



# **Cód Iompair / Code of Behaviour 19886D**

## **Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís**

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## *‘Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí’*

**Title:** Code of Behaviour

**Vision Statement:** ‘Mol an Óige agus tiocfaidh sí’

### **Introduction:**

This statement has been formulated as a result of a review of our existing Code of Behaviour (2008). A working group of teachers and principal, and in consultation with staff, parents and Board of Management has produced this statement. The suggestions and input of parents, teachers and pupils were sought. In devising this code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. Staff, pupils and parents in this school acknowledge the importance of treating each other in a respectful way and are fully committed to the fair and consistent implementation of this policy.

### **Rationale:**

Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís decided to review its Code of Behaviour for the following reasons:

1. Identified by staff as a priority area.
2. The existing policy was due for review.
3. It is a requirement under the Education Act 1998, the Educational Welfare Act 2000 Section 23(3), DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline, Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools, and Developing Codes of Behaviour (NEWB 2008).
4. To develop good behaviour amongst our pupils.

### **General Aims:**

Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís hopes to achieve the following by introducing this policy:

- 1 Our ultimate aim is to encourage the children to develop self discipline based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others, thereby, taking responsibility for their own behaviour.
- 2 To create an ordered environment, where all children feel secure and are given an opportunity to develop their full potential.
- 3 To provide an atmosphere of support and guidance in fostering the children’s development of a personal sense of responsibility and informed judgement to meet the demands that will be placed upon them in their teenage years and adult lives.
- 4 To ensure that the school recognises the uniqueness of each child and that the individuality of each child is accommodated.
- 5 To maintain the efficient operation of the school for the benefit of all members of the School Community and to promote respect for the school environment.
- 6 Every effort will be made by the members of staff to adopt a positive approach to questions of behaviour and to implement the code of discipline in a fair and consistent manner.

### **Policy Content:**

1. Every effort will be made by all staff members to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in this school. This code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by teachers.
2. The school places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will give the best results.
3. This code will be implemented in a fair and consistent manner at all times.
4. A strong sense of community and co-operation will be required from staff, pupils and parents to successfully implement this code.
5. This code acknowledges the differences that exist between children and the individuality of each child. It is important to accommodate these differences in a fair manner.
6. The rules are devised in sections for ease of understanding by pupils and are positively stated in terms of what pupils should do.
7. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his / her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A pupil will be referred to the principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.

### **General Behaviour Guidelines:**

The following guidelines underpin how pupils in Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís behave:

1. Each child is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration and respect for other children and adults.
2. Each child is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings.
3. Each child is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
4. Each child is expected to do his / her best both in school and for homework (Oral work / memory work is equal in importance to written work).
5. Taking account of the Equal Status Act 2000, where the behaviour of any pupil has a negative impact on the school's ability to provide its services to other pupils, an individual behaviour management programme will be designed and implemented for these pupils.

## **School Rules:**

**The following set of school rules will assist each pupil to follow these guidelines. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that all pupils are aware of the manner in which we expect every pupil to treat other pupils, staff members and property.**

1. Irish is the spoken language of the school and from Junior Infants on, all children are required to speak it. It is expected that parents/guardians will give the children every encouragement and endeavour to use whatever Irish they have, especially in the school surroundings.
2. It is essential that the children are in time for school which begins at 8.45am. If a child is late or absent, parents are required to give an explanation via email or phone call to the office.
- 3.. The children must wear the full school uniform. They are expected to wear the school tracksuit and sensible running shoes on P.E. day. School shorts (not bicycle shorts/ O'Neill's) are allowed. O'Neill's may be worn during match play. School issued leggings are the only leggings allowed. Rang 6 designed hoodies can be worn from February onwards and will match the track suit colour.
4. All children are encouraged to bring a wholesome lunch to school.
5. Each child is expected to complete his/her homework properly. A parent/guardian should sign this work. If for some reason a child cannot do his/her work the parent/guardian should put an explanatory note in the child's diary or send a note on Aladdin Connect to the class teacher.
6. The children are expected to be courteous at all times to one another, to their teachers, to all staff members, and to visitors to the school. Misconduct in any form which brings the school into disrepute is forbidden.
7. Children must respect school property and other people's belongings in order to keep the school neat and tidy.
8. Pupils are prohibited from bringing valuables, expensive games or jewellery to school except for single stud earrings. See Number 10.
9. If it is necessary to bring a phone/digital device to school, it must be powered off before coming to school, given to the class teacher first thing in the morning who will keep it until home time.
10. Long earrings are not permitted for health & safety reasons. Single stud earrings on the ears are the only type of earrings allowed. Any other type of piercings are not allowed in school e.g facial piercings are not allowed.
11. Rough play and speaking English are forbidden in the school yard. Pupils are expected to be quiet and orderly whenever they are in their class lines.
12. Pupils walk on the left hand side of school corridors and yield to adults walking in the corridors.
13. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school during the school day. If a parent/guardian finds it necessary to collect a child early, the class teacher should be informed in advance, if possible, by putting a note in the school diary or by Aladdin Connect. Parents/guardians can also leave a message with the school secretary.
14. In the interest of child safety, it is imperative to notify the school if your child is being collected by someone other than the parent or guardian.

