



# Scoil Chóca Naofa

Kilcock, Co. Kildare

## Code of Behaviour 2024-2025

This Code of Behaviour was drawn up by the staff of Scoil Chóca Naofa in accordance with Developing a Code of Behaviour-Guidelines for Schools. It was presented to the BOM and Parents' Association in draft form in November 2022. The Student Council had input into designing the Code of Behaviour. Their observations and comments influenced the final document. The Code will be published on the school website.

The school Code of Behaviour will also apply to all school related activities outside of school.

- School Tours
- Games and Extra Curricular Activities
- Attendance at events organised by the school.

Staff members include the following:

- Principal
- Teachers (Classroom teachers & Support Teachers)
- SNAs
- Student teachers
- Ancillary Staff

## Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well.

The Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The Code of Behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

The code expresses the vision, mission and values of the school and its Patron. It translates the expectations of staff, parents and students into practical arrangements that will help to ensure continuity of instruction to all students. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported.

## The content of the Code of Behaviour

**The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 sets out certain matters that must be included in a code of behaviour. Section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 says:**

A code of behaviour shall specify—

- (a) the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- (b) the measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- (c) the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- (d) the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- (e) the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

**In order to comply with these requirements, and in order to have the best chance of achieving its objectives, the code of behaviour should address:**

- the standards of behaviour expected in the school
- the plan for promoting good behaviour
- the ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- the plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- school procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

## **AIMS**

Our Code of Behaviour is guided by the Catholic Ethos of respect and it is a key tool in enabling the school authorities to support the learning of every student in the school. It will allow us to strike an appropriate balance between our duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and our responsibility to students whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process:

Our Code of Discipline will allow us to maintain a harmonious environment, given competing needs, time pressures and varying capacities or readiness to learn. With the support of the school community it will facilitate us to meet this challenge successfully.

**The children in Scoil Chóca Naofa are well-behaved and co-operative. Our emphasis is on promoting and rewarding good behaviour.**

Rather than listing all possible behaviours that might be unacceptable there are clear definitions of the different roles and expectations of the people involved in the everyday life of the school.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS: THE SCHOOL WILL EXPECT that you will:**

- Show respect for yourself and others
- Show courtesy and respect for staff members
- Show acceptance and respect for differing personalities, cultures and nationalities and never insult or belittle your fellow students because of differences; Listen when others are speaking; Show kindness and a willingness to help
- Always do your best
- Participate in all class activities and avoid distracting behaviour
- Follow the rules drawn up in your class
- Show courtesy and manners as you move around the school
- Respect school property and keep the school tidy and litter free

## **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS: THE SCHOOL WILL EXPECT that you will**

- Encourage a positive attitude to the school and expect your child to abide by the Code of Behaviour
- Ensure the punctuality and regular attendance of your child
- Provide a contact number where you can be reached in an emergency
- Always model the behaviour you expect from your child.
- Be familiar with the various policies and codes of the school and the expectations of the pupils
- Be interested in, support, praise and encourage your child's work in school; ensure that he/she has all the necessary materials, adheres to the dress code, has a healthy lunch, has his/her homework carefully completed and participate in school activities
- Exert firm but fair discipline in cases where your child's behaviour is having a negative impact on the behaviour of others.
- Be available to meet your child's teacher –make an appointment so that the teacher is available to talk with you.
- To respect the school staff and to support them in their implementation of the school's policies.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF THE SCHOOL:**

### **PARENTS AND STUDENTS WILL EXPECT the school:**

- To provide a safe and happy learning environment where children receive fairness and consistency
- To encourage and support children and affirm their abilities in an atmosphere of support and inclusion rather than criticism
- To show a willingness to listen to the viewpoint of students and parents
- To use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- To explore Restorative Justice Practices
- To allow a “fresh start” once an issue has been resolved.

### **TEACHERS WILL EXPECT the school community to provide:**

- Mutual support and encouragement
- Co-operation to achieve the schools aims and objectives
- A fair and consistent implementation of the school Code of Behaviour
- A consistent approach to handling troubled children
- An atmosphere that encourages professional development and a willingness to learn and change

## Promotion of Positive Behaviour

In Scoil Chóca Naofa emphasis is placed on setting high expectations and acknowledging and affirming positive behaviour.

