

Scoil Uí Mhuirí

Code of Behaviour

Adopted: 14th March 2023

Review due: March 2025



Core Values

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Be Cooperative



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Introduction

Scoil Uí Mhuirí is a multi-denominational, co-educational school for students from the local towns and villages in and around mid-Louth. Our school has the ideal platform for students to thrive socially as well as academically. Scoil Uí Mhuirí seeks excellence in education through our core values of care, respect, equality and community. We are very proud of our tradition of inspiring sporting and cultural success as well as academic excellence.

Scoil Uí Mhuirí is under the patronage of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) and has grown and developed considerably in recent years largely due to the expertise, talent and commitment of our team of teachers and support staff who create a vibrant, student-centred environment in which each individual student is supported to reach their potential.

Our Code of Behaviour was developed in accordance with the Guidelines developed by the NEWB/TUSLA, provisions of the Education Act (1998), the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act (2000) and the Education of Persons with Special Needs Act (2004).

Mission Statement

In Scoil Uí Mhuirí we are a learning community committed to the development of the whole person within a context which values each of its members.

Vision Statement - created by past pupils Clarice O'Brien and Zak

Matthews

"In Scoil Uí Mhuirí our students are supported in developing the tools to progress and the attitude to succeed and where we are all treated equally and our differences celebrated."

Aim and Core Values

Our aim in Scoil Uí Mhuirí, in line with our Mission Statement and Vision Statement, is to foster academic, social, moral, personal, positive mental health and physical development in students so that they can take their place in society as well developed, well educated, responsible citizens with pride in their community. The development of the whole person is based on personal responsibility, inter-dependence, respect for people, respect for community and respect for property. Our school seeks to instil good manners, honesty and integrity. It also seeks to teach our students to value discipline and to strive for excellence in both academic and non-academic areas.

We do this in partnership with parents/guardians whose role in supporting the school in their children's education is fully acknowledged. We place a strong emphasis on partnership with parents/guardians to ensure the best possible progress through education for each student. Education is viewed as a joint effort between students, parents and school. Great emphasis is placed on our core values, be respectful, be responsible and be cooperative. Such cooperation between teacher and parent and teacher and student can only be achieved in a context of mutual respect which is the cornerstone of life in Scoil Uí Mhuirí and of its Code of Behaviour. The Code of Behaviour identifies positive behaviour which is acknowledged and celebrated and it outlines the interventions, support and consequences for students who do not meet the expectations of the Code of Behaviour.

Students in Scoil Uí Mhuirí are encouraged to make a positive impact on the school community through positive behaviour and implementing the core values of our positive behaviour matrix. At Scoil Uí Mhuirí we place a strong emphasis on recognising and commending appropriate behaviour.

Our core values ensure that our school is a happy and safe place for all members of our school community. Expectations outlined in the positive behaviour matrix ensure that our rights are respected, positive behaviour is rewarded and that there are consequences when expectations are not met. Behaviour expectations for our classrooms, corridors, canteen, lockers and toilets are outlined in the positive behaviour matrix in appendix A.

Students are expected to respect and abide by the expectations drawn up for classrooms and for specific areas such as the library, sports areas, laboratories, kitchens, engineering and technology rooms, art rooms, music rooms and computer rooms.

Code of Behaviour - Rationale

The Code of Behaviour of Scoil Uí Mhuirí has been devised to encourage positive behaviour and to create the best environment conducive to teaching, learning and personal development.

There are ***three strands*** to the Code of Behaviour:

1. Positive Behaviour Matrix (see Appendix A)
2. The Parent/Guardian School Contract
3. Rewards, Support, Interventions and Consequences

1. The Positive Behaviour Matrix

The Positive Behaviour Matrix recognises that all members of the school community have Rights and Responsibilities. The matrix is made up of 5 core areas of expected behaviour. The behaviour matrix is printed prominently in the Student Journal, displayed around the school and taught and discussed with each class at the beginning of each school year and again throughout the school year.

The Positive Behaviour Matrix provides a framework within which students who meet expectations may be rewarded and consequences for not meeting expectations are clearly outlined administered fairly.

2. The Parent/Guardian School Contract

The Parent/Guardian School Contract is an acknowledgement by parents and students that they have read and fully understood the terms of the School expectations and have agreed to adhere to the expectations. The contract also recognises that certain specified serious forms of misconduct may result in a student being excluded from Scoil Uí Mhuirí.

3. Rewards, Support, Interventions and Consequences

Support, Interventions and Consequences: Disciplinary procedures are organised within the context of a pastoral care system, which seeks to ensure that the maximum opportunities are afforded to students to remedy any behaviours which do meet the expectations as set out in the Positive Behaviour Matrix.

In the less likely event that this doesn't meet the desired outcome, the Disciplinary Procedures are intended as a means of dealing fairly and effectively with such situations. The system involves the student being referred by a class teacher through a process which may at some stage involve Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal and Parents. At each stage in the referral process the emphasis is on helping the student understand the more positive outcome of good behaviour and on trying to work out a programme of action which will help the student to achieve their academic and social potential.