# **Classroom Rules:**

## **Junior & Senior Infants**

1. Paying Attention - "Give me 5!"
  - a. Ears listening
  - b. Eyes looking
  - c. Lips closed
  - d. Quiet hands
  - e. Feet down – sitting nicely
2. Always walk in the classroom
3. Be kind to everyone
4. Hands up before I speak
5. Schoolbag under my table
6. Chair in
7. Be careful with the toys
8. Tidy up
9. Make a nice straight line

## **First & Second Class**

1. I will use my manners
2. I will put up my hand before I speak
3. I will listen to others when they are speaking
4. I will speak Irish
5. I will walk in the classroom, in the corridors & when going to the yard
6. I will keep my place neat & tidy

## **Third – Sixth Class**

1. I will speak Irish.
2. I will put up my hand before I speak
3. I will do my homework.
4. I will keep my books neat & tidy.
5. I will listen to others when they are speaking.
6. I will be kind & mannerly to everyone.
7. I will always walk in the classroom.
8. I will walk on the left in the corridors
9. I will keep my place & my classroom neat & tidy.
10. I will leave the bathroom clean after use.

## **Pupil Code of Conduct**

### **Safety:**

**My own safety and that of others is always important. I will ensure my own safety and that of others by practicing the following:**

- 1 I will be careful coming to and going from school.
- 2 I will always walk while in the school building. I will walk on the LHS in the corridors and yield to adults.
- 3 I will stand and chat with my friends before school and I will leave school promptly in the evening.
- 4 I will play ball in the yard when my teacher provides a ball for us.
- 5 I will always move safely in the school yard taking care of myself and others.
- 6 I will remain seated at all times while eating lunch and if my teacher has occasion to leave the room.
- 7 I will never leave the school grounds without the permission of the teacher.
- 8 I will never take part in any activity that may injure myself or others.
- 9 I will always walk in pairs in a line when my class is visiting other places (e.g., Church, Swimming Pool, Library etc.)
- 10 If necessity warrants it, I will walk in the staff carpark accompanied by an adult/ a teacher/ a parent.

### **Caring for myself:**

**I am a unique and special person. I demonstrate this through the following:**

1. I respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order.
2. I will be in school before the bell rings at 8:45am.
3. I show respect for my school and am proud to wear the complete school uniform daily. I will be mindful of my personal hygiene.
4. I understand that wearing make-up, false tan, fake nails or false eyelashes is not permitted in school.
5. I understand that stud earrings and a watch are the only types of jewellery permitted in school. My watch cannot take photos, videos or send/receive messages.
6. My hair will be tied back from my face. Dyed hair is not allowed.
7. I will wear sensible shoes/ runners in school. High heels are not permitted for safety's sake.
8. I will always bring a sensible, nutritious lunch to school.
9. I will always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework to the best of my ability.
10. I will speak in Irish to all at school.

### **Caring for Others:**

**I am always conscious of other pupils in our school. I demonstrate this by practicing the following:**

- 1 I will be kind and respectful to my fellow pupils and give every pupil the opportunity to play with me.
- 2 I will be kind and respectful to all adults and visitors.
- 3 I will show good and positive example to my fellow pupils.
- 4 I will praise and encourage other pupils when appropriate and as often as possible.

- 5 I will never use bad language in school.
- 6 I will be truthful and honest at all times.



## **Caring for our School Environment:**

**I understand and appreciate the wonderful school environment in the Gaelscoil.**

1. I will keep my classroom as clean and tidy as possible.
2. I will be careful with and respectful of school furniture.
3. I will be careful when using school equipment and return it neatly to where it belongs.
4. I will show respect for the property of my fellow pupils.

## **Behaviour in the School Yard:**

**The school playground is a wonderful facility for play and games. I understand the need to be careful in areas where large numbers of people are present. I demonstrate this by .....**

1. I will walk to and from the yard in single file.
2. I will play in a positive, safe manner and I will take care of the people around me.
3. If another class's ball accidentally comes into my yard, they collect it.
4. Each class has two balls, if one goes over the fence, the second ball is used. If that goes over the fence, it remains there until the end of break. Balls are collected under teacher supervision at the end of break.
5. I am not allowed to ask passers-by to throw in the ball.
6. I will listen to the teacher(s) / SNA(s) on duty and will always follow their instructions.
7. On hearing the bell, I will "freeze" and wait for the first whistle to walk to my line.
8. I will remain in my line patiently for my teacher and will be silent on the second whistle.

## **During Games in the school yard:**

1. We will welcome everyone. We'll change the rules, or the games, to give a chance to other children to take part.
2. We will play games in the yard to enjoy them. The result or score is not important. It's important to enjoy the company of our friends.
3. We will behave ourselves in a way that will help others enjoy the games.
4. We will discuss rules mannerly, speaking gently to everyone.
5. We will play according to the rules of the games. Everybody enjoys games that are fair.

## **Behaviour in my Classroom:**

**I attend school to learn. I am aware that effort in the classroom is required, on my part, to fully benefit from the learning opportunities I will be presented with. Therefore, I will practice the following:**

1. I will raise my hand to get my teacher's attention.
2. I will always speak politely to my teachers and to other pupils in my class.
3. I will ask appropriate questions, that may encourage further debate / discussion from other pupils in my class.
4. I will listen to my teacher / classmates when they speak.
5. I will remain quiet and continue with my school work when my teacher is occupied or speaking with someone in the class.
6. I will do revision work, read a book or write in my free-writing copy if I am finished my school work before others.
7. I will always keep my books & copies neatly organized so that I know where my belongings are.
8. I will do my best each day in school.

