



3. Gortnahoe N.S.

Code of Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy



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Code of Behaviour

1. INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Gortnahoe N.S. has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Gortnahoe N.S. has been developed in accordance with *'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools'*, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

2. POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

- i. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- ii. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the Principal.
- iii. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
- iv. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron's Approval



3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

4. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.



5. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

5.1 Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to: (*sample expectations*)

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- do his/her best both in school and for homework.

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher
- obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

Playground (Playing Pitches) Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- remain – on school grounds at all times
- obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- respect – the yard supervisor and fellow pupils
- avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- walk – in the school corridors
- etc.

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times
- remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- observe – the rules of general good behaviour



School Rules:

Each class operates a set of 7 basic rules.

1. Always be on time and be prepared for class.
2. Do as you are asked immediately.
3. Raise your hand and wait quietly for attention.
4. Work quietly in your place and do your best.
5. Stay seated and be quiet when the teacher is out of the room.
6. Listen attentively and in silence to the person speaking.
7. Be honest. Respect everyone and their property.

Safety: For my own safety and that of others:

- a) I should be careful coming to and going from school.
- b) I should always walk while in the school building and paths.
- c) I should remain seated at all times during class and while eating lunch. Lunch is eaten in the classroom.
- d) I should always show respect for my fellow pupils, all staff and visitors.
- e) I should never leave the school grounds.

Caring for Myself:

- a) I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school uniform, bag, books, and copies in good order. (Uniforms and all other property should be labelled).
- b) I should be in school at 9.20 am.
- c) I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness. In the interests of hygiene and safety long hair should be tied back, jewellery should be kept to a minimum (e.g. watches, one pair only ear studs). Make-up is not permitted nor are aerosol deodorants.
- d) I should always bring a sensible, nutritious lunch to school
- e) I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.

Caring for Others:

- a) I should be kind and respectful to all staff, visitors and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line.
- b) I should behave well in class, so that my fellow pupils and I can learn.
- c) I should always keep my school clean. I should show respect for the property of others, the school building and grounds.
- d) I should be truthful and honest at all times.
- e) I should not have a mobile phone at school, unless given permission by the principal to do so, in exceptional cases.
- f) I shall address other pupils by their Christian name.
- g) I shall not climb on walls or trees or sit on the front wall.



Uniform/ Personal Appearance/ Hygiene:

We require the wearing of the full Gortnahoe NS school uniform or tracksuit to help promote a sense of belonging to the Gortnahoe NS community.

- Royal blue jumper, navy trousers, (not track suit) skirt/pinafore/dress, tie and blue shirt. Navy or white socks. Black or Navy Shoes
Official Gortnahoe School Tracksuit and a white t-shirt. Runners.
- Students should maintain a neat and tidy appearance.
- All items of uniform should be clearly labelled.
- Hairstyles should be neat. No distracting hair cuts or styles. Hair should not be dyed or high-lighted in un-natural hair colours.
- One pair of stud earrings is allowed in the ear lobe only.
- Rings, bracelets and necklaces pose as a Health / Safety risk and are not allowed in our school, except in exceptional circumstances and approved by the principal.
- Make-up of any description may not be used by children. This includes concealer, fake tan, foundation and eye make-up.
- Nail varnish is not allowed in school.
- Football gear/boots to be worn for games in the field, when the weather is bad.

Internet:

- Pupils are expected to use computers and computer networks solely for the purpose of education and academic research.
- Pupils may not misuse electronic mail or have access to internet sites that violate any aspect of this code of behaviour
- Any pupil using Information Technology for the purpose of bullying a pupil, insulting or defaming a teacher or any other staff member associated with the school and / or bringing the school into disrepute in any fashion, will be dealt with according to our sanctions.

Mobile Phones:

Mobile phones are not permitted in Gortnahoe N.S. except in exceptional circumstances and approved by the Principal.

Distribution of Christmas cards/ birthday invitations/ presents

The distribution of individual Christmas, birthday, communion, confirmation cards, birthday invitations or presents are not permitted in school.



Entry & Exit:

- Entry to the school building is at 9.10 a.m. and pupils are NOT supervised before this time.
- Pupils are not permitted to leave the school grounds on their own during the school day. Children may only leave the school premises with an adult when the class teacher is informed.
- No running, playing or any inappropriate behaviour while waiting for the school premises to open is allowed.