It is understood and accepted that authority within the classroom rests with the teacher in charge of the classroom and with the supervising teachers during breaktimes.

Strand 1 - Positive Behaviour Matrix





The Positive Behaviour Matrix, in line with our core values, outline the expectations we are expected follow. These expectations apply to students while they are within the school boundaries and within the environs of the school. They apply to all school related activities, both within and outside of the school.

Area 1 – Expectations in the Classroom




Be Respectful

-  Show kindness to others.
-  Listen carefully while others speak.
-  Use appropriate language.
-  Follow teacher instructions.
-  Be respectful of school property.

Be Responsible





-  Have homework, books and materials for class.
-  Be on time.
-  Tidy up after yourself.
-  Put maximum effort into your work.

Be Cooperative





-  Work well with other students.
-  Engage with the lesson.
-  Positive participation in classroom activities.

Area 2 – Expectations in the Corridors


Be Respectful

-  Walk on the left.
-  Be considerate of people's personal space.
-  Use respectful language.
-  Food and drink must only be consumed in the Canteen or outside.

Be Responsible

-  Store bags safely.
-  Use bins provided.
-  Go directly to class.
-  Walk on the left and think of the safety of yourself and others.

Be Cooperative

-  Line up in single file.

- ✚ Follow instructions from staff.
- ✚ Walk by other classrooms quietly.

Area 3 – Expectations in the Canteen

Be Respectful

- ✚ Queue up in an orderly manner.
- ✚ Say “please” and “thank you”.

Be Responsible

- ✚ Use the seats and tables appropriately.
- ✚ Tidy up after yourself.
- ✚ Finish food and drinks before you leave.

Be Cooperative

- ✚ Keep our school/canteen clean, by always using the bins provided.
- ✚ Wait your turn.
- ✚ Be mindful of yours and other’s safety (Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself).

Area 4 – Expectations in the Toilets

Be Respectful

- ✚ Keep area clean and tidy.
- ✚ Flush toilet after use.
- ✚ Wash hands.

Be Responsible

- ✚ Only use toilets at break and lunchtime.
- ✚ Remember to move on quickly.
- ✚ Report any issues to staff.

Be Cooperative

- ✚ Use appropriate tone and volume.
- ✚ Be mindful of your safety and the safety of others.

Area 5 – Expectations at the Lockers

Be Respectful

- ✚ Keep your locker tidy.
- ✚ Have respect for all student's lockers.

Be Responsible

- ✚ Secure your locker and don’t share the code to your lock.
- ✚ Before you go to class, ensure you have all the necessary equipment.
- ✚ Report any damage to staff.

Be Cooperative

- ✚ Use lockers before and after school, and at break and lunchtime.

- ✚ Collect your belongings and go directly to class.

Additional Expectations:

1. Attendance and Punctuality –

- ✚ Students are expected to attend every school day during the academic year
- ✚ Students are expected to be on time for all classes during the day

This means:

- ✚ Come to school every school day unless it is unavoidable
- ✚ Arrive on time for class
- ✚ Only visit lockers during designated times
- ✚ You have a note in your Journal if you have been absent from school, arrive late or if you must leave early
- ✚ You sign in and sign out in the office if you are late arriving or leave early

2. Staying within the School Boundaries

- ✚ Senior Students may leave during lunch time
- ✚ Junior Students remain on site all day
- ✚ Students stay in designated areas

3. Code of Dress & Hygiene

- ✚ Students are expected to dress according to the school's dress code
- ✚ Personal Hygiene is expected to be of a high standard
- ✚ Items of jewellery deemed to be offensive, inappropriate or a danger to health and safety are unacceptable. This includes jewellery or emblems displaying illegal or dangerous substances

4. Substance Use

The use of illegal drugs, medication not prescribed for you, medication unauthorised by parents, alcohol, tobacco and e-cigarettes is not permitted in our school and around school grounds.

You are expected to cooperate with the school management in all efforts to ensure the safety of the school community.

5. Personal Property

- ✚ Property belonging to a student should be marked with the student's name
- ✚ Valuables/money should not be left unattended
- ✚ Personal property is taken to school at owner's risk.
- ✚ Students are expected to respect another person's property
- ✚ Students are expected to cooperate with the school management in all efforts to recover missing property

6. Mobile Phones and other Electronic Communication Devices:

The following is the School Policy regarding mobile phones and other electronic communication devices:

- ✚ Students are permitted to use mobile phones under direction of staff
- ✚ Otherwise, phones are to be turned off in class on corridors and on the campus generally between classes
- ✚ Students using phones without permission will be requested to turn off phones
- ✚ Where the student fails to comply or who persistently uses a phone without permission, Parents/Guardians will be required to collect the phone or student and phone as students will not be permitted to class
- ✚ Persistent offenders will not have permission to take a phone to school
- ✚ Should the need arise, a student may use the school phone with the permission of a member of staff to contact parents/guardians.
- ✚ Parents/Guardians may also contact their children through the school office

The school takes no responsibility for missing devices

Strand 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians support in the following areas is necessary for the fair and appropriate administration of the code of behaviour. By accepting a place at Scoil Uí Mhuirí and signing the relevant section on the Acceptance Form, you have committed to support, in full, the Code of Behaviour.