**Teachers may adopt some of the strategies listed below to this end:**

- Words of praise or congratulations from the teacher and/or the Principal in class, in a larger group, praise over the school intercom or at assembly.
- Behaviour record chart where individual or group is rewarded.
- Pupil of the week/month award or certificate.
- Class treat / Golden Time at the discretion of the teacher.
- Small prizes, stars presented in class or at Assembly.
- A night free of homework or homework pass.
- Good News note.
- Extra school privileges or responsibilities.
- Note of praise, comment or ink stamp on children's work.
- Annual certificates for special initiatives such as full/near full attendance.

## Misbehaviour

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: MINOR, SERIOUS and GROSS.

All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of **MINOR** misbehaviour include:

- Using electronic equipment or mobile-phones in school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform
- Bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions.
- Inappropriate responses to teacher correction e.g. ignoring, back answering etc.
- Inappropriate comments/responses towards peers

Examples of **SERIOUS** misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)

- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Persistent infringement of the school rules
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.
- Continued and repetitive inappropriate responses to teacher correction.
- Throwing items around the classroom in an aggressive way.

Examples of **GROSS** misbehaviour include:

- Inappropriate use of technology
- Assault on a staff member or another pupil
- Behaviour that deliberately endangers others
- Threatening behaviour
- Spitting
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

### **Responses and sanctions for Minor and Serious Misbehaviour**

Sanctions are necessary to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a positive change in behaviour in the child, to reinforce the boundaries set by the Code of Behaviour, to prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning and to keep the student, or other students/adults, safe. They contain a degree of flexibility with due regard to age, emotional development and individual circumstances.

At each stage and at an appropriate time the teacher may discuss the misbehaviour with the child. The Classroom Strike sheet and the Yard Strike sheet will record misbehaviours. The Strike sheets will be kept in the Leabhar Cairdeas in each class. Where a child has been previously checked for unacceptable behaviour either by calling their name or a look from the teacher, the child will then enter the following process:

#### **➤ Classroom Responses and Sanctions**

Responses and Sanctions for Mild and Serious Misbehaviour in the Classroom

Classroom rules are discussed very regularly so all children have a clear understanding of the rules.

**The following steps will be followed for misbehaviour during class time.**

A: Teacher will move to operate from an area in close proximity to pupil that is misbehaving.  
B: Communication of the misbehaviour to the child by verbal warning and reasoning with the child.

C: Simple choice: Teacher will present the pupil with a choice...eg "If you continue to misbehave you will be moved to a different seat/thinking chair."

D: \* (Infants to 1st) A visual chart of a superstar, the sun, a cloud, and a storm cloud will be used. If a child misbehaves their name will move to the cloud.

\*\* (2nd -6th) The child's name will be written on the whiteboard.

Following A-D a Class Strike Sheet will be implemented.

**Step 1:** Strike 1 ticked by teacher on the Class Strike Sheet.

Note is written in Journal by the class teacher.

Note signed by parent and returned the following day.

**Step 2:** Strike 2 ticked by teacher on the Class Strike Sheet.

Note is written in Journal by the class teacher.

Note signed by parent and returned the following day.

**Step 3:** Strike 3 ticked by teacher on the Class Strike Sheet.

Note is written in Journal by the class teacher.

Child brings this note to the principal to sign.

Note signed by parent.

Class teacher phones parent to discuss the child's behaviour.

\* (2nd – 6th) "Reflection time" will be implemented the following break time under supervision by the Principal or Deputy Principal. This will involve missing 15 minutes of break time and a Reflection Time Sheet will be filled out by the child.

\*\*(Infants to 1st ) "Reflection time" will be implemented the following break time.

The child will miss 7 minutes of break time under supervision by the Principal or Deputy Principal. The misbehaviour will be discussed at this time.

**Step 4:** If a child has two Reflection Times within a fortnight a meeting will be arranged with the child, parent, teacher and principal, where an agreed sanction/sanctions will be decided upon.

Teacher will keep the Class Strike Sheet in the Leabhar Cairdeas.