## **Mobile Phones and Digital Devices:**

**I understand the importance and value of using a mobile phone / digital device in an appropriate manner at all times. When I require a mobile phone/digital device at school or at school related events, I will follow the procedure as set out below.**

1. I will switch off my phone/digital device before entering the school gates.
2. I will give my phone/digital device to the class teacher at the beginning of the day / event who will keep it in a designated place.
3. I will collect my phone/digital device at the end of the day and will not switch it back on until I have left the school premises.
4. I will not use my phone/digital device at any time without the permission of a teacher. Such use will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.
5. Smart watches including Fit bits are not allowed. These prove to be a distraction from school work. A simple wrist watch that tells the time is allowed.
6. Mobile phones / digital devices will be confiscated from pupils who do not adhere to the procedure as set out above. These items can only be retrieved by the pupil's parent having made an appointment to meet with the class teacher.
7. The school nor the class teacher are responsible for mislaid/stolen mobile phones/digital devices.

## **Bullying:**

I will never bully or encourage people who bully others. I will always tell my parents and my teachers if someone tries to bully me or others. Bullying is always unacceptable. Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís strives to be a bully free zone. (Please refer to Schools Anti-Bullying Policy).

**Pupil signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

## **Reinforcing Positive Behaviour - General Class Strategies e.g.**

Points system, Class Dojo, praise, written praise in journal, certificates, praise to parents/ guardians, jobs, Golden time, written homework pass, extra play time in the yard, plaque, cartúin TG4, iPads, board games, art, gardening, trip to the PríomhOide for praise.......

## **Junior & Senior Infants**

1. Reward Systems (pom poms, class dojo, smiley faces, stars for the best group etc.)
2. Rewards for the best group – washing their hands first before lunch
3. Stickers & stamps in books / copies (Excellent work!).
4. Show work to teacher next door.
5. Praise good behaviour
6. Class job/ responsibility

## **Rang 1 &2**

1. Praise / positive reinforcement.
2. Rewards for good behaviour.
3. Note of praise in their homework diary.
4. A visit to the next-door teacher/ principal for praise.
5. A free homework pass on reaching the desired target

## **Rang 3 - 6**

1. A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
2. A word of praise in front of class.
3. A system of merit/ stickers or stamps.
4. Delegating some special privilege / responsibility as a reward
5. A comment in the pupil's homework journal or mention to the parent when the pupil is collected.
6. Golden/ Free play time allocated to class.
7. A visit to another member of staff / principal for commendation.
8. Award plaque/ certificate to child for speaking as Gaeilge each week.
9. Additional break time allocated to class e.g. 5-10 mins.
10. Prize, Homework - Off Voucher given to child.

## **Special Education**

1. A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
2. A word of praise in front of class.
3. A system of merit marks / stickers or stamps.
4. Delegating some special privilege / responsibility.
5. Praise the child on meeting with the parent/ guardian.
6. A visit to another member of staff / principal for commendation.
7. Behaviour reward plan – reward on Fridays (Project of choice, art /craft activity/cooking / baking/ golden time with friends / gardening).

## **Management and Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour**

**Naíonáin go Rang 6** – the penalty imposed may be linked to the misdemeanour.

1. Alert the child to your awareness of his / her behaviour through eye contact/ proximity.
2. Praise another child for the specific wanted behaviour.
3. Speak with child about their behaviour and how they could improve.
4. 'Catch them being good' by reinforcing when they begin to comply with desired behaviour.
5. Remind pupils of class / school rules.
6. Whole class SPHE Lesson if the problem refers to a group.
7. Removal to 'time-out' table / corner in the classroom for a specific length of time.
8. Note to parents/ guardians in journal/ on Aladdin.
9. Prescribe additional work for pupils that is age, class and ability appropriate. This work can be completed outside the Principal's office, supervised by the Class teacher or at home during the week or at the weekend.
10. Send to Deputy Principal or Principal.

11. Teachers will keep a written record of all incidents of misbehaviour on Aladdin. This record should indicate the warnings and / or advice given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition.
12. A child is paying too roughly in the yard or impacting on others' enjoyment of the yard can be asked to stand by the wall for a period of time.
13. Remind children to speak in Irish at all times especially in the yard. A child can be asked to stand by the wall for a period of time if they continually use English to communicate.
14. A child can be sent to another classroom for a period of time to think on the misbehaviour. They may be assigned work by their class teacher for completion in this new classroom.
15. Missing out on school trips or school events. This will only be used if the behaviour happened during those activities or where there is a Health and Safety concern due to the pupil's behaviour. This must always be done in consultation with the Principal.
16. If a child is consistently upsetting class/ school organisation, a warning is given. This could be a trip to the Deputy Principal/ Principal and/or a meeting with parent(s)/ guardian(s).
17. In exceptional / extreme circumstances an individual behavioural plan will be designed for pupils with collaboration from class teacher/SET/ parents/guardians and of course the child. Noted in Continuum of Support.
18. Suspension / expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the rules for National Schools as amended by Circular 7/88). Appendix 1

### **Restorative Practice – Appendix**

As a school, we favour Restorative Practice as a tool of processing wrong doing or conflict. It focuses on repairing the harm that has been done. It gives opportunities to pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. It is an approach to conflict resolution that includes all of the parties involved. Each class room and SET room displays the 6 Restorative questions on a chart in a prominent place side by side with the Golden Rule – “Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.” The 6 questions are as follows:

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking of at the time?
3. What do you think now?
4. Who has been affected and in what way?
5. How could things have been done differently?
6. What do you think needs to happen next?

**Bullying is defined as the repetitive intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, cyber or emotional.**

The following specific measures will be taken to counter bullying behaviour in conjunction with our Anti-bullying Policy:

1. Respect, trust, care, support and consideration for others are encouraged in the school.
2. Children are made aware that bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour.
3. Teachers supervising children in the yard should be particularly mindful of such behaviour.
4. Children are encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour with their teachers.
5. Incidents of bullying behaviour will be investigated and definite procedures will be followed.
6. A report on any bullying behaviour is kept on Aladdin.