As a partner in the education provided by Scoil Uí Mhuirí, parents/guardians ensure that:

- ✚ their child attends school regularly and on time
- ✚ the school is informed of reasons for absences, late arrivals or early departures by providing a note in the School Journal
- ✚ they sign the School Journal when requested
- ✚ their child cooperates fully with the school's dress code
- ✚ their child is supplied with all the necessary books, equipment and materials for participation in all lessons
- ✚ they themselves and their child are familiar with the Code of Behaviour and other relevant policies of the school, and they understand and accept these.
- ✚ they maintain contact with the school and are supportive of the authority of the staff of the school
- ✚ they encourage their child to be supportive of and cooperative with the teaching and learning activities provided by the staff of the school
- ✚ they make themselves available to support the school authorities when necessary

Class Teacher

Each teacher works to ensure that each student derives the maximum benefit from class, develops a good pattern of study and homework and reaches their full potential. The teacher has primary responsibility for managing expectations within their own lessons and managing consequences as appropriate.

In general, the teacher handles all day-to-day issues that may arise in their lessons. Each teacher applies the code of behaviour in a fair and just manner. Consequences will be appropriate and proportionate.

The class teacher:

- ✚ Creates a classroom environment which is conducive to learning
- ✚ Ensures all students are aware and understand the expectations of the classroom

- ✚ Ensures all students are aware of their responsibilities to have the required books and materials necessary for participation in class work
- ✚ Establishes classroom routines which ensure good discipline
- ✚ Prepares classes and encourage students in such a way that students are academically challenged at appropriate levels by considering different learning styles, emotional development, rates of learning and levels of confidence
- ✚ Ensures that the learning experience contributes to the development and growth of a positive self-concept
- ✚ Promotes and encourages well being

Class Tutor

The Class Tutor is assigned to a particular tutor class and has a special role in the life of that class. They aim to create a well-motivated, happy class group where each member is valued and where high standards in all aspects of the student's life are encouraged. In the relationship of trust and respect that develops between the Class Tutor and the tutor class, there are opportunities to discuss and deal with concerns of a general or an individual nature. The role of the Class Tutor is primarily pastoral in nature. They will:

- ✚ Develop a good relationship with their Tutor Class
- ✚ Work with Tutor Class to raise standards in terms of academic achievement and general behaviour
- ✚ Monitor, encourage, advise and guide to encourage success
- ✚ Support Class Teacher if requested
- ✚ Give instruction on the correct use of the School Journal
- ✚ Monitor the School Journal on a regular basis

Assistant Principals

Year Head

The Year Head has a vital function of leading, co-ordinating and inspiring the students of a particular year group and liaising with the class teachers involved as well as with the Principal and Deputy Principal. The responsibilities of the Year Head include the following:

- ✚ Encourage all students to achieve their potential
- ✚ Acknowledge improvement and success within the Year Group
- ✚ Monitor attendance, punctuality, school uniform and general progress
- ✚ Follow up on students not making progress
- ✚ Deal with more serious or persistent breaches of discipline
- ✚ Support Class Tutors in relation to raising standards

Role of Deputy Principal

The Deputy Principal assists the Principal in the day-to-day running of the school and in its internal organisation, management and discipline. In the absence of the Principal, they take responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school and adopt the responsibilities of the Principal.

Role of Principal

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school and for its internal organisation, management and discipline. Through their leadership they aim to create the ethos conducive to high standards of teaching and learning so that, in line with the school's Mission Statement, every member of the school community can develop to their potential within a context which values each of its members. In consultation with all the partners, they work for the overall good of the school community.

Strand 3 – Rewards, Supports, Interventions and Consequences

Positive Behaviour and Rewards

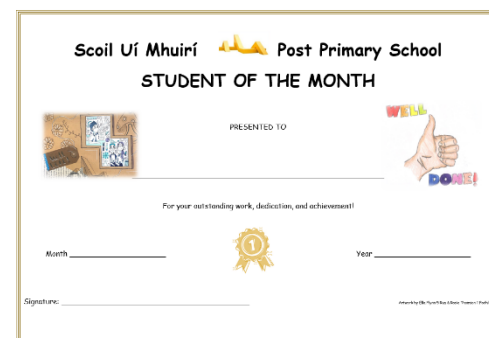
To promote the core values of Scoil Uí Mhuirí and support the holistic development of our students, Teachers actively engage in our ethos/system/programme of rewards and encouragement.

Rewards used to promote positive behaviour include:

“Well done” postcard – teachers can send a postcard to any student who has completed work to a high standard for that individual student and a student who is demonstrating a substantial effort. Other reasons for sending a postcard include, demonstrating courteous behaviour in dealing with a fellow student or staff member, making a positive and sustained effort to participate fully in class, a marked and consistent improvement in positive behaviour. The postcard is designed by students.



Student of the Month Certificate – Every month we award a certificate to the student of the month from each class. Student of the month winners are also praised over our intercom system. The Certificates they receive have been designed by students in our yearly run competition to design the new certificates.



“Well Done” Award:

The overall Student of the Month for each year group receive a Mug designed by students

Junior and Senior Student of the Month – The overall junior and senior student of the month receive an additional prize.



Other rewards that promote positive behaviour include:

- ✚ Verbal Praise
- ✚ Notes in the journal
- ✚ Phone call home to Parents/Guardians
- ✚ Annual Awards Ceremony
- ✚ In-class rewards and acknowledgements
- ✚ Subject Awards

Supports, Interventions and Consequences

Introduction

If a student is unable to meet the expectations set out in the Code of Behaviour, a teacher will engage with the student using the teacher/student relationship referral process with the purpose of restoring student to positive behaviour in class and in school.

The school will utilise the school’s support systems when necessary, these include:

- ✚ Guidance Counsellor
- ✚ Student Support Team
- ✚ Check and Connect Programme
- ✚ HSCLO
- ✚ SCP
- ✚ Tutor
- ✚ Year head

Suspensions and Expulsions

The LMETB suspension and expulsion policy and procedures are detailed in Appendix B.

Interventions and Referral Procedures

Referral procedures are organised within the context of a pastoral care system which seeks to ensure that the maximum opportunities are afforded to students to remedy any behaviours which are detrimental to themselves or to other students. In general, the vast majority of students comply with the school Code of Behaviour. At times a small number of students may present need for action and the referral system outlined below is intended as a means of dealing fairly and effectively with a student that may need this level of intervention. The system involves students being referred by the Class Teacher through a process which may at different stages involve the Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal and Parents. At each stage of the process the emphasis will be on helping the student to move towards more positive behaviour and on trying to work out a programme of action which will help the student to achieve their academic and social potential.

To facilitate these interventions there are three levels in operation, for further information see the Student/Teacher referral document is detailed in Appendix B.

1. Low Level Incidence (3 or more times)

Intervention may/will be necessary from Class teacher for:

No homework
Late for class
No Materials/Books
Talking out of turn
Not respecting the classroom

The interventions, supports and consequences will take a restorative approach and at this stage may include:

Refer to classroom expectations
Redirect to task
Quiet word after class
Corrective written work
Record in student journal
Positive Reflection Session

2. Medium Level Incident

Continuing to not meet classroom expectations or other behaviour issues

Persistent lack of homework
Persistent poor effort in class
Poor behaviour inside and outside class

Other Behavioural issues
Vandalism
Disrespectful to staff/bad language






The interventions, supports and consequences will take a restorative approach and at this stage may include:

Teacher may send a note home
Note to be signed and returned by parent/guardian
Note will be given to year head
Teacher may get support from Tutor
Year head may request a progress report
Year head may put student on report to monitor behaviour
Year head may phone home
Year head may link student with a student support service such as check and connect or guidance
Year head may take student for a positive reflection session

3. High Level Incident

The intervention at this level will be by the Deputy Principal/Principal with assistance from the Year Head. This level is for serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour and will only be used after all of the previously outlined procedures have been exhausted. This level may involve meeting with the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head, Parent/Guardians and student. Targets will be set and reviewed to ensure expectations are met. Breaches at this level may result in suspension/expulsion.

Appendix A – Positive Behaviour Matrix

 Scoil Uí Mhuirí Positive Behaviour Matrix 					
<u>Expectation</u>	<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Corridors</u>	<u>Canteen</u>	<u>Toilets</u>	<u>Lockers</u>
<u>Be Respectful</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Show kindness to others. ✓ Listen carefully while others speak. ✓ Use appropriate language. ✓ Follow teacher instructions. ✓ Be respectful of school property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Walk on the left. ✓ Be considerate of people's personal space. ✓ Use respectful language. ✓ Food and drink must only be consumed in the Canteen or outside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Queue up in an orderly manner. ✓ Say "please" and "thank you". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep area clean and tidy. ✓ Flush toilet after use. ✓ Wash hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep your locker tidy. ✓ Have respect for all student's lockers.
<u>Be Responsible</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have homework, books and materials for class. ✓ Be on time. ✓ Tidy up after yourself. ✓ Put maximum effort into your work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Store bags safely. ✓ Use bins provided. ✓ Go directly to class. ✓ Walk on the left and think of the safety of yourself and others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use the seats and tables appropriately. ✓ Tidy up after yourself. ✓ Finish food and drinks before you leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Only use toilets at break and lunchtime. ✓ Remember to move on quickly. ✓ Report any issues to staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Secure your locker and take care of your key. ✓ Before you go to class, ensure you have all the necessary equipment. ✓ Report any damage to staff.
<u>Be Cooperative</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work well with other students. ✓ Engage with the lesson. ✓ Positive participation in classroom activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Line up in single file. ✓ Follow instructions from staff. ✓ Walk by other classrooms quietly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep our school/canteen clean, by always using the bins provided. ✓ Wait your turn. ✓ Be mindful of yours and other's safety (Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use appropriate tone and volume. ✓ Be mindful of your safety and the safety of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use lockers before and after school, and at break and lunchtime. ✓ Collect your belongings and go directly to class.

