

# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

## SCOIL TRIEST SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

*Scoil Triest endeavours to create a happy, safe and supportive learning environment where each individual is heard, included and valued. We enable each other to reach our full potential both in school and in the wider community.*

*"Be As Good As You Can Be!"*

*Pupils will be subject to the code of behaviour in the immediate school environment, on school transport, on school tours and in any activity during the school day e.g. work experience, school links visits to other schools, community access programmes in the wider community.*

## ABBREVIATIONS

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CPI	Crisis Prevention Institute
HSE.	Health Service Executive
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
NEWB.	National Educational Welfare Board
SENO.	Special Education Needs Organiser
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SPHE	Social Personal and Health Education
TEACCH	Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children
ETB:	Education and Training Board

An audit of the existing Code of Behaviour at March 2011 was carried out by a small group representing staff, parents, Board of Management. The existing code was circulated to all involved with a date set to meet and review the existing code of behaviour.

The group consisted of:

- 2 teachers
- 2 SNA's
- 2 parents / Guardians
- 2 Board of Management members - Principal + 1 other
- 1 Multi-disciplinary member

The Code of Behaviour has been reviewed giving consideration to the following guidelines as defined by the N.E.W.B.

- *Our vision for relationships and behaviour in the school and the ways in which the school promotes good behaviour.*

We aim to provide a positive non-confrontational teaching and autism friendly learning environment for the pupils and staff in Scoil Triest taking into account the individual needs of each child as determined by their needs associated with their autism and learning disability. The following considerations associated with autism and learning disability can cause a child to be stressed and behave in a manner which parents and staff may find challenging.

Students may have difficulty in the following areas

- Ability to understand or be understood.
- Understanding of social cues / rules.
- Ability to socialise
- Need for structure which takes into account their difficulties with temporal and space concepts.
- Anxiety
- Ability to describe emotions.

- Ability to make needs known - in relation to pain, hunger, illness, heat or other sensations.
- Ability to share.
- Close proximity of others
- Sensory problems associated with noise, touch etc.
- Changing routines - including staff changes, locations.
- Transitions.
- Generalizing i.e. transferring what is learned from one situation to another.
- Physical changes in adolescence.
- Perceiving that they are being deprived of favoured events.
- Need for ritualistic forms of occupation.
- Mental Health Issues.
- Medical issues.
- Dietary / Sleeping Disorders.
- The child's mode of communication not being understood by others.
- *The expectations for students, staff and parents and how they will treat each other.*

It is expected that students, staff and parents will work together in a positive proactive manner, treating each other with dignity and respect. Parents provide staff with invaluable advice, information, support and reinforcement. School staff should work together with parents as partners in the process of developing behaviours that are appropriate and acceptable in so far as this is possible for our students.

- *Ways in which students, teachers and parents can help to promote a happy school.*
  - Create an autism friendly environment
  - Create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.

- Evaluate and understand the individual needs of each child, matching activities to the pupil's strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes.
- Provide an appropriate stimulating educational programme.
- Make every effort to view the world from the child's perspective.
- Provide the child with the level of structure he / she requires to anticipate the sequence of daily events, using routine and structure to devise timetables which make sense to the child and reduce anxiety.
- Listen to the child and to each other.
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Ensure that pupils and staff feel safe and secure.
- Ensure the pupil is taught strategies for communication on an individual basis so that the pupils can learn the power of communication to enable them to meet their own needs where possible and to the best of their ability.
- Enable the pupils to become as independent as their ability allows them to be.
- Develop positive relationships with pupils and with each other.
- Teach and encourage pupils to make choices within a safe constructive learning environment.
- Recognise the need and provide opportunity for pupils to opt out of activities when the environment becomes over stimulating for them i.e. sensory breaks.
- Communicate adult expectations clearly and directly to students.
- Communicate information / plans to all involved adults to ensure consistency of approach.
- Ensure that all methods / strategies of working with a pupil are known to significant people in the pupils life as appropriate
  - e.g. parents, escort on transport, ETB teachers, respite & home support staff, staff on yard duty.

- Make appropriate environmental changes e.g. TEACCH structured classrooms.
  - Work with the relevant multi-disciplinary team members to develop programmes of optimum relevance and benefit to the fulfilment of each child's potential.
  - To develop clear long term and short term guidelines so that pupils can experience consistency of approach from all staff throughout their school day.
  - To afford opportunity to class teams to meet regularly to discuss plans and strategies so that levels of consistency of approach can be maintained.
  - To formulate appropriate de-briefing strategies and methods as requires.
  - To develop skills to allow for greater inclusion in the world and access functional living skills through the functional living curriculum.
  - Allow the pupils the right to be consulted in matters which affect their lives.
  - To allow for flexibility for matching of students in their class groupings as the school year progresses
- *Roles and Responsibilities of Staff members in relation to behaviour management of students.*
    - Take into account all the factors which cause the pupils to behave in an unacceptable manner e.g. mental health issues, medical issues.
    - Attempt to understand / analyse why the pupil behaves in a certain way.
    - Look at each behaviour as a communication and examine what the pupil is attempting to communicate.
    - Identify triggers for challenging behaviour and reduce / remove these triggers as appropriate.
    - Use graded change techniques to enable the pupil to cope with non-preferred events and situations.