## **Procedures for dealing with misdemeanors**

The degree of misdemeanour will fall into one of 3 categories; minor, serious or gross, and will be judged by the teachers and / or Principal / Deputy Principal based on common sense approach with regard to the gravity / frequency of such misdemeanours, as follows:

### **Category 1:**

#### **Minor Misdemeanours:**

##### **Examples:**

Interrupting class work, arriving late for school, running in the school building, talking in the class line after the 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle, leaving seat without permission at lunchtime, placing unfinished food / drink cartons in the class bin, leaving litter around the classroom, not wearing correct school uniform, being discourteous / unmannerly, not completing homework, not regularly working to full potential and/ or completing tasks, minor yard misdemeanours, other behaviours of similar gravity / frequency.

##### **Consequences:**

Verbal reprimand, reasoning with pupil, noting incident of yard misbehaviour in the yard book, noting incident with class teacher.

##### **For Regular Occurrences:**

1. Warning to pupils.
2. Note in homework journal to be signed by parent/ guardian.
3. Note home on Aladdin/Phonecall home to parents/ guardians.
4. Write an account of what happened / answering restorative practice questions - Appendix 4/ write out the school rules.
5. Temporary separation from peers within the classroom.
6. Sending to another teacher of the same or similar class level. This option will be used having tried other strategies first. The class teacher should ensure that it is an opportune time to receive the pupils and a timeframe and work to be completed should be agreed.

### **Category 2:**

#### **Serious Misdemeanours:**

**Examples:** Vandalism of school property/other pupils' property, constantly disruptive in class, telling lies, bullying, back answering a staff member or visitor, leaving school premises during school hours without appropriate permission, frequenting school premises after school hours without appropriate permission, using unacceptable language, endangering self / fellow pupils in the yard at break time, hurting someone else on purpose, bringing something dangerous to school, other behaviours of similar gravity / frequency.

##### **Sanctions:**

1. Send to Deputy Principal.
2. Send to Principal.
3. Class teacher meets one / both parents/guardians
4. Principal calls or sends email to parents/ guardians.
5. On occasion, Principal contacts parents /guardians by phone requesting them to reason with their child on the phone or to collect them from school.

6. Principal / Deputy Principal meets one / both parents concerning behaviour.
7. Chairperson of BOM informed and parents requested to meet with Chairperson and Principal.

For Bullying Procedures refer to School Anti-Bully Policy.

### **Category 3**

#### **Gross Misdemeanours (Aggressive, threatening and violent behaviour)**

**Examples:** Bullying, damaging school property, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a pupil/teacher, stealing from another pupil/staff member or the school, use of banned substances in school – tobacco, alcohol, drugs, other behaviours of similar gravity / frequency.

#### **Sanctions:**

1. Chairperson / Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents and sanction of Board of Management. **Appendix 1.**
2. Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6) of the Rules for National Schools. **Appendix 1.**

**Note:** These lists consist of examples only. They are not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

## **Children with Special/ Behavioural needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special/behavioural needs may require assistance in understanding rules. Individual behaviour plans will be put in place after consulting with parents, class teacher, SET teachers and/or Principal who will all work closely with home to ensure that the optimal support is given. Cognitive and emotional development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from other services and from psychological assessments will be sought.

The children in the class /school will be taught strategies to help the student with needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive, safe way acknowledging and respecting difference in all individuals.

#### **Pupils presenting with Behavioural Disorders**

1. We will treat pupils presenting with behavioural/emotional disorder/problems in a professional and caring way. All behaviour is communication and the school recognises that inappropriate behaviour is often a sign of underlying problems within the child or within the child's environment.
2. A pupil who presents with an undiagnosed behaviour disorder may after consultation with Principal and parents, be referred to NEPS psychological service or for professional counselling.
3. Special behaviour systems will be used as needed for such pupils. These include Behaviour Contracts, Daily monitoring records, etc.
4. Teachers will liaise with external agencies as appropriate – SESS, NCSE, NEPS, Le Chéile...

The following types of behaviour are deemed to be serious:

1. Frequent disrespect shown to any member of staff or frequent non-co-operation with staff.
2. Any action which endangers pupils or staff.
3. Name calling, racism, bullying and any form of physical violence.

4. Anger management difficulties.
5. Damaging property or theft of property.
6. Any form of minor misbehaviour which is disruptive and continuous.

### **Time – out**

Pupils with SNA assistance may be removed for set periods of time to complete a set O.T. exercises or a calm – down period. This period will be short and may be time-tabled daily. These short breaks prove very effective in managing sensory overload and build-up of emotions.

Pupils may also be accompanied by an SNA for sensory regulation breaks in our Cubbie – sensory pod.

### **Individual Behavioural Plan ( noted in Continuum of support on Aladdin)**

An agreed plan is put together with input from parents, pupil, Class teacher, SET teacher and/or Principal.

This purpose of this plan is to lead the child to behavioural awareness and to lead the child to behavioural accountability. The plan may be supported by lessons on emotions/ behaviour e.g Weaving well-being. The plan will have a reward system with the reward presented weekly at the end of the week or indeed a daily reward system if this is deemed necessary.

The consequences of poor behaviour will be outlined in the plan. However, we place a much greater emphasis on working towards a reward. The plan is regularly reviewed e.g on a monthly basis with the full team of parents, teachers and pupil. Such meetings are pre-arranged.

### **Managing a behavioural event.**

Two staff members have been trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention and can give this training to all staff. CP looks at the ABCs (Antecedents, Behaviour and Consequences) in a stepped manner and aims to prevent behaviour escalating to a higher level. Teachers and SNAs look out for antecedents/triggers and respond accordingly.