Appendix B – LMETB Policy on Suspension and Expulsion



SCOIL UÍ MHUIRÍ

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Policy Statement

1.1. The suspensions and expulsions policy applies to all schools established and maintained by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board.

2. Legal framework

2.1. Louth and Meath ETB acknowledges the duty of schools under its control to publish their policy concerning admission and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students pursuant to Section 15 (d) of the Education Act 1998 and Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Code of Behaviour in *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* specifies:

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

2.2. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms that its Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board 2008. The Code of Behaviour addresses:

- The standards of behaviour expected in the school

- The plan for promoting good behaviour
- The ways in which a school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- The plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- School procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion

2.3. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* recognises the Right to Appeal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act.

2.4. In regard to informing the Education Welfare Board, *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms its statutory obligation pursuant to section 21 (4)(a) of the Education Welfare Act.

2.5. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms that data collected in relation to students and parents is in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018.

3 Suspensions

3.1 The Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* holds the authority to suspend a student. This authority is devolved under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Boards of Management of each of the schools under its control.

3.2 Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Boards of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* may delegate this authority to the Principal of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí*. The Board of Management should make a formal delegation arrangement taking due account of the provisions of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.

3.3 *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* recognises that suspension is only one strategy within the *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* Code of Behaviour in response to inappropriate behaviour.

3.4. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* recognises that when all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension affords a student time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for their behaviour and to accept the need for the behaviour to change. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* works closely with parents to assist a suspended student to rejoin the school community successfully.

3.5. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* acknowledges that suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. 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.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The student breaches the Code of Behaviour. (At the discretion of the Principal.)

3.6. Scoil Uí Mhuirí affirms that all suspensions must be notified to the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* .

3.7. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms that the Education Welfare Services of the Child and Family (Tusla) should be Informed of suspensions in the following circumstances:

- Where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive school days.
- Where the aggregate number of days on which a student has been suspended /absent in any school year is 20 or more days.

3.8. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms that suspension may occur after the following factors have been considered:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The impact and context of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- That all discipline options under the *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
- That all actions /decisions taken are recorded and all correspondence copied.
- Discussion has occurred with the student and parent(s) regarding the specific behaviour which the school considers unacceptable, and which may lead to suspension.

3.9. The Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms that students attending *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* may be suspended as follows pending investigation and /or discussion with parents. The following list is not exhaustive:

- For serious misbehaviour
- For an unacceptable level of repeated misbehaviour
- For bullying, insulting, aggressive or violent behaviour towards others whether in person, by mobile phone or via social media or other electronic means; in the school, or when identifiable with the school
- For the supply/possession /use of alcohol and /or illegal drugs
- For the supply /possession /use of weapons/ hazardous materials

- For behaviour that may be a danger to self or others
- For racist behaviour /supply of racist behaviour/use of racist material
- For behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act 2000
- For sexual harassment and/or the possession/supply /use of pornographic material.

3.10. *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* acknowledges that a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Such grounds may include where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety or welfare of students, staff of the school or any other person.

3.11. A student may be suspended during a state examination and such suspension should normally be approved by the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* . This type of suspension should only be used where there is:

- A threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- A threat to the safety or welfare of other students and personnel
- A threat to the right of the other students to do their exam in a calm atmosphere.

3.12. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* may decide as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviour incur suspension as a sanction. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.

4 Inappropriate use of Suspension

- Rolling suspension. A student should not be suspended again shortly after they return to *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* unless they engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension, that fair procedures are observed in full and the standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as that standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.
- Informal / unacknowledged suspension. Exclusion of a student for part of the school day as a sanction is a suspension.
- Open-ended suspension. Students should not be suspended for an indefinite period. Any such suspension would be regarded as a defacto expulsion.

5 Procedures in respect of Suspension.

5.1 Louth and Meath ETB affirms that *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* is required to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. The school should observe the following procedures

- The student and parent(s) should be informed about the complaint
- The student and parent(s) should be given the opportunity to respond
- In the case of 'immediate' suspension, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Parents must be notified, and arrangement made for the student to be collected from the school. The school must have due regard for its duty of care for the student.