**Children will begin every week with a clean start.**

**Continuous repeated misbehaviour will be treated as Gross Misbehaviour and sanctions for Gross Misbehaviour will be adhered to.**

### ➤ **Yard/Field Responses and Sanctions**

Responses and Sanctions for Mild and Serious Misbehaviour in the Yard/Field.

Yard rules are discussed very regularly in the classroom so all children have a clear understanding of the rules.

The following steps will be followed for misbehaviour during break time outdoors.

**Step 1:** Strike 1 ticked by supervising teacher on Yard Supervision Strike Sheet.

Child is shown Strike 1 Card.

Class teacher informed.

Note is written in Journal by the class teacher.

Note signed by parent and returned the following day.

**Step 2:** Strike 2 ticked by supervising teacher on Yard Supervision Strike Sheet.

Child is shown Strike 2 Card.

Class teacher informed.

Note is written in Journal by the class teacher.

Note signed by parent and returned the following day.

**Step 3:** Strike 3 ticked by supervising teacher on Yard Supervision Strike Sheet.

Child is shown Strike 3 Card.

Class teacher informed.

Note is written in Journal by the class teacher.

Child brings this note to the principal to sign.

Note signed by parent and returned the following day.

Class teacher phones parent to discuss the child's behaviour.

\*(2nd – 6th) "Reflection time" will be implemented during the following break time, under supervision by the Principal or Deputy Principal. This will involve missing 15 minutes break time and a Reflection Time Sheet will be filled out by the child.

\*\* (Infants to 1st ) "Reflection time" will be implemented during the following break time. The child will miss 7 minutes of break time under supervision by the Principal or Deputy Principal. The misbehaviour will be discussed at this time.

**Step 4:** If a child has two Reflection Times within a fortnight a meeting will be arranged with the child, parent, teacher and principal, where an agreed sanction will be decided upon.

**Children will begin every week with a clean start.**

**Continuous repeated misbehaviour will be treated as Gross Misbehaviour and sanctions for Gross Misbehaviour will be adhered to.**

### **Responses and sanctions for Gross Misbehaviour**

Gross misbehaviour threatens the health, safety, physical and emotional well-being of the pupils and staff members. Whilst we shall endeavour to take into account each child's age and the level of individual need, the following procedures will apply in cases of gross misconduct.

#### **Stage 1:**

Verbal warning is given and the incident is recorded in the Serious Incident Record Book in the Office. Principal is informed and the child is removed from the situation for health and safety reasons.

Parents/guardians are informed by the class teacher. In extreme cases where the level of physical aggression endangers the pupil, another pupil or member of staff, the pupil will go to Stage 3 below.

#### **Stage 2:**

If the behaviour is repeated, parents are informed immediately by the Principal and asked to collect their child from the Principal's office. The incident is recorded as above. To re-enter school the child will be presented to the Principal's Office the following morning with the parent/guardian. The child must give an undertaking not to repeat the behaviour again. Following an apology, he/she will be allowed to return to their class. This constitutes a **final warning**.

**Stage 3:**

If the behaviour is repeated yet again the matter will be recorded in the Serious Incident Book in the office and referred to the Board of Management. Parents will meet the Principal/Chairperson and a one to three day suspension will be imposed. Parents will be notified in writing. Parents take responsibility to obtain and ensure the completion of all homework during the period of suspension.

**Stage 4:**

Any additional serious misbehaviour will be referred to the Board of Management who may authorise further suspension of the pupil up to a maximum of 10 days. Parents take responsibility to obtain and ensure the completion of all homework during the period of suspension. Following suspension a Behaviour Management Plan agreed by the principal, the class teacher, the parent and the child will be necessary for re-admission.

**Stage 5:**

Expulsion from the school will only be considered in the most extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and only after Stages 1- 4 have been enacted. A decision to expel a pupil would be considered in the following circumstances: the pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process, the pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real threat to safety or the pupil is responsible for serious damage to school property.