Behaviour	Response
Step 1 Anxiety	Verbal Support
Step 2 Defensive	Verbal/ Directed choices
Step 3 Risk Behaviour	Physical intervention
Step 4 Tension Reduction	Therapeutic rapport e.g RP questions.

Step 3 will only ever be used if the pupil is in a dangerous situation or endangers others around him/ her. The policy on Physical Restraint explains Step 3 further.

## **Record keeping**

A yard book is kept for recording playground incidents. The teacher on supervision duty always informs the class teacher of the incident and the school secretary, if a phone call home is needed as a pupil is hurt.

Teachers note significant behaviour events on the school journal/ notice board on Aladdin and on Aladdin documents. Any correspondence regarding significant pupil behaviour is stored digitally on Aladdin. Registers of bullying reports are also kept on Aladdin.

## **Communication with Parents:**

Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís has a culture of open communication with parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are free to communicate with teachers and principal by arranging an appointment through the school secretary. Parents/guardians can also communicate with teachers through the homework journal or email.

We are very proud of our tradition of excellent behaviour among our pupils and we feel confident that this policy will ensure the continuation of this tradition.

In instances of serious misbehaviour, communication with parents will be by phone or by letter/e-mail, depending on the circumstances. The parents/guardians concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss the situation. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour to a staff member will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on the circumstances.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the chairperson and the principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period. Suspension will be in accordance with Rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools. **Appendix 1**

In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board will authorise the chairperson or principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians.

If parents/guardians have any concern relating to their child(ren) they should make an appointment to meet the class teacher through the school secretary. The class teacher will involve the principal when / where necessary, following attempts to resolve the issue at class level. The principal will also be available if the need arises and parents can discuss any issue with the principal where they are unsatisfied with the response from the class teacher or where any urgency exists. The following outlines the procedure to follow where a parent/guardian has a concern in relation to their child.

- (1) Discuss and seek to resolve with class teacher
- (2) Teacher / parent to inform principal seeking resolution
- (3) Principal / parent to refer matter to Board of Management if unresolved.

It is the policy of this school to regularly communicate with parents/guardians informing them of their child's behaviour.

## **Roles & Responsibility:**

1. The overall responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy rests with the principal.
2. All staff members have responsibility for the implementation of this policy on a daily basis.
3. The Board of Management support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
4. The pupils and parents of Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís should support this policy in every way to ensure its successful implementation.



**Implementation Date:** This policy will take effect from .....

**Review:**

This code will be reviewed and amended when necessary and if needed. Next review .....

**Ratification & Communication:**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís on .....

This policy will be circulated to all families in the school and will be provided to all parents of new entrants to this school.

## **Appendices:**

1. Procedures for suspension/ expulsion
2. Bus Code of Conduct
3. Sport Code of Conduct

## **Appendix 1**

Link to Rule 130 ( 5) Rules for National Schools.

<https://assets.gov.ie/15651/0cfe8a4e2f8a4daf97e0a9f45dc25f70.pdf>

**Procedures for Suspension/ Expulsion** available from the principal's office

## **Appendix 2**

### **Code of Behaviour for Children Travelling by Bus**

#### **While waiting for the bus:**

- 1 I will stand quietly in a straight line.
- 2 I will walk towards the bus when instructed to do so by the teacher.
- 3 I will be mindful of traffic and others around me while boarding the bus.

#### **While getting on the bus:**

- 1 I will wait in line to get on the bus.
- 2 I will not push to get on the bus.
- 3 I will leave vacant the first row of seats for teachers/ SNAs or any seat they wish to sit on.
- 4 I will follow the teacher's/ SNA's directions regarding seating.

#### **Travelling on the bus:**

1. I will remain seated during the bus journey.
2. I will wear my safety belt and I will tell the teacher if I have any problem with the belt. I will tell the teacher about any pupil not wearing their belt.
3. I will remain quiet during the journey and I will not upset anyone.
4. I will not put any part of my body outside the window of the bus.
5. I will not damage any part of the bus.
6. I will not endanger anyone else travelling with me.

#### **Leaving the bus:**

1. I will remain seated until the bus stops and until I receive permission to leave my seat.
2. I will check and not leave any of my belongings after me on the bus.
3. I will keep my section of the bus neat and clean and not throw rubbish on the floor.
4. I will let those seated in front of me out first.
5. I will walk respectfully and say 'Go raibh maith agat' to the busdriver as I descend. I will not bump my bag against anyone

6. I will stand quietly in a line with my friends in a safe place designated by my teacher.
7. I will follow the teacher's directions.
8. If I have a coat or bag with loose straps, I will make sure they are properly tied before leaving the bus.
9. I will wait until the bus has pulled away before I move or cross the road.
10. I will help the younger children to cross the road safely.

**Respect for the other passengers:**

- 1 I will give good example through my own behaviour.
- 2 I will take care of younger children on the bus.
- 3 I will not force someone to get out of the seat in which (s)he is sitting.
- 4 I will never refuse to let someone sit beside me.
- 5 I will tell an adult (parents, teachers), if someone is being bullied on the bus.

**Respect for the Driver:**

- 1 I will follow the bus driver's rules.
- 2 I will never be rude to the bus driver.

**Respect for Property:**

- 1 I will keep my bag(s) in/under the seat that I'm sitting in.
- 2 I will refrain from standing on the seats.
- 3 I will refrain from writing on the back of the seats.
- 4 I will refrain from spitting while on the bus.
- 5 I will refrain from banging on the windows.
- 6 I will refrain from interfering with the emergency door.
- 7 I will refrain from putting gum on the seats.
- 8 I will refrain from leaving any litter on the bus.