Bus Rules:

The children are regularly encouraged by all teachers to behave appropriately on the bus, not distract the driver, stay seated with seat belt on and to enter and exit the bus in a safe, orderly manner. Enter and Exit the bus on the footpath side in a safe manner.

Yard Rules:

General Lunchtime Rules

- When the bell goes, line up and WALK to the yard on the RIGHT hand side.
- Everyone is to leave the school and go to the yard when the bell goes. No hanging around the class.
- Food (without wrappers) is allowed in the yard at break time (11a.m.) only.
- Each class must remain in their allocated area in the yard.
- No one is allowed on the ramp or on the bars.
- You must ask the teacher for permission to go to the toilet or leave the yard for any other reason.
- You must listen to your prefect and do as you are asked immediately.
- When the bell goes at the end of lunch, everyone walks to their line.
- Line up in a straight line at your designated area.
- Teacher collects their class from the yard.
- Hurling Area is timetabled for classes.



Hurling Area:

- Helmet must be worn once you enter the playing area and must be kept on until you come back into the normal yard.
- Tennis Ball Only Allowed and you are not allowed to play with it in class or normal yard or on your way to the playing area.
- Goals only and the score is not to be kept.
- Only when the weather is fine and the grass dry will hurling be allowed.
- Old runners must be worn with football socks.
- 1 person in charge of setting up the goals with cones.
- Only people genuinely interested in playing hurling are allowed out to the hurling area to PLAY. You will not be allowed to stand around in groups chatting in the middle of the pitch, just because you are wearing a helmet. If so you will be asked to return to the normal section of your yard.
- If the ball goes over the wall into the housing estate you are to leave it. No one is to climb the wall or fence of the field. Also, there is no one to enter the housing estate after school to retrieve the tennis ball.
- If the ball goes over the wall into the yard, ONE person is to leave their hurley down and go into the normal yard for the tennis ball.
- Once the bell goes, play is immediately stopped, no matter what and players return to their line as quickly as possible
- There is to be no goading, gloating, talking, fighting in relation to the matches.
- REMEMBER ; It is for fun and to improve your skills.
- Anyone breaking any of these rules can be removed from the Hurling Area.
- Classes are timetabled for the Hurling Area



Swimming:

When swimming, children are expected:

- to wear a coat when walking to the swimming pool except on dry, sunny days during May and June;
- to walk in line behind the teacher to the swimming pool. No running allowed;
- to never shout or run in the dressing rooms or pool area;
- to listen and obey the instructor and life guard;
- to wear a swimming cap.
- to never leave the pool side - unless under the instructor's directions;
- to never push or play roughly in the pool, pool area or dressing rooms;
- to dress quickly after each session;
- not to bring hairsprays, gels, spray deodorants to the pool; Roll-on deodorants are allowed for 3rd - 6th class pupils.
- not to buy drinks/sweets at the pool.

School Functions/ Trips/ Tours. Matches/ Cross Country:

When on school trips/tours, children are expected:

- to enter/leave the bus in an orderly manner;
- to arrive 15 minutes before departure time; Parents are expected to contact the school 15 minutes before departure time if a child is sick or unable to attend.
- to keep the school rules as listed above;
- not to bring mobile phones or electronic devices on school tours; Teachers will have mobile phones on tour if parents/children need to get in contact with one another.
- to sit in their seats and avoid loudness that would distract the driver;
- to take drinks and sweets at the appointed lunch breaks;
- to stay in their appointed groups at all times;
- to wear school tracksuit on school tours



5.2 Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

5.3 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.



6. PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavor to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include;

- Praise and encouragement in lessons and around the school should be used as much as possible.
- Ensuring that pupils are treated fairly, equally and firmly;
- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- Matching work with pupil's abilities; A prize/reward carefully noted by the teacher to ensure that all children at regular stages during the school year are rewarded for effort/behaviour/skill etc. *Teachers creating moments of success and then acknowledging them.*
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book;
- A visit to another member of staff or the Principal for commendation;
- A word of praise in front of a group or class;
- Delegating some responsibility or privilege;
- A mention to a parent – written or verbal;
- Teacher records improvement in the behaviour of a disruptive pupil;
- Implementation of Programmes such as Circle Time to promote positive behaviour.
- Golden Time is awarded in individual classes as a reward for positive behaviour.