- Identify and document pupils likes / dislikes and triggers for behaviours in an Individual Behaviour Plan.  
An Individual Behaviour Plan should identify
  - (1) Pro-active strategies and supports to maximise positive behaviours.
  - (2) Pro-active strategies for dealing with undesirable behaviours.
  - (3) Identify environmental triggers for undesirable behaviours.
- Share Individual Behaviour Plans with relevant others i.e. Parents, ETB teachers, escorts, Respite Staff, Summer Camp Staff, home-support staff etc.
- Help the child develop strategies to cope in different situations.
- Use a non-blaming approach to behaviour analysis and management.
- Increase opportunities for success for everyone by minimising opportunities for conflict and confrontation.
- Reinforce positive behaviours in a way that is rewarding for each individual child.
- Use praise and positive attention.
- Enable / teach the pupil to make choices.
- Negotiate and reach compromise with the pupil.
- Allow the pupil to have space and quietness he / she may need.
- Keep records of behaviours.
- Consult with the multi-disciplinary team members when necessary.
- Consult with parents ETB Teachers, escorts, respite staff, summer camp staff, home support staff when necessary at the discretion of the Teacher / Principal.
- Aim towards the child becoming independent in that they can take control over their own behaviour if they are able to do so.

- School Rules

Rules should be few, flexible, relevant, realistic, child-centred, positively articulated, clear, consistent and understood by the child.

General Rules:

- We listen to each other.
- We listen to staff.
- We walk in school.
- We are kind to each other
- We look after ourselves and our belongings in school.
- We wear our uniforms.

Playground Rules:

- We stay in our playground.
- We are kind to each other.
- We take turns.
- We play nicely with our friends.
- We speak kindly to each other.
- We wait until our teacher collects us from the playground.

Transport Rules:

- We stay in our seats until it is time to get off the bus / taxi.
- We wear a seatbelt.
- We are kind to each other.
- Systems for acknowledging good behaviour progress and effort.

Use of Praise / Rewards:

- Praise is a very effective way of reinforcing acceptable behaviours and improving self esteem.
- Rewards should always be very appealing to the pupil if they are to be effective. We must ensure that the child understands what is expected of them in order to receive the reward.
- Combine praise and rewards if possible.

- Give specific praise e.g. "well done you walked in the corridor".
  - Praise pupil in the presence of others.
  - Praise with smiles, eye contact and enthusiasm and gestures.
  - Catch the child being good.
  - Praise using tokens / rewards.
  - Display good work.
  - Foster peer support e.g. clapping, cheering.
  - Use weekly assembly as a forum for praise for major achievements.
  - Use token systems relevant to child's interest to earn rewards.
  - Allow the child responsibility to do a message or class job.
  - Send a note home so parents can further reward.
  - Send the child to another class or to Principal for praise.
  - Use positive 'stickers' for work well done.
- Ways in which students, staff and parents can help each other to meet the standards expected in the school.

#### Positive Behavioural Management Techniques / Strategies:

- Use Behavioural Support Plan.
- Distract the pupil by redirecting him / her positively to another activity.
- Reason with child / offer alternative.
- Use Social Stories <sup>™</sup> to clarify expected acceptable behaviour.
- Use planned ignoring (minor difficulties)
- Define boundaries and space for pupil.
- Use praise and positive attention.
- Use reward / token system.
- Foster peer support.
- Use the pupil's augmentative communication where appropriate to maximise understanding.
- Use SPHE programme as an opportunity to discuss behaviour.
- Encourage the pupil to assume responsibility for his / her own behaviour through the use of contracts / recording notebooks

/ reward charts which he / she can be involved in designing and filling in.

- Be consistent.
- Ensure that the de-briefing policy is enforced for both staff and students. (refer to De-briefing Policy)
- Parents and others should assume responsibility for students safety within school grounds when collecting and dropping them to school. Support in this area may be requested from the class team

- Ways in which Parents / Students can get help when problems arise.

- Parents can request help from class teacher at any time.
- Parents can request referral to any member of the multi-disciplinary team if they need help. This help can be requested through the class teacher or school principal.
- Referral can be made to either Trasna Behaviour Support Service or CAMHS after discussion with the multi-disciplinary team.

