

# **Howth Primary School 18080A**

**Scoil Mhuire Beann Éadair**



## ***Code of Behaviour***

## **INTRODUCTION**

Howth Primary School places the greatest emphasis on a positive approach to encouraging good behaviour, based mainly on positive techniques of motivation, praise and encouragement. The aim of this code is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while also acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. Good discipline requires a high level of cooperation and communication between staff, pupils and parents. Every effort will be made to foster this co-operation.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL**

The ethos of Howth Primary School is to create a happy learning atmosphere in which each student will feel secure and free from psychological, social, verbal and physical danger. To ensure this the school endeavours to provide a caring, stimulating and healthy environment throughout the whole school.

## **GENERAL AIMS**

- 1.The efficient operation of the school.
- 2.To create an orderly, happy and stimulating learning environment in the classroom.
- 3.To ensure the wellbeing and safety of all pupils and staff members'.
- 4.To maintain good order in the school and in the playground.
5. To develop good self-discipline in the pupils based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.

## **STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR:**

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Board of Management, the Principal and with the relevant special duties post holder. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, when on yard duty and on any organised out-of-school activity, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. The school values the support and cooperation of parents in promoting positive behaviour.

Teachers will use disciplinary procedures sensibly and flexibly taking into account the individual circumstances and the seriousness of the misbehaviour, abiding by the principles of justice and fair play and Department of Education & Skills Guidelines.

### **1.Promoting Positive Behaviour**

The following strategies may be used to encourage good, and discourage unacceptable behaviour. This list is not exhaustive.

- Children are encouraged and praised either orally or by written comment
- Reward for effort e.g. stars, sticker, merits for classes
- Children are complimented in class or sent to another class or to the Principal to display work well done.
- Children can be given small prizes,extra P.E. time, art time,golden time,iPad and laptops, exemption from homework etc as rewards for positive behaviour

- Children are given stickers, pupil of the week certificates as rewards.
- Each week teachers could select a 'student of the week' and a 'class of the month' may be handed out at assembly.
- For lining up in the yard the 'best at lining up' can be called out and brought up to the front of the line. An 'outstanding pupil' or 'overall best at lining up' or someone you notice who plays well may be brought up to the front.
- Principal award in the form of a certificate.
- Extra privilege award, for example no homework, pyjama day, non uniform day, pizza and popcorn day, extra yard time etc

## **2. Supportive Interventions: below are some examples of supportive actions:**

- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time, SPHE, or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Informal record notes regarding incident or intervention. This information would be useful should a problem persist.
- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal and/or Principal.
- Individual reward chart with specific desired learning/behaviour outcome
- In-class Behaviour Management Programme such as Weaving Wellbeing, conflict resolution exercises, SPHE lessons and reflections etc.

### **School Rules**

- Our general school rules are listed in Appendix A and B at the end of this document.
- At the beginning of each year the class teachers and children draft a list of class rules focusing on the positive aspects of behaviour. These are kept to a minimum. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and individual difference.

## **CATEGORIES OF MISBEHAVIOURS**

Misbehaviours may be deemed minor, serious or gross and will be dealt with as appropriate based on the severity and frequency of the behaviour and the developmental stage of the child.

### **LEVEL 1: MINOR MISBEHAVIOURS:**

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

Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included. Please note the list is not exhaustive:

- Talking in class

- Swinging on the chair
- Not paying attention
- Failure to prepare for class, forgetting necessary books or gear as defined by individual teachers
- Failure to engage in work/task assigned by the teacher
- Incomplete homework on a regular basis
- Incorrect uniform
- Disorganised work area
- Out of seat
- Name calling
- Telling Lies
- Running/creating disturbance in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Punctuality
- Rough play
- Being disrespectful towards a staff member
- Minor misbehaviour in school, yard or on school outings
- Possession of mobile phone/internet enabled devices i.e. didn't hand it up to the teacher at the beginning of the day

### **LEVEL TWO: SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOURS**

Serious behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and wellbeing of the students and staff.

Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included at this level. Please note the list is not exhaustive:

- Repeated instances of minor behaviours, which have not been modified by intervention
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Repeated verbal abuse/use of profanity
- Repeated lying
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult
- Serious Misbehaviour in school, or during fire drill or on school outings
- Use of mobile phone/ internet enabled devices in class/school
- Taking photographs and/or videos of other pupils or staff without permission.

### **LEVEL 3: GROSS MISBEHAVIOURS**

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal wellbeing of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement.

Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in this level. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 serious behaviours which have not been modified by intervention
- Bringing weapons, dangerous substances or incendiary material to school
- Serious assault: -Serious assault that causes injury to others or that has the potential to cause serious harm or damage.
- Behaviour that the school qualifies as extreme misbehaviour
- Leaving school grounds without permission

## **SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring change in behaviour. The sanctions imposed for misbehaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and the developmental stage of the child.

Below is a list of sanctions that are divided into class-based, school-based and formal-based. This list is not exhaustive.

### **Class-Based Sanctions**

- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers
- Prescribing additional work or unfinished classwork or homework which was not completed by the student due to lack of effort, concentration or non compliance to be completed during a breaktime.
- Loss of Privileges:  
Junior: eg. loss of a classroom job, golden time Senior: eg. loss of golden time or exclusion from class trip, **exclusion from lunchtime sports training for a period of time, loss of privilege of playing a match for the school team,**
- Reflection sheet describing the incident
- At the discretion of the class teacher a pupil may be referred to the principal for serious breaches of discipline, disruptive behaviour or repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour.
- Communication with parents/guardians by the class teacher informing them of the unacceptable behaviour
- **Behaviour Reflection Time:** Use of yellow and red cards. These are used as a means of communication to the pupils. A yellow card is a verbal warning that if an unacceptable minor behaviour doesn't improve there will be a red card which means **spending a lunchtime reflecting on their behaviour..** An instant red card can be given for repeated minor behaviours, gross or serious behaviours. The teacher will inform the deputy principal and principal when a **behaviour reflection time period** has been sanctioned. The parents will be informed by the class teacher of the reason prior to this period and a letter will be sent home following the **behaviour reflection**, signed by parents, class teacher and deputy principal and returned to the school for record.

### **School-Based Sanctions involving other members of staff**

- One-to-one or small group social skills lessons with members of the SEN team
- Individual Behaviour Modification programme (tailored to the particular needs of the pupil) where appropriate

- Behaviour Reflection Time: as per class-based sanctions
- Depending on the seriousness of the behaviour the child may be asked to meet with the principal and/or deputy principal to discuss the incident of misbehaviour
- Depending on the severity and frequency of behaviours, communication by the principal to parents/guardians to inform and discuss misbehaviour
- Class teacher and/or Principal may need to meet with one/both parents
- In-school suspension where the child is in school but is supervised in another class
- Anticipated use of suspension

**Formal-based sanctions involving the school's Board of Management.**

- Referral to Board of Management i.e. Chairperson of the Board of Management may be informed and parents/guardians are requested to meet with the Chairperson or other designated Board member and the Principal.
- Suspension will proceed in line with the government's Department of Education guidelines. Please refer to Appendix D at the end of this document.
- Expulsion will proceed in line with the government's Department of Education guidelines. Please refer to Appendix D at the end of this document.

**Sanctions for Managing Extremely Difficult Behavioural Problems**

In the case of a pupil with an extremely difficult behavioural problem or where a pupil presents a real threat to the safety of another pupil or member of staff the following strategies shall apply:

1. Removal of the pupil or the class from the area of difficulty, e.g. class, playground etc.
2. Parent/guardian to be contacted immediately and requested to remove the pupil
3. School will receive an acknowledgement from the parents/guardians and the child that the behaviour was unacceptable and an undertaking that it will not be repeated
4. Behaviour Modification plan (where appropriate)
5. Parent/guardian may be put on notice that suspension and/or expulsion will be a real possibility if offending behaviour continues

**Bullying:**

All incidents of bullying including cyberbullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-bullying policy. The severity, frequency and nature of the bullying will determine the sanctions where necessary.

**Record Keeping:**

Teachers should keep a written record of all instances of serious and gross misbehaviour as well as a record of improvements in the behaviour of disruptive pupils.

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, formal records in relation to pupils' behaviour are kept in a secure filing cabinet.

Copies of formal communications with parents will be retained in the school. Records of more serious incidents are recorded on a specific Incident Report Form and a copy is given to the Principal.

### **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

This policy will be deemed to be successful when the following are observed:

1. Positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment
2. Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
3. Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Role of parent(s): Discussion reinforcement of the school's Code of Behaviour, Conduct & Discipline with child(ren)

Role of teachers: Discussion / Reinforcement/ Review of Policy

Role of Principal: The Principal will monitor the effectiveness of the policy on a regular basis and communicate with the In-School Management Team/Parents Association/Board of Management as necessary

Role of Special Duties Post Holder (Post 1):

Post Holder will monitor and coordinate discipline in liaison with the Principal and other members of staff

### **Documents Attached:**

1. Appendix A: Scoil Mhuire Howth School Rules
2. Appendix B: Scoil Mhuire Howth yard/playground rules.
3. Appendix C: Detention Letter template
4. Appendix D: Suspension/Expulsion Procedures

### **Timeframe for Implementation & Review**

The original policy was ratified in September 2004. It is reviewed on a regular basis as deemed necessary.

### **Responsibility for Review**

Involved in this review will be the Principal, In-School Management Team, teachers, parents and Board of Management.

### **Review Dates:**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>08/02/2010</b>
<b>1. Reviewed :</b>	<b>20/03/2012</b>
<b>2. Reviewed :</b>	<b>26/02/2014</b>
<b>3. Reviewed :</b>	<b>05/04/2017</b>
<b>4. Reviewed:</b>	<b>30/03/2020</b>
<b>5. Reviewed:</b>	<b>03/02/2022</b>
<b>6. Reviewed:</b>	<b>03/10/2024</b>

## Appendix A

### SCHOOL RULES

The rules are kept to a minimum and are at all times devised with the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community in mind. Respect and consideration for others forms the basis for our code of good behaviour.

Where appropriate the rules are positively stated in terms of what pupils **should** do:

- ★ Pupils should take care at all times not to hurt or injure themselves or others.
- ★ Pupils should strive towards a high level of good manners and courtesy to fellow pupils, teachers and visitors. Polite language is expected.
- ★ In the interest of Safety and Good Order pupils should comply with the rules designed for their collective well being. These rules are communicated to them and reinforced as the need arises.
- ★ School and other persons' property and equipment will be treated with respect.
- ★ In the playground directions given by the supervising teacher are to be followed implicitly.
- ★ Older children should, as far as practicable, protect and care for younger children.
- ★ Children should attend school punctually and regularly, and must stay on the school premises for the duration of the school day. They may only leave with the express permission of the class teacher or Principal. This will normally only be given on a written request from the parent.
- ★ Children should pay attention to neat dress and good personal hygiene. Full school uniform must be worn (unless alternative arrangements have been authorized by class teacher/principal, i.e. school outing etc.).
- ★ Long hair must be tied back at all times.
- ★ Make-up is not allowed to be worn in school.
- ★ Chewing gum is not permitted in school.
- ★ Jewellery: Necklaces are not permitted in school for health and safety reasons. Only stud ear-rings are permitted. Long ear-rings are not.
- ★ Mobile phones must be turned off and handed up to the teacher at the beginning of the school day and returned at 2:30pm.
- ★ Bad language will not be tolerated.
- ★ Corridors are quiet zones at all times.
- ★ Class assignments and homework should be completed to the best of a pupil's ability.
- ★ Pupils are expected to adhere to the rules and procedures put in place as per our Covid-19 School Response Plan
- ★ Pupils are expected to adhere to the rules pertaining to the yard as outlined in Appendix B.



## **Appendix B**

### **Scoil Mhuire Howth Primary School Yard Rules**

A copy of this is to be kept in each classroom. Each teacher should remind the children of these rules from time to time. They are by no means exhaustive. This is a working document and can be added to when required.

- Pupils should not give piggy-backs, lift others or give the bumps.
- Pupils should refrain from charging/group running from one end of a yard to the other.
- Running through skipping ropes is not permitted
- Pupils should not kick, hit or punch another pupil
- Pupils should not sit, walk or climb on the exterior walls
- Bulldog type games are not permitted.
- Two balls maximum on the astro, small tennis ball allowed for each class on main yard.
- Staff car park and ramp area is out of bounds
- Walking around in large groups with arms around each other is not permitted
- Chewing gum is not permitted
- Train games are not permitted
- Fair play in games is what is expected at all times. Nobody is to be deliberately left out of a game or told they are not welcome to play.
- Bullying- we have a zero tolerance in this school. Please report early to a member of staff so that it can be stopped and don't stand by and watch it happen to others
- On wet days children remain in their classrooms. Doors are to be left open. Children are not allowed to run around.
- Children are expected to obey instructions from the staff member on duty without delay or question
- School property must be respected and not damaged or destroyed.