5.2 A student should not be suspended for more than 3 days except in exceptional circumstances. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* should provide guidance to the Principal concerning the kinds of circumstances under which suspensions of longer than 3 days might be approved. If a suspension of longer than 3 days is being proposed the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. However Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. Such authorisation must be recorded in the minutes of meeting of the Board of Management and reviewed on an annual basis.

5.3 Louth and Meath ETB affirms the Boards of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* should 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 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

6 Implementing the suspension

6.1 The Principal of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* should notify the Parent(s) and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period 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 student and the parents.

- The provision for an appeal to the Department of Education, in the case of a suspension which would bring the days suspended in one academic over 20 days.
- 6.2 In the case where Parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, Louth and Meath ETB confirms that written notice will serve as notice to impose a suspension.
- 6.3 A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* decides to remove the suspension for any reason.

7 Section 29 Appeal against Suspension

- 7.1 Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the Minister for Education.
- 7.2 An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.
- 7.3 An appeal must be made within **42 calendar days** from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.
- 7.4 Appeals must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Form and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website www.education.ie .

8 Expulsion

- 8.1 Louth and Meath ETB has the authority to expel a student. This authority may be delegated under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Board of Management of Scoil Uí Mhuirí.
- 8.2 Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Scoil Uí Mhuirí acknowledges that expulsion of a student is a very serious step and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.
- 8.3 The Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* affirms that *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* needs to have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion.

Such measures may include:

- Meeting with parents and students to try and find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
 - Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour should it persist
 - Ensuring that all possible options have been tried.
 - Seeking the assistance of relevant support agencies, e.g. Child and Family Agency (Tusla) Education Welfare Services, HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. National Behavioural Support Service JLO, NEPS, NCSE.
- 8.4 A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:
- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
 - The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety and welfare of others.
 - The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- 8.5 Before expulsion is considered, school authorities must satisfy themselves that all possibilities have been exhausted for changing the student's behaviour.
- 8.6 'Automatic Expulsion'
The Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* may decide in consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students that particular named behaviours would result in 'Automatic' expulsion. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedure.
- 8.7 Expulsion for first or once-off offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* decides that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the Code of Behaviour could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to students in the school
- Sexual assault

9 Factors to Consider before proposing to expel a student

9.1 The Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* should take the following factors into consideration before considering expelling a student:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions already tried to change the student's behaviour
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

9.2 Expulsion would not be appropriate for the following:

- Poor academic performance
- Poor attendance or lateness
- Minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

10 Procedures in respect of expulsion

10.1 A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. The Principal should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the investigation.

10.2 The Principal should inform the student and their parents about the specific details of the alleged breach of behaviour, how it will be investigated and that

it could result in expulsion. The Principal must ensure that the student and parents are given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour. The Principal should communicate this in writing to ensure that parents have a permanent record of having been informed.

10.3 A meeting should be arranged between the student and their parents and the Principal of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* before a sanction is imposed.

10.4 Should a student and their parent(s) fail to attend a meeting the Principal should write advising:

- the seriousness of the matter
- the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting
- Failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour
- Record all correspondence

10.5 Where the Principal of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board to consider expulsion.

10.6 The Principal should:

- Inform the student and parents in writing that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that parents have written records of (a) the allegation, (b) the investigation, (c) written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide the Board with the same comprehensive records as are given to the student and the parents.
- Notify the parents in good time of the date of the hearing with 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 parents are given enough notice to allow them to prepare for the meeting.

10.7 It is the responsibility of the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.

10.8 The Board of Management should undertake its own review of documentation and all circumstances of the case.

10.9 The Board of Management should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

10.10 Where the Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* decides to expel a student it must hold a hearing and this meeting should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures.

10.11 Parents may be accompanied at the Board hearing but, as this is a lay forum; legal representation is not the normal practice, however it may be allowed due to the potentially serious consequences for the student. The Board Secretary should be informed in writing who shall be attending this meeting at least two days prior to the meeting taking place.

10.12 At the start of the meeting the Chairperson shall enquire whether any member has an objective bias in respect of the matter being considered by the Board. Where the Board is satisfied that an objective bias exists, the member(s) involved shall withdraw from the meeting.

10.13 At the hearing the Principal and the parents, or a student aged 18 or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence and will be available to answer questions from Board Members. Each party should be allowed question the evidence of the other party. Questions should be directed through the Chairperson at the end of each presentation.

10.14 Once the Principal and the Parents have made their cases, they will withdraw from the meeting.

10.15 Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal, the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting briefly for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there will be no discussion on the merits of the particular case being considered.

10.16 In the conduct of the hearing the Board must take care to ensure 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.

10.17 When both sides have been heard the Board should ensure that the Principal and Parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

10.18 In hearing and considering a proposed expulsion the Board shall have regard to:

- (a) the nature, scale and persistence of any behaviour alleged to have given rise to, or contributed to, the decision made by or on behalf of the Board,
- (b) the reasonableness of any efforts made by the school to enable the student to whom the appeal relates (the 'student concerned') to participate in and benefit from education,
- (c) the educational interests of the student concerned and the desirability of enabling the student as far as practicable to participate in and benefit from education with his or her peers,
- (d) the educational interests of, and the effective provision of education for, other students of the school and the maintenance of a classroom and school environment which is supportive of learning among the students of the school and ensures continuity of instruction provided to students in any classroom concerned and the school,
- (e) the safety, health and welfare of teachers, students and staff of the school,
- (f) the code of behaviour under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act of 2000 and other relevant policies of the school and —

- (i) in the case of that code of behaviour, the extent to which it is in compliance with that section 23 and any guidelines issued under subsection (3) of that section, and
- (ii) in the case of those other policies, the extent to which each of them is implemented, promotes equality of access to and participation in education and is in compliance with —
 - (I) any enactment that imposes duties on schools or their boards,
 - (II) any relevant guidelines or policies of the Minister,
 - (g) the duties on schools or their boards imposed by or under any enactment,
 - (h) guidelines issued pursuant to section 22(7) of the Act of 2000, and (i) such other matters as the Board considers relevant.

11 Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

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

11.2 When 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 Education Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion pursuant to section 24 91) of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Board should refer to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) Education Welfare Services reporting procedures for proposed expulsions.

11.3 The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification.

11.4 The Board of Management should inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and where expulsion is proposed the parents should be informed that the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

12 Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

12.1 Within 20 days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management the EWO will make all reasonable attempts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parent and the student. The EWO

will convene a meeting of those parties. These consultations will focus on alternative educational arrangements for the student.

12.2 Pending the consultations in 12.1 the Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. This should only be considered where the continued presence of the student during this time would seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a risk to the safety and health of students or staff.

13 Confirmation of the decision to expel

13.1 When the 20 day period following notice to the EWO has elapsed and 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. The Board of Management may delegate authority to the Chairperson and Secretary to review this decision of expulsion after the twenty days has expired.

13.2 Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student must be informed of their right to appeal to the Minister for Education.

14 Section 29 Appeal against Expulsion

14.1 The parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the expulsion under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

14.2 Parents and the student should be informed about their right to appeal to the Minister for Education.

14.3 An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.

14.4 An appeal must be made within **42 calendar days** from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.

14.5 Appeals must be made in writing on the **Section 29 Appeal Form** and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department’s website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department’s website www.education.ie .

15 Review of use of Expulsion

15.1 The Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* should review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals.

16 Implementation and Review of Policy

16.1 The Principal and Board of Management of *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* will responsible for the implementation of this policy.

16.2 This policy shall be reviewed periodically, in light of emerging legislation and circulated Guidelines from the Department of Education from its official adoption by the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board and *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* Board of Management.

This policy was reviewed and adopted by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board on 15 November 2018 for incorporation into school’s Codes of Behaviour.

This policy was reviewed in November 2020 in light of commencement of changes to the Section 29 Appeals procedures under the Education (Admission to schools) Act 2018.

This policy was ratified by the *Scoil Uí Mhuirí* Board of Management on

Definitions under the Education Act, 1998

“**parent**” includes a foster parent, a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997, or other person acting in *loco parentis* who has a child in his or her care subject to any statutory power or order of a court and, in the case of a child who has been adopted under the Adoption Acts, 1952 to 1998, or, where the child has been adopted outside the State, means the adopter or adopters or the surviving adopter;

“Principal” means a person appointed under *section 23*;