Consequences of unacceptable behaviour, responses and sanctions.

Please note that because of the difficulties associated with autism many of our students are unable to understand consequences of their behaviour and will need a detailed behaviour plan relevant to their individual needs.

However, for individual students who understand about consequences the following responses and sanctions may apply.

Possible sanctions to consider:

1. Use of facial expression.
2. Use of firm tone (not shouting)
3. Quiet time - removal from group under supervision of an adult.
4. Removing others from the vicinity of the child.
5. Giving the child notice of a possible consequence of their behaviour - last chance!
6. Asking the Principal to talk to the child.

7. Where the behaviour is very aggressive threatening or violent towards staff and other pupils the parent may be asked by the Principal to take the child home for the rest of the day.

ALL FORMS OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT BY STAFF ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED AND WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION PENDING INVESTIGATION BY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT.

Restrictive practices include:

- Seclusion
- Medication including PRN Medication
- Restricted access
- Restrictive restraints
- Exclusionary time out
- Physical intervention (physical restraint) procedures (MAPA strategies)

Restrictive practices should only be used as a last resort and the least restrictive and least intrusive option should be used. Where restrictive practices are being considered, referrals should be made to relevant multi-disciplinary professionals and when implemented should only be carried out by suitably trained and qualified staff.

The role of the restrictive practice is to make the current situation safe while the team addresses the underlying causes and maintenance for the restriction. It is not acceptable to implement a restrictive practice in the absence of doing this.

Restrictive practices should be part of an individual's behaviour support plan and should be agreed with parents.

For further information please refer to Brothers of Charity Southern Services - Fuller Lives Safer Lives : Policy for Restrictive Practices.

*GROSS MISCONDUCT IN SCOIL TRIEST.*

- Types of behaviour considered as gross misconduct in the context of Scoil Triest.

1. Causing physical hurt to others such as kicking / pushing / biting / punching, where medical attention is required.
  2. Persistent assault where child is striking a staff member / student and is unable to stop.
  3. Kicking or punching to the head of another student / staff member.
  4. Resulting from the behaviour of a child, classroom activities are continually disrupted.
  5. Where the safety of the child / other children or staff cannot be guaranteed due to the intensity of the child's behaviour.
  6. Where damage to school property is such that normal school activities are continually disrupted.
  7. Due to behaviour associated with mental illness a child is unable to cope with school attendance and likewise the school staff are unqualified to provide the intervention necessary.
  8. Inappropriate sexualised touching of others.
- This list is not exhaustive.

- School Procedures for dealing with gross misconduct:

1. Keep incident reports.
2. Frequent meetings / phone calls with parents as part of the process to manage behaviour and to keep parents informed.
3. Referral to school psychologist.
4. Establishing of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan in consultation with parents and members of the Multi-disciplinary team.
5. Consider if additional relevant training is required for staff.
6. Deal with behaviour in situ with all necessary support if possible.

7. If behaviour cannot be dealt with in situ, it should be dealt with in alternative setting within school with necessary support.
8. Request behaviour support from Trasna Training Services.
9. Inform SENO if additional resources are required.
10. Where Principal and Deputy Principal in consultation with the multi-disciplinary team determine that the risk of damage to children or staff is high the child may be suspended for 3 days. H.S.E. representative will be informed by the Principal in case immediate supports are required for the family. Board of Management sanction is required to suspend a child beyond 3 days. The child can be accepted back into school if his / her behaviour can be managed in safety as determined by the multi-disciplinary team.

### Suspension:

Factors to consider before suspending a student

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour:

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour:

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in the swimming pool, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- What is the age, stage of developed and cognitive ability of the student?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special education needs)?

The impact of the behaviour:

- How are other students and staff affected by the students behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?
- Does the behaviour have a particular or greater impact on some students or teachers?
- Does the student understand the impact of their behaviour on others?

The interventions tried to date:

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of those interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Are any other interventions such as peer mediation, restorative justice approaches or family conferencing available?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving the problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent services)

Whether suspension is a proportionate response:

- Does the student's behaviour warrant suspension?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of suspension:

- Will suspension allow additional or alternative interventions to be made?

- Will suspension help the student to change the inappropriate behaviour?
- How will suspension help teachers or other students affected by the behaviour?
- Will suspension exacerbate any educational vulnerability of the student?

Procedure in respect of suspension:

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. Where preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures.

- Inform the student and their parents about the complaint.
- Give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

All issues relating to suspension shall be dealt with in accordance with NEWB Guidelines as amended and updated from time to time.

### Expulsion:

Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student.

The nature and seriousness of the behaviour:

- What is the precise description of the behaviour?
- How persistent has the unacceptable behaviour been and over what period of time?
- Has the problem behaviour escalated, in spite of the interventions tried?