## Appendix C

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### **Howth Primary School**

Scoil Mhuire N.S  
Howth, Co. Dublin  
Phone/Fax: 01 8323572

### **Principal:**

Mary Downes  
Email: [howthns@gmail.com](mailto:howthns@gmail.com)  
[www.howthprimaryschool.ie](http://www.howthprimaryschool.ie)

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Dear Parents,

\_\_\_\_\_ has received a **behaviour reflection period** today for not adhering to the school rules as outlined in our code of behaviour policy.

Yours sincerely,

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Mr. .... [ Class Teacher]  
Aisling Heerey [Deputy Principal]  
Mary Downes [ Principal]

Please sign below that you have received this note and return it to the class teacher.

**Parent/Guardian Signature:**

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## **Appendix D**

### **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

**Suspension and Expulsion will proceed in line with relevant governmental/Department of Education procedures.**

In the most serious incidents, suspension and expulsion may be considered. This measure will only be used as a last resort. The Board of Management will ensure that:

- Fair procedures are used for suspension and expulsion and that all staff are aware of these procedures
- Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that fair procedures are accessible to those from different language or cultural backgrounds
- There are no undue delays in the investigation and in making decisions about the imposition of suspension or expulsion
- All matters to do with an investigation are dealt with in confidence
- In circumstances of particular complexity, the school authorities may seek legal advice to support their decision making.

### **Suspension**

For the purposes of this document, suspension is defined as:

*‘Requiring the student to absent him/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’* (Developing a Code of Behaviour: A Guide to Schools NEWB 2008)

Suspension will be used as a sanction where all other strategies have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion.

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 others. Parents / guardians may be requested to collect a student from school during the day if their continued presence constitutes a threat. Parents/guardians may be asked to keep a student home from school for a number of days and this form of suspension will be notified to parents/guardians by the principal.

Before serious sanctions such as suspension/expulsion are used, communication between the school and parents will take place. Suspension will be in accordance with Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Copies of all correspondence will be retained).

During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school. The Board of Management has the authority to suspend and this authority has been delegated to

the principal. This authority, however, has limits, for example the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire, Howth Primary School has given approval to the Principal to suspend a pupil for a period of three school days, where a BOM meeting cannot be called in a timely fashion.

The grounds for suspension include:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of others or to the teaching process
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to the safety and welfare of others or to the pupils own safety and wellbeing
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

All suspensions, for whole days or part of a day will be recorded by the principal and reported to the BOM.

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. The school will arrange, where possible, for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the reintegration process.

### **Procedures in respect to Suspension**

The procedural steps will include:

- Parents will be informed by phone or in writing. The letter will confirm:
  1. Period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
  2. Reasons for the suspension
  3. Arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student.
  4. Provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
  5. Right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, section 29)
- Written notification will be signed by the Secretary to the B.O.M. and has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having informed parents. It also ensures that parents are clear about what their son/daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.
- Except in the case of immediate suspension, parents will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Parents and pupil will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision to suspend is made and before any sanction is imposed. This meeting will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the misbehaviour, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.
- A pupil will not be suspended for more than 3 days by the Principal. If a proposal in excess of 3 days is being considered, the matter will be referred to the BOM.

- A period of up to 5 days may be sanctioned by the Chairperson in circumstances where a meeting of the BOM cannot be convened in a timely fashion.
- The BOM can place a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.
- The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year to 20 days or more.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case. A student is expelled from school when the BOM makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school. The BOM has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion of a student will only be undertaken in extreme cases of gross misconduct that seriously disrupts the smooth and safe running of the school. This measure will generally only be undertaken after every effort has been made to support, help and address behaviours of concern so as to avoid the expulsion. However, a single serious assault on another person may be considered grounds for expulsion.

Before the expulsion of a student, the BOM will notify the local Education Welfare Office in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

### **Procedures in respect of Expulsion**

The procedural steps will include:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal;
- The principal will make a recommendation to the BOM to consider permanent exclusion of the student;
- The BOM will consider the principal's recommendation and will invite both the principal and the student's parents / guardians to a hearing on the issue;
- In the absence of the principal and the parents/guardians, the BOM will deliberate on the recommendation of the principal, the responses of the parents/guardians and any other relevant information;
- The BOM will write to the parents/guardians to inform them of their decision. Where the BOM recommends expulsion, the parents/guardians will be informed of their right to appeal the decision and that a period of 20 school days will elapse before the decision of the BOM is confirmed.
- The school will participate in any consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer in respect of the decision to expel.

### **APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, gives parents (and students over the age of 18) the right to appeal decisions made by the BOM to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. Appeals must be lodged within 42 calendar days from the date the decision has been notified to parents.