## **Appendix 3: Sports Code of Behaviour**

### **Myself**

1. I'll do my best. I'll understand that I should be understanding of myself if we lose, and humble if we win. Every win or loss is due to a team's play. The most important thing is that I do my best, regardless of the result.
2. If I play well or if I score the winning point/goal/score, I will not become boastful but remain humble in victory.

### **Players from Another Team**

1. We will greet players before/after each game. We will shake their hands before and after the game.
2. We'll wish them the best, regardless of the result.
3. We will play within the rules, so that other players will be safe.
4. We will control our emotions when dealing with other players.
5. We will never hit another player.
6. We will never lose our patience and become angry with another player.
7. We will deal fairly and respectfully with other players.
8. We will show respect to other teams/players.

### **Our own Trainers**

1. We will show respect to our trainers with respectful and suitable language always. Our trainers are happy to give of their free time to teach sports' skills.
2. We will respect the trainers' decisions regarding play and team selections.
3. We shouldn't complain if we are not chosen to be on the team.
4. We will listen quietly and mannerly to the trainers when they are speaking.
5. If we have something to say to a trainer, we will say it in a mannerly fashion.
6. We will never use bad language or unsuitable speech.
7. The trainer has the final word.

### **Supporters and Trainers from other Teams/Schools**

1. We will show respect to other teams'/schools' supporters and trainers.
2. If we're not happy with anything, we will speak to a teacher/trainer from our school or the referee, instead of answering back.
3. We will never use bad language or back-answer.
4. We'll wish the other team/ trainers the best, before and after games, regardless of the result.

### **Fellow Players**

1. We'll show loyalty and respect to the whole panel. They are part of the team.
2. Both players and substitutes constitute the team – the full panel.
3. We'll play as team members, for the team.
4. If I'm sick or hurt before/during a game, I'll let a teacher/trainer/referee know.
5. I will not be selfish with the ball.
6. If a fellow player makes a mistake, we'll be positive with them. We'll advise them to think of the next ball/play/match, and to be positive with themselves.
7. We will not mock or make a fool of anyone who loses a chance or who makes a mistake.
8. We must do the opposite and advise and support the person who makes a mistake.
9. We should always remember that each player is doing his/her best and we must be loyal to the team.

### **Referees/Officials/Organisers**

1. We'll show respect to the referee through displaying good-behaviour, using appropriate speech and by listening to their directions.
2. We will not be disrespectful nor use bad language with the referee nor with other stewards
3. We understand that we cannot change the referee's decision, no matter what we say or do.
4. The referee's decision is always right even if it is a poor decision.
5. If we disagree with the referee's decision, we will not complain or blame anyone. We will continue with the game without complaining.
6. We will shake the ref's hand and thank him/ her at the end of the game.

I agree to abide by the Code of Behaviour above while playing any sport with the school.

Child's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 3**

### **Sports Code of Behaviour:**

#### **How I Treat Myself.**

- 1 If I try my best on the day even if it's not my best performance ever, I will not blame myself for a defeat. A defeat, the same as a victory, is brought about by a group of players not one.
- 2 If I play very well and / score the winning goal, I will not boast or brag about it.

#### **Players from Opposing Teams:**

- 1 We will shake hands before and after the match.
- 2 We will treat our opponents with respect.
- 3 We will wish them well whether they win or lose.
- 4 We will never deliberately hit an opponent.
- 5 We will never lose our temper.

#### **Our own Team Coaches:**

- 1 We will respect our own team coaches because they are giving up their free time to train us.
- 2 If we're not picked to play in a match, we will not complain.
- 3 We will always be respectful and never use bad language.
- 4 We will never be cheeky or back answer our own team coaches.
- 5 If our own team coach is giving a talk or advising us, we will not interrupt them.
- 6 The decision of our coach is final.

#### **Supporters & Coaches of Other Teams:**

- 1 We will respect adults supporting and coaching other teams.
- 2 We will not use bad language.
- 3 We will never back-answer them.
- 4 We will wish them well if we meet them after a game.

**Fellow Players:**

- 1 We will respect our fellow players and treat them as part of a team.
- 2 The team includes the players and the substitutes – the full panel.
- 3 We will show loyalty to everyone on our team.
- 4 We will not be selfish with the ball.
- 5 We will never mock or put down a fellow team member if they miss a shot or make a mistake.
- 6 Instead, we will encourage our team mates and support them when they make mistakes.
- 7 We will remember our team mates are always trying their best.
- 8 If injured or sick, before or during a match, we will let our coaches and team mates know about it.
- 9 We will play as a team, not as a group of individuals.

**Referees:**

1. We will respect the referee as (s)he is in charge of the match.
2. We will never back answer or use bad language to the referee.
3. We will remember that we can never change a referee's decision no matter what we say or do.
4. A referee's decision is always right even when it's the wrong decision.
5. If the referee's decision seems unfair, we will not give out, sulk, blame other people, instead we get on with the game.
6. We will shake hands with the referee and thank her / him after the game.

When participating in sport organised by this school, I agree to follow the above Code of Conduct.

**Signature of Player:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

## **Appendix 4 : Restorative Practice Form**

**Ainm an pháiste:**

**Rang:**

**Dáta:**

**1. Cad a tharla?**

**2. Cad a bhí id'aighe ag an am?**

**3. Cad a cheapann tú anois?**

**4. Conas mar a chuir .....isteach ar..... ?**

**5. An raibh aon slí eile chun..... a dhéanamh?**

**6. Cad go gcaithfidh tarlúint anois?**

## Appendix 5 : Ag Bainistiú Iompar Dúshlánach

### Introduction

This policy stems from Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís's commitment to providing an optimum learning and teaching environment for all pupils. Some pupils may display escalated behaviours, including emotional/physical behaviours and risks that need to be addressed by staff. This policy is designed to safeguard the rights of children and the staff who support them, to work and develop in an environment that is positive, respectful, safe and inclusive.

As a school community we will endeavour at all times to model positive behaviour by treating children and adults with respect and dignity and building up positive relationships with pupils. Promoting positive behaviour and preventing and managing challenging behaviour is vital to ensuring the safety of all.

Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís's approach to Behaviour Support acknowledges that the student's behavioural difficulties may be linked to a triad of impairments, sensory sensitivities, and cognitive abilities of the individual.

### Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour

We understand that all behaviour is communication and that challenging behaviour serves a purpose for the individual. This can be attention seeking, sensory, tangible or escape. We aim to support the child in choosing a safer and more effective way of communication. We support a positive social environment with praise and acknowledgement for participation and achievement.

***The following are some of the strategies that will be used to promote positive behavior:***

- Praise and acknowledgement
- Develop language and communication skills
- Clear and simple classroom rules and instructions
- Visual schedules
- The use of timers to encourage work completion
- Reward systems – tokens/ points
- Access to preferred items / activities following an appropriate request/ completion of work.
- Choice boards
- Alternative seating
- Buddy system
- Distraction/ Deflection
- Regular communication with parents
- The teaching of social skills using Weaving Well-being; Fun Friends and Friends for life programmes; OSPS; Bí Sábháilte
- The use of social stories
- Consistent agreed approaches to behaviour by staff members
- Clear, consistent consequences for misbehaviour
- Talk and discussion of behaviour with the child with the help of Restorative Practice Questions.
- The teaching and reinforcing of appropriate replacement behaviour that serves the same function for the child (e.g. teaching the student an appropriate means of asking for a break from a demanding task without resorting to challenging behaviour).
- ABC tracking
- Visits to the Téarmann under the stairs; Cubby-sensory pod.
- Sensory regulation breaks using OT exercises.
- CPI safety training ( verbal intervention) to prevent challenging behaviour from escalating.
- Individual behaviour plans.
- Advice from NEPS; NCSE; SENO and outside agencies.
- Modified timetable/ school day in compliance with Circular 0047/2021



## Staff Training

The health and safety of all students and staff is of utmost priority. Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís promotes Continuous Professional Development to help SNAs and teachers develop their skills and confidence to work successfully with students who have challenging behaviour. This aims to support positive behaviour through verbal intervention and vigilance.

CPI-Safety Intervention Foundation Course - CARE, WELFARE, SAFETY and SECURITY

Two staff members are trained as CPI Certified Instructors and can deliver training to school staff. This training emphasizes prevention of escalating behaviour through our vigilance and through our response to situations.

Challenging behaviour is explained in a stepped manner and the response to each step helps to prevent it escalating to a higher level.

	Behaviour	Our Response
Step 1	Anxiety	Verbal Support
Step 2	Defensive	Verbal/ Directed choices
Step 3	Risk behaviour	Physical Intervention
Step 4	Tension Reduction	Therapeutic rapport e.g. RP questions.

Step 3 will only be used if the pupil is in a dangerous situation or endangers others around him/her. The physical intervention ranges from disengagement – blocking, hold and stabilize, push / pull and lever to holding skills with low, medium and high level intervention.

Module 1-The CPI Development Model

Module 2-Integrated Experience

Module 3-Communication Skills

Module 4-Responding to Defensive Behaviours

Module 5-Safety Interventions (including dis-engagement skills)

Module 6-Introduction to Restrictive Interventions (including holding skills)

Module 7-Decision Making

Module 8-Post-Crisis (including restorative practices)

## Responsibilities Related to Behaviour Management

*Teachers will be responsible for:*

- Providing a safe and supportive classroom environment, which promotes the educational, social, emotional and behavioural development of all students. This includes communication with the student's parents/guardians as early as possible to discuss concerns, suggest forms of support and encourage feedback. Home school communication copies support continual and effective communication.
- Implementing suitable classroom management practices and appropriate intervention strategies for students who are at risk of developing challenging behaviour e.g. seating; alternative seating; buddy system, supervision, Individual reward systems.
- Behaviour Management Plans will be put in place where needed in consultation with the Parents
- Participating in CPD that contributes to their skill development and understanding of students with challenging behaviour.
- Documenting all challenging behaviour incidents as they occur on Aladdin using the ABC form. **Appendix 5.1** Incident reports **Appendix 5.2** will be written when needed (see Health and Safety Statement)
- Reporting all challenging behaviour and incidents to the principal and parents/ guardians.

***Parents/Guardians will be responsible for:***

- Communicating with the child's teacher or school principal concerns about their child's behaviour.
- Contributing to behaviour plans that concern their child and providing feedback on the results of any interventions.
- Cooperating with interventions and strategies that are proposed by the child's classroom teacher/ SET teacher and the principal.
- Informing the school if their child is receiving any regular medication. Where prescribed medications are known to have a behavioural effect these possible effects will be factored in to all behaviour support measures.
- Talking in confidence to the class teacher or principal about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

***The Principal will be responsible for:***

- Facilitating the development of a supportive school environment and implementing the Challenging Behaviour Policy within the school.
- Facilitating access of all staff to CPD in relation to students with challenging behaviour so that enhanced skills are developed thereby enhancing sharing of support and advice within the school.
- Seeking outside support and advice.
- Deciding on a final course of action when all intervention programs have been exhausted.