*Alternative school placement or further referrals such as CAMHS might be required as an alternative to expulsion. A decision regarding suspension or expulsion may be appealed to the Board of Management by the parents/guardians, having regard for the educational and health/safety rights of all concerned*

**Pupils with special needs**

Pupils with special needs will be required to follow the school's Code of Behaviour but staff members will use their professional judgment in relation to regularity and level of sanctions. While staff members must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other children who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanors, they will also show leniency and understanding in relation to children with specific learning/ behavioural / emotional difficulties. Parents of these children will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the child to improve his/her behaviour. This may involve agreeing a Behaviour Plan or working and co-operating with the Support Teacher and Special Needs Assistant(SNA), if an SNA is deployed to assist a pupil/class. Devising such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies.

**Understanding behaviour**

Staff at Scoil Chóca Naofa are also aware of the factors that affect behaviour. These factors include external and interpersonal factors (such as parent and family patterns and relationships, peer groups/friends and neighbourhood and community factors) and within-person factors (including age and stage of development, social skills deficit, personality and temperament, physical and medical characteristics and ability to learn). The staff also believe that students' behaviour can change, and will endeavour to assist pupils to modify their behaviour. Examples of support and intervention for pupils are outlined below.

### **Interventions and support**

Classroom management plan as agreed with all students at the start of the school year i.e. rewards, rules and sanctions.

Social skills programme, promotion of friendship and self-esteem as part of S.P.H.E.

Yard games/activities may be organised if the behaviour is taking place on the yard. Footballs and skipping ropes provided.


Use of a behavioural check-list to evaluate whether any modifications could be made to the learning environment.

A Behaviour Plan may be considered when a child consistently exhibits challenging and disruptive behaviour. A Behaviour Plan will focus on a limited number of behavioural targets. It is envisaged that the child will be involved in the setting of targets. If a child is entitled to a support teacher on the basis of his behavioural needs, the support teacher may set targets in consultation with the child, the class teacher and the parents.

For pupils who exhibit particularly challenging behaviour, support services may be requested to assist in responding to the needs of the pupils. Sources of support may include, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and Special Education Support Service (SESS)

### **RATIFICATION OF POLICY**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in September 2024.

Signed:  (Chairperson Board of Management)

## Reference Section

Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES website [www.irgov.circulars](http://www.irgov.circulars)). Also as Appendix 54 CPSMA Handbook

Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website). Deals with appeals under the following headings

- (1) Permanent exclusion from a school
- (2) Suspension
- (3) Refusal to enrol

Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d) (DES website)

Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23(1-5) 24 (1-5) (DES website)

Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2000. CPSMA

- (1) \*Appendix 42 p.151 Rule 30 of the Rules for National Schools
- (2) \*Appendix 54 p. 164 Guidelines for School Behaviour and Discipline.
- (3) \*Appendix 55 p. 167 A suggested Code of Behaviour and Discipline for National Schools. \* These references apply until new guidelines are issued by the Education Welfare Board.

Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website.

Report to the Minister of Education Niamh Breatnach, T.D. on Discipline in Schools. Maeve Martin Spring 1997. Ch. 4

p. 56-61 Recommendations for Schools.

Discipline in the Primary School INTO August 2002 Enhancing Self Esteem INTO 1995

Working Together. Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations. INTO 2000

The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers INTO

The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. IVEA 2002 Ch 2 School Discipline

Quality Circle Time in the primary school. Jenny Mosley. LDA 2000

Working towards a Whole School Policy on Self Esteem and Positive Behaviour. Jenny

Mosley. Positive Press 2001 Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying HAS 2002

Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board Investigating and Resolving Bullying in Schools. The Cool School Programme. NE Health Board

Stop it! Steps to Address Bullying. Wexford Education Network Area Partnership. Phone: 053 23994 Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes

Scoil Choca Naofa SPHE Plan

Anti Bullying Unit. Trinity College. Dr. Mona O Moore

Achieving Positive Behaviour. A Practical Guide. Patricia Dwyer. Marino Article in Solas (March 2001)

InTouch (April 2002) pg. 26 Discipline For Learning; InTouch (March 2002) pg. 22 Circle Time

InTouch (April 2000) pg. 33 Circle Time InTouch (May 2001) pg. 31 Calm classrooms using

Montessori methods

NPC website [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie) IPPN website [www.ippn.ie](http://www.ippn.ie)

INTO website [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie) SDPS website [www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie)