

Code of Behaviour

September 2025



Phoenix Park Specialist School
North Road, Phoenix Park, D08 V098
Phone: 01-838 6699
E-Mail: thephoenixparkschool@gmail.com

Introduction

Phoenix Park Specialist School provides for children with severe emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (Severe EBD) who have the potential to return to mainstream school. This policy outlines the school's Code of Behaviour and it has been produced and written with considerations given to;

- Phoenix Park School's Mission Statement
- The school's responsibility to make appropriate provision for learners with SEBD under the umbrella term
- Anti-Bullying Policy 2025
- Relationship and Wellbeing policy 2025
- Section 23 of the Education Act 2000 and guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB)
- Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations Guidelines for Schools in Supporting Students 2024

How our code was developed

Our Code of Behaviour was developed in consultation with the principal, teachers, special needs assistants, students and other members of the school community. The school principal, deputy principal, teachers, SNA's and nurture room staff worked collaboratively to set out a vision for the school to inform the policy and outlined categories for mild, moderate and serious behaviours. School staff also collaboratively developed a school toolkit for 'Keeping it all on track', 'Keeping it together when things get rocky', 'Keeping it safe' and 'Repairing relationships'. These toolkits inform strategies used by staff when children present as anxious, defensive or at risk or when tension reduction occurs. The students in the school contributed to the school rules and their shared perspective informs our six 'Golden Rules' as laid out in this policy.

Vision Statement

At the Phoenix Park School, we are committed to providing a supportive school environment that maximises the educational opportunities and outcomes for all students.

The core of the policy is that all children and members of staff should experience a safe and positive school environment. The code of behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and reduce 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 quality of relationships between teachers and students is a powerful influence on behaviour in a school. The schools Relationship and Wellbeing Policy fosters relationships of trust between students and teachers. The code is informed by this policy and also the principle of fairness. It respects the principles of natural justice, and ensures a consistent approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel. We are committed to ensuring that:

- Students are guided toward caring for themselves by our promotion of self-discipline, self-control and self-responsibility.
- We nourish self-esteem and self-respect and we distinguish between a person and that person's behaviour.
- We value dignity, worth, fairness and justice in every child.
- Students are guided toward caring for others by the promotion of respect, courtesy, tolerance, teamwork, trust and honesty among all members of the school community.
- School staff are the first and foremost models for these values and will behave in a manner from which children can learn at all times, both from their interactions with other adults and with the children themselves.
- We understand the learning and behaviour needs of all students.
- We recognise and reward all students for positive contribution in reaching their individual behaviour and learning targets and support this using appropriate strategies.

Our beliefs are based on the four values of:

- Nurture
- Respect
- Honesty
- Empathy

Aims

At the Phoenix Park Special School, we aim to:

- Establish standards of behaviour in a caring, productive and safe learning environment where all students are valued and respected.
- Promote a supportive environment so that all school personnel may work together in developing acceptable standards of behaviour for our pupils.
- Encourage all students to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour, and the consequences of their behaviour choices, through the implementation of whole school proactive programs and additional targeted support for those who may need it.
- Instil within our pupils the values of caring for themselves, others, their school and their learning.
- Create a climate of co-operative learning and teamwork amongst all pupils and staff.

Expected Standard of Behaviour

At our school, we believe that the first step in facilitating standards of behaviour is communicating these standards to **all** students. We believe that teaching students the behaviours we want them to demonstrate at school is very important. Communicating behavioural expectations is a form of universal behaviour support and helps us to prevent problem behaviour and provides a framework for responding to problem behaviour.

We promote the following six “**Golden Rules**” that underpin all behaviour in our school:

1. Keep yourself and others **Safe**
2. Be **Kind**
3. **Try** your best
4. Have **Respect** for the school community, school property and yourself
5. Use every opportunity to **Learn**
6. When things get rocky, get **Back on Track**.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management Responsibilities

The Board of Management is expected to:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
- Ratify the code
- Ensure the code is communicated to the whole school community

Principal's Responsibilities

The Principal is expected to:

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Arrange for review of the Code, as outlined in the timetable for review.

Teachers' Responsibilities

Teachers are expected to:

- Teach the code
- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on a whole school basis
- Be cognisant of their duty of care
- Create a safe and welcoming working environment for each pupil
- Develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil
- Praise desirable behaviour
- Facilitate pupils to reach their full academic potential
- Listen, at appropriate times, to pupils' explanations for behaviour
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour through the Sleuth portal
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary
- Ensure all paperwork is kept up to date including Individual Escalation Prevention Plans, Student support Plans and Pupil Profiles.

All Staff Members Responsibilities

All staff members are expected to:

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour having regard to decisions made on a whole school basis
- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Be cognisant of their duty of care
- Contribute to a safe and welcoming working environment for each pupil
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability, with consideration given to equity over equality
- Develop and nurture a sense of self-esteem in each pupil
- Praise desirable behaviour
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with behaviours of concern
- Provide support for colleagues
- Work as a team to discuss and brain storm
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Help teachers to think about and analyse what is being communicated through behaviour
- Support children during times of anxiety
- Recognise signs of distressed behaviour and be aware of triggers relating to individual children in the school community
- Help to devise possible ways of changing the behaviour and support and implement student support plans for students
- Complete necessary paperwork following behaviours of concern and physical intervention, as laid out in the physical intervention policy

Pupils' Responsibilities

Pupils are expected to

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Listen to their teachers and staff members and act on instructions/advice
- Avoid any behaviour in class that disrupts learning.
- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling
- Include other pupils in games and activities
- Follow school and class rules
- Speak to a teacher if they feel anything is wrong.

Parent's Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are expected to

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for their own and other people's property
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others and support
- Communicate to the school the reasons for children's absences
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour on a day to day basis
- Provide the school with at least two mobile numbers.
- Work with the school in building a positive relationship for the best outcomes of their child
- Take an active role in the development of their child
- Work in collaboration with teachers, alongside the principal and deputy principal to develop any specific behaviour plans needed for their child.
- Read and if necessary, respond to progress reports which are sent home monthly so that ways of helping the pupils can be discussed and agreed and the contributions of parents/guardians on strategies which may be effective for the individual child can be considered.

Procedure For Notification of A Child's Absence From School

Each parent must notify the school of their child's absence and the reason for this absence. Parents will be asked to indicate the reason for the absence and a record of this will be kept by the school. In the event of a pupil's absences exceeding 20 days, the school is legally obliged to report such absences to the National Education and Welfare Board (NEWB).

Requirement for parents of new students to accept the terms of the Code of Behaviour

Parents who are applying for a place for their child in PPSS, will be furnished with a copy of the Code of Behaviour prior to registering their child. As provided for in the Section 23 (4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, a Board of Management may require that the parents of pupil confirm that the school's Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them before the child is enrolled. The Board of Management of PPSS, as a condition of registering their child in the school, require parents to confirm in writing that the PPSS Code of Behaviour (and its associated policies) is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by their child.

Plan for Promoting Good Behaviour

At our school, we believe that students are more likely to stay on track when:

- There is good school management and classroom teaching
- They understand the code of behaviour and their part in making it work
- They see that the code works in a fair way

- They are given responsibility in the school and are involved in the development of the code of behaviour
- parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour
- The standards for behaviour are clear and consistent
- There are good relationships between teachers, parents, staff and students and a happy school atmosphere
- Adults model the behaviour that is expected from students

Whole school strategies to encourage and promote good behaviour include:

- positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
- good school and class routines
- clear boundaries and rules for students
- helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
- recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour
- exploring with students how people should treat each other
- involving students in the preparation of the school and classroom rules

Rewards

We believe that the use of rewards can help to affirm children's efforts to abide by the code of behaviour and can also motivate more reluctant children to engage with the code. Rewards systems are in place at a whole school level and at individual classroom levels. Examples of both are provided below. We believe in the following in terms of good practice in using rewards:

- They are meaningful to the individual student or group
- They acknowledge behaviour that is valued and wanted
- They are closely linked in time to that specific behaviour
- They are given for effort as well as achievement
- They are used consistently and by all staff

Whole School Rewards	Class Rewards
<p>'Phoenix Park Bucks' School Tuck Shop Weekly Kindness Award Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine Nurture Room Movie Afternoon</p>	<p>Free time on Chromebook Extra Hall Time Extra Football Time Extra time on trampoline or bikes Movie Day Hot Chocolate treat Class Trips</p>

Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

The Phoenix Park School makes systematic efforts to prevent problem student behaviour by teaching and noticing expected behaviours on an ongoing basis. When unacceptable behaviour occurs, students experience predictable consequences. Our school seeks to ensure

that responses to unacceptable behaviour are consistent and proportionate to the nature of the behaviour.

Should problems arise for a student or their parents in regards to unacceptable behaviours, the parent or student can at any time contact school staff regarding this behaviour and will be advised of the school approaches taken in account of this behaviour.

Our whole school approach to responding to inappropriate behaviour includes:

A three step ladder of intervention

Step 1: Whole School Strategies

- Consistent and relatable consequences for all problem behaviours, e.g. 'minutes out is minutes off'
- The use of the 5 point scale
- Effective procedures and supervision in non-classroom areas
- Effective classroom management and instruction

Step 2: Class Intervention

- Classroom team make a plan for intervention for the student.
- At this stage, the teacher may bring the student's case to the principal for further intervention.
- Intervention plan is documented in student's support plan.

Step 3: Intensive Support

- Behaviour Support Plan will be reviewed and intensified.
- At this stage, the principal may seek support from outside agencies involved with the child, e.g. NEPS or CAHMS.

Restorative Conversations

Restorative conversations happen following difficulties between students and are usually facilitated in the deputy principal's office. They include a series of six questions;

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
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?

Student Support Plans (SSPs)

Student support plans include a log of actions, guided by discussions had when children are off track, when a child cannot take part in the whole class plan or when behaviours of concern occur.

Parents are asked for suggestions of strategies which may support their child monthly when school progress reports are sent and during parent teacher meetings alongside ad hoc meetings as things arise.

Student support plans require teachers to lay out targets for each child and strategies which may support the child to reach their target. Targets for each child are laid out on the child's target card, which is usually kept on their desk, so that all staff are aware of what that individual child is working on.

Individual Escalation Prevention Plans (IEPPs)

Staff members work together to complete an Individual Escalation Prevention Plan (IEPP) for each pupil. This plan outlines the recognised stages of behaviour that children exhibit, as outlined by the Crisis Prevention Intervention and includes behaviours of anxiety, defensive, risk behaviour and tension reduction and outlines the best staff response of supportive, directive, safety intervention and therapeutic rapport, to each level respectively. All staff members are required to make themselves familiar with and must follow this plan.

Throughout any instance of unacceptable behaviour, conversations had at a class level or a whole school level should adapt a problem solving approach involving six steps;

1. Gather information. Understand the context and the factors that may be affecting behaviour.
2. Generate ideas about possible solutions that take account of the reasons why it may be happening.
3. Decide and agree on specific targets and strategies and record these in the students support plan.
4. Implement the agreed strategy consistently through the use of target cards
5. Review progress: evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the intervention at staff meetings and parent teacher meetings
6. Throughout, keep the relationship with the student as positive as possible; involve the student and parent.

Plan for Implementing the code of behaviour

School staff have worked collaboratively to identify behaviours which are deemed as unacceptable in the school and these behaviours have been categorised as ***Mild, Moderate and Serious Behaviours***. When responding to problem behaviour the staff member first determines if the problem behaviour is mild, moderate or serious, with the following agreed understanding:

- **Mild** problem behaviour is handled by staff members at the time that it happens and may be recorded on teachers record sheet. Continued repetition of such behaviours will inform targets and strategies within Student Support Plans
- **Moderate** behaviour is referred to the class teacher and are recorded, with logical or natural consequences enforced and a system put in place to prevent reoccurrence.

- **Serious** behaviour is referred to the principal and the warning letter system is started. Disciplinary absences are considered, which balance the interests of the individual student with the educative and safety needs of others in the school. Depending on the severity of the behaviour and the effect on other members of the school community, suspension and expulsion may be considered as possible sanctions.

A list of sample behaviours which falls into these categories is available in the appendices below.

Limit Setting

When responding to challenging behaviours, staff members ensure that students understand the relationship of the behaviour to expected school behaviour. All staff members have received training in this regard and understand crisis prevention procedure for setting limits with children who are acting in a defensive manner. A five-step approach to setting effective limits will be followed by staff, and will always be delivered in a calm manner:

1. Explain to the individual exactly which behaviour is inappropriate
2. Explain why the behaviour is inappropriate and how their behaviour differs from expected school behaviours
3. Give reasonable choices with consequences
4. Allow time
5. Enforce consequences

Warning letter system

At the Phoenix Park Specialist School, a warning letter system is used as a response to repeated instances of serious behaviour. The system operates as follows:

1. Information letter.
2. First Warning.
3. Second Warning.
4. Third Warning – Suspension.

*It should however be noted that in cases of serious misbehaviour, particularly misbehaviour that constitutes a risk to the child themselves, other children or staff or any member of the school community, the Principal or the Board may decide that immediate action is necessary, in the form of suspension or exclusion, to protect members of the school community.

Managing aggressive or violent behaviour

The school recognises that occasionally students may not respond positively to the usual interventions and that they may require extra support in an effort to manage aggressive or violent behaviour. A small minority of students may show particularly challenging behaviour. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. The Board of Management is satisfied that staff members are trained in, and use Crisis Prevention Intervention in dealing with disruptive and assaultive behaviour that students exhibit that may pose a health and safety risk to the student, staff members or other pupils in the school.

Ensuring Consistent Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour

Staff members follow the school Code of Behaviour, Behaviours of Concern guidelines, CPI safety interventions, Relationship and Wellbeing policy, Bí Cineálta and Health and Safety policy consistently, which ensures a consistent response to dealing with problem behaviour in the school. These policies set out the school's approach to behaviour management and they overlap with this Code of Behaviour.

As mentioned above, staff work together to complete an Individual Escalation Prevention Plan (IEPP) for each pupil. All staff members must follow this plan. Throughout each academic year, staff members are provided with appropriate professional development to respectfully deal with inappropriate behaviours. Through this training, we work to ensure consistent responses to challenging behaviours across the school. Training includes individual events for teachers and staff members, and group professional development initiatives delivered to the whole school team.

Parent Contact

At the Phoenix Park Specialist School, we feel that it is important that parents are kept informed of their children's behavioural performance during the day, and also that school staff are aware, as much as possible of difficulties and precipitating factors which may impact a student's day. As such, families and school staff can use the school Dojo app as a means of communicating, the Dojo will also be updated frequently with photos of things happening around the school and important updates relating to the school. Alternatively parents will receive a phone call to outline how their child's day went. The school Warning Letter System is also used to inform parents of incidents of serious unacceptable behaviour in the school.

Procedures for the use of Suspension

In cases of serious misbehaviour, a suspension may be issued.

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked and made the best effort possible to find a response which supports the child. Other interventions may include:

- Reviewed timetable
- Individualised incentives
- Parental contact
- Behavioural Contract
- Warning Letter System
- In-school suspension
- Support from CAMHS team or NEPS Psychologist

The Phoenix Park school recognises that suspension can be counter-productive if used without a clear rationale or without measuring its impact and value. School management

should consider the risk of any unwanted outcomes from suspension, such as an increased sense of alienation from school that could lead to a cycle of behavioural and academic problems.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

The following factors should be considered:

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
2. The context of the behaviour
3. The impact of the behaviour
4. The interventions tried to date
5. If suspension is a proportionate response
6. The possible impact of suspension

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

In exceptional circumstances, school management 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. Fair procedures must still be applied.

Length of period of suspension

The Board of Management has authorised the principal to impose suspension as a sanction for up to a maximum of three days. The Principal, in consultation with the Chairperson, is authorised to impose a period of suspension of not more than five days.

The Board of Management may impose a period of suspension of more than five days but will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will not impose an indefinite suspension and will formally review any proposal to extend an existing suspension.

The Board will also 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 school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

Administrative Steps relating to Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures (save in circumstances where an immediate suspension is warranted):

Step 1: Inform the student and parents

Let the student and their parents know about the incident, how it will be investigated, and that it could/will result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter. Informing parents in writing has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having let the parents know. It also ensures that parents are clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged incident.

Step 2: Give an opportunity to respond

Parents and student should be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed, where appropriate. A meeting with the student and their parents provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Step 3: Decision as to whether to suspend the student or not.

Having heard what the parents and/or student has to say, the Principal (or where appropriate the Board) will make a decision as to whether to suspend the student or not, and the period of suspension to be imposed. Freedom from bias in relation to suspension will exist, where possible, the person or people involved in the incident will not solely be responsible for deciding on the sanction imposed.

Step 4: Follow up

As soon as possible after the decision to suspend has been taken, the Principal should notify the parents/guardians 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
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents/guardians (for example, parents/guardians may

be asked to attend for a post suspension meeting or may be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour)

- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management,
- where applicable, the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) (Education Act 1998, section 29).

In the event of a student being suspended, the school will notify school transport of this fact and the date of return to school for the student (when it is known).

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. It should be noted that this preliminary investigation is likely to be brief and will not involve the parents having a right to respond at the initial stage. A formal investigation (during which there will be full rights of fair procedure in relation to a right to a response etc in accordance with Steps 1-4 above) should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The school must have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances should a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

Work will be issued to the student for the duration of any period of suspension

Need for additional resources

At any stage it may be clear that the student requires additional resources that are outside the school's capacity. In consultation with parents/guardians, and the BOM, an application will be made to the DES and the SENO for any additional resources required. This following list is not exhaustive and may include some or all of the following and may be for a short or sustained period of time

- *Additional SNA support*
- *Any other clinical supports as deemed necessary by the Board of Management*
- *Additional support from individualised escort on school transport*
- *Individualised transport*
- *Individualised teaching support*

If any of the above resources are not granted to the school following application or, if there is a delay in accessing any of those recommended, a further period of administrative suspension may be required until such time as the resources are available.

Rationale for the use of Suspensions

The Phoenix Park Specialist School believe that using suspensions as a consequence for serious misconduct can have value if used with a specific purpose in mind. This includes giving staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour and giving the school an opportunity to seek support from other agencies that may be able to help to support the child (e.g. CAMHS, NEPS, Tusla). Suspensions can provide respite for staff and students, give the student time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences, and illustrate to other students that serious misbehaviour is not acceptable at the school.

Appeals

Decisions in relation to suspensions imposed by the principal should be appealed to the Board of Management within ten school days of the decision being notified to the parent(s). In relation to suspensions where the cumulative period of suspension in an academic year reaches 20 school days, this can be appealed in accordance with the provision of Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

Post Suspension

A planned re-entry to school may be convened after enforcing a suspension to minimize recurrence of unacceptable behaviour and disruption to the student's education. Parties who may be involved in this process include the school principal, deputy principal, Parent/Guardian, Teacher or other staff members involved in the incident.

A meeting may be scheduled to take place following a suspension and before the official start of the school day. Should a post suspension meeting be arranged, limit setting will take place whereby children will be expected to take part in a restorative conversation, discussing what led to the incident and what actions can be taken in the future to ensure behaviour is not repeated. The school principal must be satisfied that the pupil's return to school will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff.

In the event that the pupil does return to school, a revised Student Support Plan for the pupil will be required prior to re-admitting the pupil formally to the class.

Parental Engagement

Parents may need to pick their child up from school and if this is the case, they are required to be at the school within one hour of contact from the school. Parents are required to bring their child to a post suspension meeting, should one be organised. Parents are entitled to respond to any sanction imposed by the school. Parents may ask to meet with the teacher and principal to discuss the incident, and to ask questions about the evidence of the serious misbehaviour. This meeting will also afford the school an opportunity to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.

Further Reporting

If a student is suspended for a period of not less than 6 consecutive school days, then the school is obliged to report this to **the Tusla Education Support Service (TESS)**. If a student is suspended for a shorter period(s) then it must be counted in the aggregate number of absences and if the student exceeds 20 days absence (including any suspensions) then this will be reported by the school also.

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters. The Juvenile Liaison Officer can be a significant source of support and advice for the school and the student.

Procedures for the use of Expulsion

This procedure may be used in an extreme case, in accordance with the principles set out below and with Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. While it is envisaged that expelling a student would be a measure of last resort after a continuum or period of serious or dangerous behaviour, the Board recognises that there may be instances of behaviour which are so serious or dangerous that expulsion is warranted for a “first offence”.

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student’s behaviour and is considered in the case of repeated instances of serious or dangerous behaviour. Grounds for expulsion may be similar to those of suspension, however, factors also include the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour. A difference regarding expulsion, is that the school have tried a number of significant steps to address the misbehaviour and avoid expulsion, as appropriate. These may include:

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways to support the student
- explanation to students of the possible consequences of their behaviours should they continue
- the assistance of support agencies (e.g. NEPS, NCSE, CAMHS)

When the board of management believe the school have exhausted all possibilities for changing the students behaviour, expulsion will be considered.

Grounds for expulsion:

- The pupil’s behaviour is a consistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- Continued presence of the pupil in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the pupil’s own safety and well-being.
- Continued presence of the pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety and well-being of others.

Non-exhaustive list of examples which may warrant expulsion:

The Board may impose expulsion as a sanction in cases such as the following. Please note that this list is for information purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive. Other scenarios may arise in which the Board deem expulsion is warranted.

