

## **Code of Behaviour – Moate Community School.**

This policy was developed by the staff, parents and students of Moate Community School in conjunction with NEWB ‘Developing a Code of Behaviour - Guidelines for Schools’.

Parents as partners with teachers and the Board of Management must accept the Code of Behaviour as a precondition to their sons/daughters enrolment in the school. Parents and each student must sign the code and undertake to make every effort to uphold and respect it.

Our school has the care of each student at the heart of its ethos. All teachers base their work on the philosophy that each student is directed and helped to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming. In order to achieve this goal teachers will establish good working relationships with students, and will lay down clear behavioural expectations. The help and co-operation of parents is vital at all times to enhance the schools work.

Students, teachers and parents can help promote a happy school environment by

- (a) respecting the rights of each other
- (b) working together for a common goal
- (c) understanding and forgiveness in times of difficulties.
- (d) not discriminating against anyone on the grounds of age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, colour and ethnic group or nationality.

The quality of our school is the quality of relationships between staff, students and parents. These relationships are based on trust, respect, fairness, consideration, good manners and loyalty.

Problems concerning school will be discussed in a spirit of confidence and trust. All incidents will be fully investigated and the tenants of natural justice will apply. Any sanctions will be used as a positive intervention and will be applied proportionally as part of a wider plan to help the offending student to learn. Parents are always welcome to consult the Yearhead, Deputy Principals, Principal concerning their children. This should be done during school hours by appointment. Our school must at all times be supported in its efforts to strike a balance between our investment of time in disruptive students and time invested in pupils who conform.

In our school we have agreed:

### **1. To A Reward System:**

The school is committed to a policy of recognition, encouragement and reward of positive behaviour and achievement. It has in place good school and class routines where students are clear on the boundaries and expectations. Students are given recognition for

- Outstanding Achievements
- Sporting Accomplishments
- Extra-Curricular Success
- Good Manners and demeanour

#### **Acknowledgement may take the form of:**

- Involvement in positions of responsibility e.g. Committees, Student Council, Prefects, Mentors, representing the school, etc.
- Praise from staff members, privately / publicly
- An affirmative stamp / note in student Journal
- At Assemblies

- On Twitter and Facebook
- Announcement over the Intercom
- Student of the Month – Vouchers
- Honour Board Notice
- Articles in Local Newspapers/ Newslink / Yearbook
- Certificate of Merit
- Awards Ceremony

It is our schools aim at all times to encourage each student to fulfil his/her educational potential, academically and in every other respect.

## 2. To have Respect for Others:

### (a) **Recognising the rights of others e.g.**

- The right to grow as a responsible person
- The right parents have to expect good results
- The right the teacher has to do her/his work without having to constantly correct students for inattention.
- The right each member of the class has to learn.

### (b) **Behaving in an orderly manner:**

- Students should always use the student entrance. The door at front entrance of school is reserved for staff and visitors and should not be used by students at any time.
- Students should move quickly and quietly, keeping to the left in single file on the stairs, corridors and doorways.
- Disruptive behaviour on corridors or in class will not be tolerated.
- Lockers should be visited prior to 9.00 a.m. and during breaks only.

### (c) **Not bullying any other person:**

Bullying, rough conduct, name-calling, isolation or any other form of intimidation of students by other students is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with as a serious breach of good order. The use of bad language will not be tolerated. If you think you are being bullied talk to any member of staff. Remember that silence is the bully's greatest weapon. Refer to [www.moatecs.com](http://www.moatecs.com) for entire anti bullying policy.

### (d) **Being a team player:**

**Student Council:** We encourage students to take part in the development of school policies and procedures. Each year a new council is formed and elected members liaise with class captains from each year group.

**Prefects:** Transition Year and 5th Year students can apply to become a prefect. Prefects help in the day to day running of the school.

**Games Committee:** TY students can become Games Committee Members helping to organise and supervise lunchtime sport activities.

**Student Mentors:** Members of TY & 5th year can become part of our mentoring programme. Mentors give peer support to junior members of the school community.

Participants in all the above programmes are highly valued members of the school community.

### **3. TO RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT WE LIVE IN:**

#### **Smoking:**

In accordance with the Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment Act 2004 – smoking is not allowed in the school, the school grounds or the school environs at any time, or while a student is involved in school related activities. E-Cigarettes are also prohibited. Smoking is considered a serious breach of good order.

#### **Litter:**

Students are expected to keep classroom, corridors and school grounds free from litter. Litter is a health hazard. Chewing gum and aerosols are forbidden in the school at all times.

#### **Mobile phones:**

While the prevalence and importance of mobile phones, especially in emergencies, the school authorities believe that they can act as a major distraction in the classroom environment and beyond. Mobiles phones may only be used in the classroom under the supervision and direction of the teacher.

Failing that, the following is the school policy regarding mobile phones:

#### **All mobile phones to be switched off at the gate before students enter school.**

If any mobile phone rings during class or co-curricular activities, it will be confiscated and returned at a later date to the student or collected by parents on the understanding that it will not be brought back into school.

Because of their size, mobile phones can be easily lost/misplaced/concealed so the school takes no responsibility for missing phones.

Any student found to be using the camera of their mobile phone at any time will have their phone confiscated and the matter dealt with as a breach of good order.

“The Department of Education & Skills” regulation states that for Leaving and Junior Certificate exams, a candidate is liable to have his/her whole examination (in all subjects) cancelled if he/she brings into the exam hall or has in his/her possession a mobile phone or a smart watch.

#### **Substance Misuse:**

The possession, use or distribution of mind altering substances, legal or illegal, while in the school or on school outings is not permitted.

The school has zero tolerance policy in relation to the possession, sale and use of mind altering substances and will be considered as most serious behaviour.

#### 4. TO A DRESS CODE:

In the interest of overall appearance of pupils as individuals and as a group, full school uniform is to be worn in the school at all times and at all school functions. This includes occasions such as public and house examinations.

Regular School Uniform (non PE Days)	MCS PE Day uniform
Crew neck navy jumper or O'Neill's MCS half zip	O'Neill's MCS half zip
White shirt/blouse	O'Neill's MCS t-shirt
Navy uniform trouser for boys	O'Neil's MCS tracksuit bottoms
Navy check uniform skirt or navy uniform trousers for girls	
Black/Navy shoes- for health and safety reasons these should be on slip	Runners
Navy Uniform Jacket with Crest	Navy Uniform Jacket with Crest

*The school uniform is available from Walshe's (The Irish House) Main Street, Moate and Kelly's Clara. A Full PE uniform will be available to purchase online from the O'Neills "Moate Community School" shop.*

\*PE Day uniform is compulsory for 1<sup>st</sup> – TY students and any 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year students taking PE as an examination subject. \* If a student in 5th/6th year does not wish to purchase the PE uniform – they will bring gear for PE, change for PE class and change back into their uniform after the class.

\* MCS School jacket: Students can wear the existing navy crested school jacket or purchase the NEW O'Neills school jacket available online. No other jacket will be permitted.

Any one of the following will apply where there is any deviation from the wearing of full school uniform

- Parents will be contacted and asked to bring in the correct uniform, when the student reports for school
- Permission will be sought for the student to go home to collect the uniform
- The student will be provided with the correct uniform by the school attendant, which they must wear.
- If wearing a jacket students must wear the school crested jacket. Students who wear other jackets will have them confiscated and returned at the end of the week following undertaking regarding future breaches. **The above also applies to students carrying jackets.**
- In house suspension will apply, during which the student will follow a study plan for normal timetabled classes.

#### **Hairstyles/Jewellery:**

Students are expected to be neat and tidy in dress and appearance. Excessive hair colouring, make-up and jewellery is forbidden. Facial piercings are not allowed. Boys must be clean shaven.

**The School Authorities are the judges of acceptable standards of dress and hairstyle.**

The wearing of the school uniform contributes a lot to the atmosphere of order, discipline and respect in the school and it is essential that parents ensure that students are not negligent in this matter.

**5. STARTING TIME:**

The school will be opened to cater for pupils arriving on the early bus. All students should be in school at 8.55 a.m. Students arriving after that time should report to reception with their journal. A 'late stamp' will be placed in the Journal. Otherwise the student will be marked absent for that day. A note of explanation should be given to the Deputy Principal/ Yearhead/ Tutor. Parents may be contacted by phone or webtext on lates /requests to leave school or absences from school.

**6. CLASS TIMES:**

Students are requested to be punctual for all classes, so as to prevent disruption of class and to maximise learning time.

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00					
Break					
11:15-12:15					
12:15-1:15					
Lunch					
1:55-2:55					
2:55-3:55					
After School Activities					

**7. LUNCH TIME:**

Canteen facilities including healthy options are available in the deli for all students. Students from the town who wish to go home for their lunch must have the necessary form completed and signed by parents.

A lunchtime pass will then be issued. Students must carry this pass with them at all times during lunch break. Students, not going to their home for lunch will have their lunchtime pass withdrawn. Responsibility for any accidents or incidents resulting from this will fall on the parents. Students are encouraged to participate in school activities, which are organised at lunchtime.

**8. TOILET PROCEDURES:**

Students are requested to use the toilets before and after school and during break times. During class time the following will apply:

- Students should ask the teacher for permission to go to the toilet.
- If permission is granted, the teacher will write 'TP'/time in the student's journal.
- The teacher will then give the student a Key for the toilet which must be given back on return.
- Students should not allow access by other students to the toilet while they are there.
- Excessive use of this procedure will not be permitted.

## **9 INSURANCE:**

While every reasonable precaution will be taken, the School Management accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to a pupil's property. School insurance does not cover loss or damage to jackets or bicycles. Bicycles should be securely locked to the bicycle rack. Large sums of money and valuable items should not be brought to school. Mobile phones, glasses and other valuables should be kept in students locker.

## **10. AFTER SCHOOL PROCEDURES:**

After school, all students should leave the school premises. Only student involved in games, extra class or evening study should remain.