The above list is not exhaustive and consists of examples only and may be procedurally added to over time at the discretion of the staff and Principal.



7. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 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 in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner
- Ignoring staff requests

Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s)
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract



Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Open Circle or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Cheating
- Use of profanity
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an adult
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff during school outings.



Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Principal, and include the formal notification of parents, with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

- In school supervised detention
- Report submitted to the Board of Management
- Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the behaviour
- Implementation of extensive behaviour management plan

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).



Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well-being 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 Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

- **Expulsion:**

Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.



8. PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

8.1 Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Gortnahoe N.S. has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Gortnahoe N.S., having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;



- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
or
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property
or
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of *Gortnahoe N.S.* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.



Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *Gortnahoe N.S.* will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed;

- A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);
- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
 - ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *Gortnahoe N.S.* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- iii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.



8.2 Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Expel:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

- b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion



- ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians 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
 - iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organised by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely 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 pupils or staff.



e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Gortnahoe N.S. acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

9. NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified in writing by *letter / call / using the Aladdin Connect App*
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences cause by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register



10. RECORDS

A standardised record system will be used to track an individual pupil's Behaviour. Such records will contain;

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

Pupils will be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record will be explained.

All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.



11. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Gortnahoe N.S. has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published by the Department of Education & Skills in September 2013.

11.1 Best Practice in the Prevention of Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which-
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.



11.2 Definition of Bullying

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, DES, 2013*.

11.3 School Contact Personnel

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

David O'Dwyer and Ciara Lanigan

(see Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):



11.4 Education & Prevention Strategies

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

(see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

11.5 Investigation & Follow-Up Procedures

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

(see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

11.6 Working with Pupils Affected by Bullying

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

(see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

11.7 Supervision & Monitoring

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

11.8 Prevention of Harassment



The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

11.9 Policy Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 22/05/2023

11.10 Communication

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

11.11 Implementation Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, be otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.



12. POLICY RATIFICATION

This Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 22/05/2023

Signed:

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 22/05/2023

Signed:

Principal of Gortnahoe N.S.

Date: 22/05/2023



APPENDIX ONE

Gortnahoe NS
Bullying-type behaviour incidents

Date, Time and Location	Who was involved? (Names & Classes)	Nature of the incident	Incident witnessed by/told to:	Reported to relevant teacher (Please X)



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APPENDIX TWO

Gortnahoe NS
Bullying Investigation Template (Pre-Determination Stage)

All recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

1. Who is allegedly being bullied?

Pupil	Class

2. Who made the bullying complaint? Please name if known.

Parent of pupil	
Other parent	
Pupil allegedly being bullied	
Other pupil	
Teacher	
Anonymous	

3. How, when and to whom was the complaint made? (e.g. telephone call, meeting, worry box, child disclosure etc)

4. Against which pupil or group of pupils was the allegation made?



5. Name of the relevant teacher carrying out investigation

6. Has the principal been informed of the investigation?

7. Actions taken (refer to section 6 of anti-bullying policy for procedures for investigating bullying)

8. Outcome of Investigation (e.g. no bullying, inconclusive proof of bullying, bullying has occurred, situation needs further monitoring etc)



9. Where it has been determined that bullying has occurred, formal stage 1 template will now be used.

10. Where it has been determined to the best of your professional judgement that NO bullying has taken place, have the parents of all parties involved been informed of the outcome of the investigation?

Name:

Date:



APPENDIX THREE

Gortnahoe NS

Bullying Investigation Template (Formal Stage 1)

All recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

1. Name of relevant teacher

2. Date that it was determined bullying has occurred

3. Have the parents of all the parties involved being contacted to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken? If yes, how and when?

4. What actions have been taken to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved? Please list.



5. 20 school days from the date that you determined that bullying has occurred, in your professional opinion and to the best of your knowledge, has the bullying behaviour been adequately and appropriately addressed and is the issue resolved? {Take the factors outlined in section 6 of our policy (“Follow up and recording”) into account}. If no, briefly explain why.

6. Where it has been determined that the issue has not been adequately and appropriately addressed, formal stage 2 template (Appendix 3 from DES Procedures) will now be used.

Name:



Date:

APPENDIX FOUR

Template for recording bullying behavior (Formal Stage 2)

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*			4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

*** Note:** The categories listed in the tables 3, 4 & 6 are suggested and schools may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.