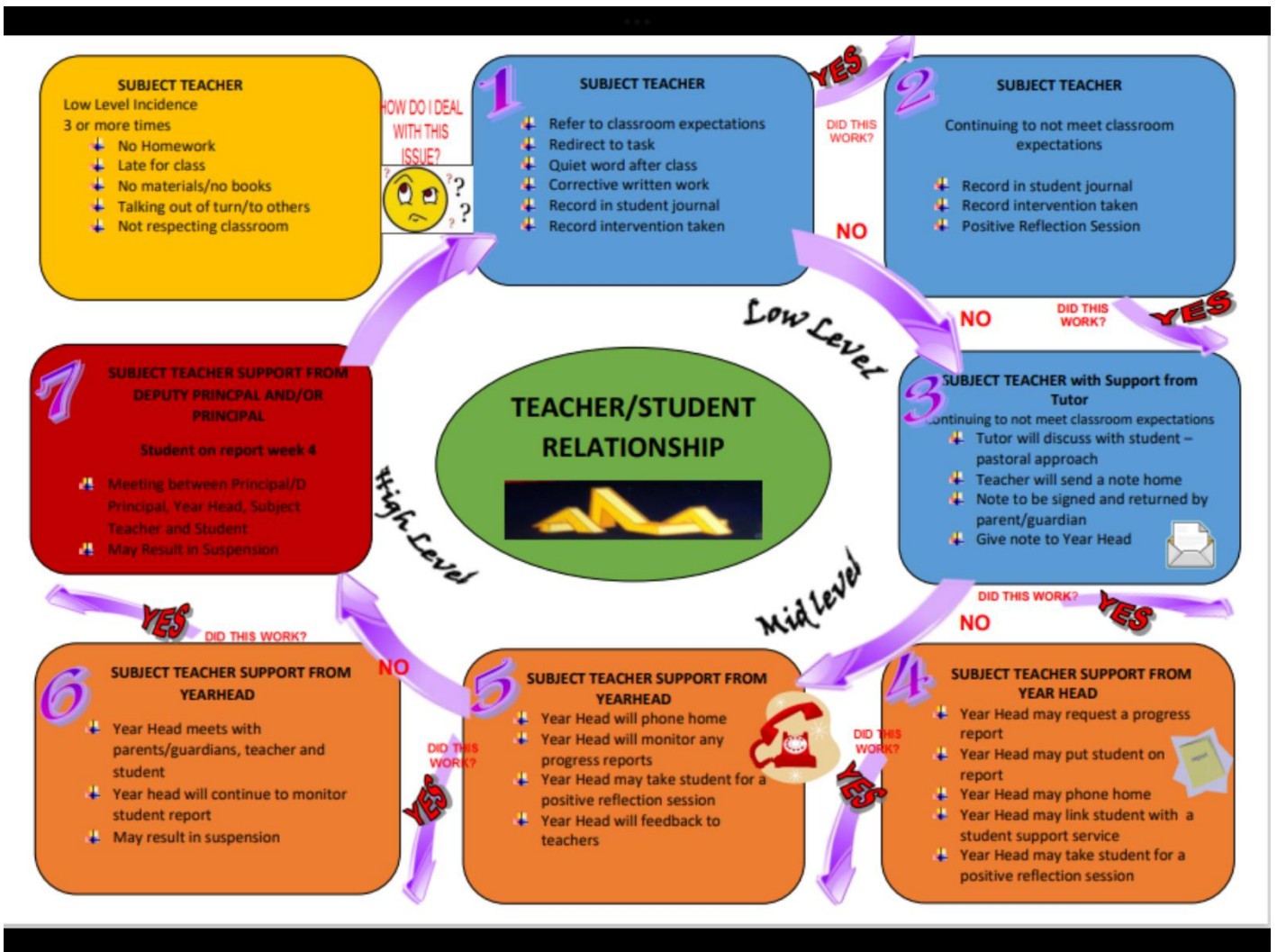
“school” means an establishment which—

(a) provides primary education to its students and which may also provide early childhood education, or

(b) provides post-primary education to its students and which may also provide courses in adult, continuing or vocational education or vocational training, but does not include a school or institution established in accordance with the Children Acts, 1908 to 1989, or a school or institution established or maintained by a health board in accordance with the Health Acts, 1947 to 1996, or the Child Care Act, 1991;

“student”, in relation to a school, means a person enrolled at the school and in relation to a centre for education, means a person registered as a student in that centre;

Appendix C – Student Referral Document





Policy for Resolution/Ratification by LMETB Board

School	Scoil Uí Mhuirí
Policy Title	Code of Behaviour
Date of School Board of Management Meeting	14 th March 2023
Please confirm if a quorum was present at the meeting (4)	Yes
Please confirm if the completed Policy Consultation Record was presented at the meeting	Yes
Policy Proposed By	John Sheridan
Policy Seconded By	Frances Kirwan
Signed	John Sheridan (Chairperson, BOM)
Date	14 th March 2023

Signed	Úna Kirk (Principal)
Date	14 th March 2023

Board of Management Policy Consultation Record

Please bring this completed form to your Board of Management meeting when considering a policy at BOM level for ratification. Please note that the Board of Management should only ratify a policy once the appropriate consultation process has been completed with students, staff and parents/guardians. More detailed records of consultation should be retained in the school.

In the case of consultation with staff please ensure that the staff have ratified the policy at a staff meeting and that the name of the proposer and seconder for the policy have been included in the minutes of that staff meeting.

School:	Scoil Uí Mhuirí
Policy:	Code of Behaviour

Staff Consultation

Date of Final Consultation:	23 rd January 2023
Proposed By:	Miriam Howard (Staff Member)
Seconded By:	Laura Matthews (Staff Member)

Student Consultation

Date of Final Consultation:	27 th of February 2023
Proposed By:	Saoirse Carron (Third Year)

Seconded By:	Eric Kenright (Third Year)
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Parent/Guardian Consultation

Date of Final Consultation:	Monday 20 th of February 2023
Proposed By:	Annette Kelly (Parent Nominee)
Seconded By:	John Dorian (Parent Nominee)

LMETB Ratification/Resolution of the ETB Board

Date of Resolution of ETB Board	
Signed	(Chairperson)