- Sexual assault
- Possession of and/or supplying of illegal drugs
- Possession of and/or use of a weapon
- Actual violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff
- Attempted violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff
- Attempted self-harm resulting in the occurrence of potentially serious physical injury where the school judges that it can no longer meet the pupil's needs by adequately providing for the pupil's health, safety and well-being when at school

Procedure in respect of expulsion:**Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal**

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal will:

- inform the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is 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. This also ensures that parents are very clear about what their child is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Parents and the student will have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed. Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents must take place. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.

If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make 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 of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing

It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should 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. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board should 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

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

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 must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)*). The Board of Management should refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot 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)*).

An appeal against an expulsion under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Educational Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with section 24(1) or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion (*Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, s4A*).

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

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- 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*).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned should come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, a 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)*). A Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension should only 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 should formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record should be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Youth against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

Concerns and Complaints

Parents and students have the right to raise any concerns they may have in relation to behaviour or any aspect of the code of behaviour. Concerns can provide valuable feedback to the school and are welcomed. The school has provided a mechanism for dealing with concerns and complaints through the school Parental Complaints Procedures.

School Policies Relevant to the Code of Behaviour

- Physical Intervention Policy
- Parental Complaints Procedures
- Bi Cineálta Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Relevant Documents

- *Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties, A Continuum of Support*, NEPS
- *Special Educational Needs, A Continuum of support*, NEPS

Ratification and Communication

This Policy is available on the school's website and is provided to all children on enrolment. It was ratified by the Board of Management in September 2025.

Policy Review Procedures

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if necessary. The next review will take place in 2027.

Dr. Brendan Doody, Chairperson of the Board of Management

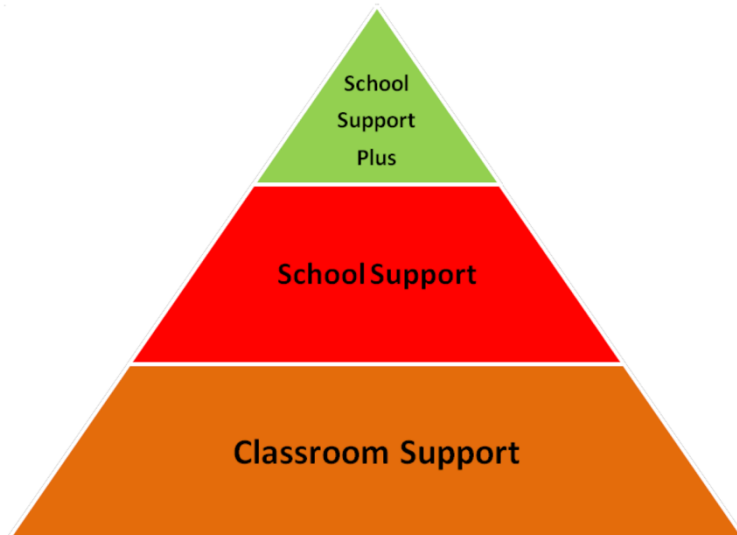
Date Created	September 2025
Date Ratified	
Date for Review	September 2027

**Appendix 1
Student Support Plan Template**



STUDENT SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	

A Continuum of Support





School Support Plus Individual Support Planning Sheet <small>(Essential References: 'SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers' pp. 32-46; 'BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers' pp.50-62; pp.75-77)</small>			
Name:	Age:	Class:	Date:
Progress to date/Strengths: The nature and degree of the student's abilities, skills and talents			
Areas for improvement/presenting difficulties: The nature and degree of the student's special educational needs and how those needs affect his/her progress			
Summary of Special Educations Needs of the student			
Special Educational Provision: The special education and related support services provided to the child			
Further Information			
Signed Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Teacher(s):			



School Support Plus – Individual Support Plan (Essential References: ‘SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers’ pp. 32-46; ‘BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers’ pp.50-62; pp.75-77)		
Lead Teacher:	Class:	Review Date:
Priorities/Long Term Goals:		
Short-term targets and strategies		
Target 1:	Strategies:	
Target 2:	Strategies:	
Target 3:	Strategies:	
Target 4:	Strategies:	
Signed Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Teacher(s):		



School Support Plus Individual Support Planning Sheet Review <small>(Essential References: 'SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers' pp. 32-46; 'BESD: A Continuum of Support – Guidelines for Teachers' pp.50-62; pp.75-77)</small>	
Progress to date/Strengths: What has been most successful and why?	
Areas for improvement/presenting difficulties: What has been least successful and why?	
Special Educational Provision: What are the pupil's current needs?	
Future Actions: What actions are recommended? List how, who and when actions will be carried out.	
Pupil comments	
Parent/Guardian Comments	
Further Information	
Signed Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Teacher(s):	

School Support Plus Primary Care Support Targets (where additional care needs are identified) <i>To be completed by the teacher(s) in consultation with parents/guardians and staff supporting the additional care needs of the student.</i> <i>The voice of the student should also be captured as part of this process, as appropriate.</i>
Long-Term Care Goals
Care Targets (incorporating the voice of the student)
Strategies to help the student achieve the care targets
Staff, including support staff, involved
Parent/Guardian input
Frequency of support
Timeline for achievement of targets
Review date
Signed Parent(s)/Guardian(s):



Signed Teacher(s):

*A consultation with a NEPS psychologist/other professionals may contribute to this plan.



<p>School Support Plus</p> <p>Primary Care Support Targets Review Record</p> <p><i>To be completed by the class/subject(s) when reviewing the Student Support Plan, to inform future targets, in collaboration with parents/guardians, the student and staff supporting the additional care needs of the student.</i></p>
<p>What care targets have been most successful and why?</p>
<p>Since the start of the Support Plan, has anything changed in relation to the original concerns? If so, what are these changes, and what have we learned from them?</p>
<p>Have the student's additional care needs changed since the start of the plan, and if so how?</p>
<p>Feedback from the student re: his/her progress</p>
<p>Comments from the parent(s)/guardian(s)</p>
<p>Recommended future actions; what, how, who, when?</p>
<p>Signed Parent(s)/Guardian(s):</p> <p>Signed Teacher(s):</p>
<p>Outcome of review</p>



	Revert to Support from All/ Support for Some		Continue at Current Level of Support	Request consultation with other professionals

**Appendix 2
Individual Escalation Prevention Plan**

Individual Escalation Prevention Plan (IEPP)

Stages of Escalation

Name:

Age:

Date:

Triggers:

Prevention Strategies:

Behaviour Level	Staff Response
Anxiety	Supportive
•	•
Defensive	Directive
•	•
Risk Behaviour	Safety Intervention
•	•
Tension Reduction	Therapeutic Rapport
•	•

Appendix 3

Categories of School Behaviours

This is not an exhaustive list of behaviours and any repeated instances of mild or moderate behaviours may also mean referral to the principal and the beginning of the letter warning system, alongside the consideration of disciplinary absences.

<p>Mild Behaviours Handled by staff members at the time that it happens and may be recorded on teachers record sheet</p>	<p>Moderate Behaviours Referred to the class teacher and are recorded, with logical or natural consequences enforced and a system put in place to prevent reoccurrence</p>	<p>Serious Behaviours Referred to the principal and the warning letter system is started. Disciplinary absences are considered</p>
<p>Shouting Walking around the class- room Not sitting on chair properly Climbing on railings Work avoidance behaviours Bad language Snapping a pencil Leaving the class without permission Rough play Refusing to do work Not listening Refusing to leave a room Disrupting games Not sharing/taking turns Not sitting down to do work Not ignoring when asked Climbing on furniture Kicking classroom doors Passing comments Using other children’s stuff without asking Excluding individuals Pushing past someone Throwing small objects</p>	<p>Damaging displays Repetitive touching of other students Not following staff instructions Leaving school grounds Ripping books Trashing classroom Disrupting other classes Persistent name calling Vandalism Smashing a plate or cup Kicking front door open Setting off fire alarm Throwing items around the room Throwing furniture Directed throwing Consistently ignoring classroom instructions Stealing school items Verbal abuse to other pupils Continually kicking classroom doors Pushing other children Pushing staff Weapon seeking Threatening others Constant defiance Spitting</p>	<p>Deliberate throwing of furniture Throwing an iPad, laptop or Chromebook Refusing to follow safety instructions Defiant urinating Stealing Sexualised language Spitting at others Interfering with fire extinguishers Threatening others with a weapon Climbing on cars Inappropriate touching Deliberate assault to staff Setting a fire Tying something around neck Pulling hair Strangling another child Sexual Harassment Head banging Making themselves sick Incident involving a member of the public Attempting to smash a window Smashing a window</p>

PPSS

Code of Behaviour