## **Steps in Managing Challenging Behaviour**

Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís places emphasis on positive behaviour promotion. This is implicit in our Code of Behaviour. Only when positive measures have been tried and exhausted should the following be considered.

***Minor challenging behaviour:***

- Will be discussed with the child - Verbal Support as per Step 1 Crisis Prevention.
- Will be dealt with at class level as appropriate
- Focus initially on positive behaviour demonstrated by other students

***Minor challenging behaviours which are ongoing:***

- Will be discussed with the child – Verbal Support as per Step 1 Crisis Prevention.
- Will be written in child's ABC chart. Appendix 1
- Will be reported to parents/ guardians.
- Will be dealt with appropriately which may include the creation of a Behavioural Support Plan

***Aggressive behaviour – threats – Stage 2 Crisis Prevention matrix.***

- Will be discussed with the child – Verbal / Directed Choices as per Step 2 Crisis Prevention.
- Will be written in child's ABC chart
- Will be reported to parents/guardians
- A Behavioural Support Plan will be implemented

***Aggressive behaviour – assaults/ Serious Challenging behaviour: Stage 3 Crisis Prevention Matrix.***

- The child will be spoken to by staff directly involved.
- If help is required, a yellow/ red card will be given to a child to be given to a named teacher/ SNA.
- The child is encouraged to move elsewhere whilst the class remain in situ or vice versa whichever is easier.
- Time is given to the child to calm down.

- Medical attention is organised if necessary.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the class teacher if not present ( e.g. at lunch/ on the yard...)
- A written report will be made on the ABC chart and on the Critical Incident Report if necessary.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the principal and the child's parents.
- The school staff involved as well as the principal discuss the incident with a view to learning from it and preventing such incidents in future.

The report provides a factual account of an incident so appropriate supportive/organisational actions can be taken.

Staff can be alerted to potential dangers and how they might be prevented.

The report can be a reliable tool for evaluation of policies, procedures, performance and if used.

- A Behavioural Support Plan will be implemented in consultation with the parents.
- If the behaviour recurs, the same procedure will be followed and the Behavioural Plan will be reviewed as often as warranted/regularly e.g on a monthly basis.
- Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend a meeting at the school with the Chairperson, the Principal and the Class Teacher.
- If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with the class teacher and other members of the school community involved. Procedures for Suspension/ Expulsion are kept in the Principal's office and are in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act.

#### **Please Note:**

Behavioural interventions implemented in the school will only be done so with full parental/guardian support. In situations where parental/guardian support for the best practice intervention as selected is not forthcoming, a meeting will be held with the child/ young person's family to present and examine all alternative interventions available. The potential effectiveness, outcomes, and consequences of each intervention will be discussed with reference to the school's duty of care towards all its students and staff. After all outcomes and risks have been examined a decision will be proposed. If agreement can't be arrived at then the matter is referred to the Board of Management.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff members of Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís must adhere to the Challenging Behaviour Policy. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all staff are made aware of it. Parents must sign a statement saying that they will adhere to the policy on enrolling the child in the school.

**Limitations.** This document is not designed to list all the possible situations that may arise, nor state all the possible strategies to address challenging behaviour, but to serve as a general guide to the students, the teacher, and the Principal to be used to solve individual problems.

#### **Policy Review/Ratification**

It is fully acknowledged by all parties that this Challenging Behaviour Policy will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it is kept up to date and that it retains its relevance. Ongoing evaluation and new approaches to education and/or DES guidelines may require this document to be modified.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

**Chairman** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5.1 ABC Behaviour/ Iompar ABC ( fíricí amháin )

**Antecedents and function of behaviour / Na truícir/ Cad is cúis leis an iompar?**  
**Function can be attention seeking, sensory, tangible or escape.**

**Behaviour/ An iompar/ Cad a tharla?**

**Consequences/ Na hiarmhairtí**

Baill

Foirne:.....

Dáta.....Áit.....



## Appendix 5.2 Tuairisc ar Eachtra tromchúiseach

Ar fáil ón oifig an Phríomh Oide.

Available from the Principal's Office.

## Appendix 6 Suspension and Expulsion

### **Procedure to be followed if a pupil is to be suspended from the school**

Suspension is defined as “requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.” (NEWB 2008)

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís will be guided by the NEWB in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools 2008 in matters relating to suspension from school. The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís has the authority to suspend a pupil.

#### **Grounds for suspension:**

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms very 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
- Place the pupil in detention until a determination is made about the 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.

Suspension will result from very serious misbehaviour where 1 of the following criteria is satisfied:

- 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.

#### **Immediate suspension**

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

#### **The period of suspension**

A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective.

#### **Section 29 Appeal**

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

## Implementing the suspension

### Written notification

The Principal should notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm:

- the period 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 student and
- the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm 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 (*Education Act 1998*, section 29)

### Grounds for removing a suspension

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

### Re-integrating the student

The school should have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. This plan will help to avoid the possibility that suspension starts or amplifies a cycle of academic failure. Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension, and these feelings can trigger problems with reintegration which, in turn, may lead to further problem behaviour. Where possible, the school should arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

### Clean slate

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

### Records and reports

#### Records of investigation and decision-making

Formal written records should be kept of:

- 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 should report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

### Report to NEWB

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with 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 the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

### **Procedure to be followed if a pupil is to be expelled from the school.**

#### **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.'*

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Thomáis Dáibhís will be guided by the procedures as set out by National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools 2008 in matters relating to expulsion from school. 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.

### 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.

#### Right of Appeal

In all cases involving the suspension or expulsion of a pupil, the parents/guardians have a right of appeal to the Board of Management.