similar to those of suspension, where expulsion is considered, the school authorities are satisfied that they have tried a series of other interventions and are satisfied that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the students behaviour.

Expulsion for a First offence

The Board of Management reserves the right to expel pupils for a first offence for the following behaviours:

1. A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.
2. Actual violence or physical assault.
3. The supply of illegal drugs to other students in the school.
4. Sexual assault.

Expulsion

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

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

5. Consultations arranged by an Education Welfare Officer of the National Educational Welfare Board
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal

In investigating an allegation the principal will:

- Inform the student and parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could lead to expulsion.
- Give the parents and student every opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is made and a sanction imposed.

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know.

Step 2: A recommendation to the board by the Principal

Where the principal forms the view, based on the investigation that expulsion may be warranted, the principal makes a recommendation to the Board of management to consider expulsion. The principal will

- inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parents 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
- provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board and the holding of a hearing

The Board will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing.

At the hearing:

- The Principal and the parents will put their case to the Board in each other's presence.
- Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly.
- The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction.
- Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board will facilitate this.
- After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

The student will not be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

To ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education the Educational Welfare Officer will:

- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

Pending these consultations, the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)).

The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time.

Suspension will be considered where there is a likelihood 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 students or staff.

Step 6: 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 (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal).

Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Review of use of expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.