The context of the behaviour:

- What are the circumstances of the incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. in class, in a particular teacher's class, in the yard, in a group)?
- What factors may have triggered or provoked incidents of serious misbehaviour (e.g. bullying, cultural or family factors)?
- Are there any factors that may be associated with the behaviour (e.g. particular home circumstances, special educational needs)?

The impact of the behaviour:

- How are other students and staff affected by the student's behaviour?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on the teaching and learning of the class?

The interventions tried to date:

- What interventions have been tried? Over what period?
- How have the interventions been recorded and monitored?
- What has been the result of these interventions?
- Have the parents been involved in finding a solution to the problem behaviour?
- Has the intervention of NEPS or other psychological assessment or counselling been sought, where appropriate?
- Is the student or parent involved with any support service and has this agency or support service been asked for help in solving this problem?
- Has any other agency been asked for assistance (e.g. Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)?
- Is the Board satisfied that no other intervention can be tried or is likely to help the student to change their behaviour?

Whether expulsion is a proportionate response:

- Is the student's behaviour sufficiently serious to warrant expulsion?
- Is the standard being applied to judging the behaviour the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student?

The possible impact of expulsion:

- To what extent may expulsion exacerbate any social or educational vulnerability of the student?
- Will the student be able to take part in, and benefit from, education with their peers?
- In the case of a student who is in care, what might be the implications of expulsion for the care arrangements?

Procedures in respect of expulsion:

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation, and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

These procedures assume that the Board of Management is the decision-making body in relation to expulsions.

It is a matter for each Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

In extreme cases when there are repeated serious incidents of gross misconduct such as threatening or violent behaviour towards other pupils or staff which cannot be resolved within the existing resources and when all the internal school procedures listed above have been exhausted and the Board is of the opinion that the student should be expelled for gross misconduct, the Board will follow the procedures and guidelines as stipulated in the Education and Welfare Act 2000, Section 24.

The Board of Management is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the school can deliver educational programmes in a secure and safe environment for all children. The Principal is required to inform the Board of Management of circumstances which adversely affect the capacity of the school to do this.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005) requires the Board of Management to ensure the safety and health of all its employees. The Board of Management recognises the profound impact that incidents of aggression and gross misconduct can have on staff morale and well being. The Board of Management undertakes to prevent and minimise the risk of injury to staff and pupils. However, in extreme cases if structures and resources cannot be put in place to minimise or eliminate the risk of injury to staff the pupil presenting with gross misconduct should be removed to a more restrictive environment e.g. home with support or other location until resources are identified and provided which significantly reduce the risks involved.

- *Procedures for raising a concern or bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter.*

Staff, parents and students can make a complaint about any aspect of the code of behaviour by making an appointment to talk to the School Principal. Alternatively written complaint / concerns may be submitted to the Board of Management.

Appeals procedures are available under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 Application forms are available from the secretary general of the Department of Education and Science at [www.irlgov.ie/educ](http://www.irlgov.ie/educ)

- *Procedures for notifying the school about reasons for absence from school.*

Parents are required to inform the class teacher if their child is absent from school. This can be done by asking the bus escort to let the teacher know or by telephoning the school secretary. A detailed account of the reason for absence can be given to the class teacher

through the home / school notebook on return to school. If a child is absent for more than 10 consecutive school days a doctor's certificate must be furnished. If a child is absent from school for more than 20 days the educational welfare officer has to be informed.

- Plan for reviewing Code of Behaviour:

Code of Behaviour will be reviewed in consultation with and giving all members of the school community an opportunity to be involved at least every two years. The Code of Behaviour may be reviewed / updated as situations arise at any time by request of any stakeholder. Any review must be ratified by the Board of Management.

- Informing Parents of Code of Behaviour:

The Code of Behaviour will be given to parents at time of registration in Scoil Triest with a request to sign a declaration that they have read and accepted the Code. The Code of Behaviour as updated from time to time is available on the school web site. [www.scoiltriest.ie](http://www.scoiltriest.ie)

The Board of Management expects that parents / guardians will work in partnership with school staff to ensure that their child co-operates with the Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies and curriculum organisation and management.

- Informing staff of Code of Behaviour:

It is the duty of the Principal to inform new staff of the Code of Behaviour. Class teachers will request all staff to read the Code of Behaviour and discuss at one team meeting per year at least.

## DECLARATION

I / We, parents / Guardians of

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have read and accepted the Code of Behaviour for Scoil Triest, Lota, Glanmire, Co. Cork and agree to work in partnership with school staff to ensure that my child/ren co-operates with the Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies and curriculum organisation and management.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parents / Guardians)