## **11 BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME:**

The conduct of pupils on their way to and from the school is as important as within the school. The wearing of seatbelts on all buses is a legal requirement. Students are reminded to behave in a mannerly way on the road and in the bus. Only students waiting on school buses should loiter at the school gate after school. The school reserves the right to impose in-house sanctions if a pupil's activities outside the school have a detrimental effect on the pupil's behaviour or academic performance in school or on the well-being of any other pupil in this school.

## **12. HEALTH:**

The Principal and Deputy Principals should be informed of any student's illness or physical ailment which might affect her/his performance in class or should be noted by those taking extra-curricular activities. From time to time, strict health measures are implemented by the school based on public health advice, Students must adhere strictly to these at all times.

## **13. PE:**

All students are obliged to take part in all physical education classes. Students with medical conditions, which prohibit such involvement, must provide a medical certificate.

## **14. PASTORAL CARE:**

The basic objectives of our school are to foster the intellectual, social, spiritual, moral, athletic, cultural and physical development of each student. Each student is seen as an individual whose talents should be realised to the full. Each year has a Yearhead and each class has a Class Tutor. The Yearhead has the overall responsibility for discipline, monitoring academic progress, absences, lateness, disciplinary problems and the overall personal development of each student. Many support structures have been put in place to encourage support and motivate students – homework club, evening study, extra tuition, extra-curricular activities, mentors, etc.

### **15. HOMEWORK:**

Students are expected to be fully prepared for their classes each day. This will require careful study at home to ensure that written assignments and memory work set in class are completed thoroughly. Homework should also include due time for study and revision. When students are absent they are still accountable for homework

Assignments.

Students involved in extra curricular activities must do home work for the classes they have missed. **It is their responsibility to find out what homework was given. (For further information – see Homework Policy)**

### **16. ON-LINE LEARNING:**

All students are assigned a school email address. This allows students and teachers to communicate on a virtual platform. The school's Code of Behaviour applies to all on-line interactions.

### **17. THE STUDENT JOURNAL:**

The Journal is an important medium of communication between home and School. It serves the following functions:

- a) Record of all homework
- b) Record of important notice
- c) Means of communication between Teacher and Tutor/Yearhead
- d) Means of communication between Teacher and Parent.

Students are to have their Journal in school at all times. This should be signed by parents and never defaced. Replacement cost of lost/defaced journal /lost journal €10.00

### **18. CONDUCT DURING EXAMINATIONS:**

Students who are talking or copying will have their paper cancelled. Parents will be called by Yearhead, sanctions may be imposed

### **19. SICKNESS:**

Students should not come to school if they are sick. To avoid abuse, strict procedures must be adhered to:

- Students who feel ill in class may only report to Reception with the express permission of the class teacher.
- The school will try to contact parents and ask them to arrange to take the student home. Parents may nominate (in writing) a person/persons who will take responsibility for their son/daughter if he/she is ill and they are not available.
- If the student's condition gives cause for anxiety he/she may be brought to a doctor, or a doctor called to the school. If a doctor is not available the school may call for an ambulance.
- Medical expenses are the responsibility of parents.
- **In keeping with modern accepted practice and advice, no medication will be dispensed to students by school staff. Students should not give prescribed/unprescribed medication to other students.**

### **20. ATTENDANCE:**

Students are required to attend school regularly. In the case of unexplained absences, the Tutor or Yearhead will contact parent/guardian. A note of explanation in the pupil's Journal from

parent or guardian is required for absence from school, homework undone, late arrival or for permission to leave school early. Unauthorised departures from school within the school hours are regarded as serious transgressions and a student found in breach of this rule may be suspended. Students who wish to be excused during the school day may only do so if a note of explanation from a parent is signed by the Principal or Deputy Principal/ Yearhead. The Journal will then be stamped at reception on departure.

#### **21. THEFT:**

Any student involved in stealing either school property or property belonging to individuals (school personnel or students) may be suspended and / or referred to the Garda Síochána. Students who damage school property or equipment may either have to replace or repair the property.

#### **22. LOST PROPERTY:**

Students should ensure all their clothing and possessions are named or marked so that they can be identified. Lost property should be handed into the school office without delay. Named items that are handed in as lost property are directed to the owners. Unnamed lost property may be reclaimed from the Lost & Found. Unclaimed, unnamed items will eventually be disposed of.

#### **23. SECURITY**

The school has an extensive monitoring system in place which is used to provide security for the school building and extensive grounds, especially at times when the school is vacant

#### **24. EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

All students are encouraged to participate in some area of extra-curricular activities. However, students and particularly examination students are discouraged to take on too many activities. If a student misses class because of an extra-curricular activity the onus is on the student to find out what homework has been given and to complete same.

Students representing the school or involved in extra-curricular activity must wear the school uniform and their behaviour should reflect the high standards of the school. Students may only attend school activities at venues away from the school either by the mode of transport provided by the school or with their parents.

Students who are involved in extra-curricular activities and/or training at lunchtime must ensure that they are in class at 1.55 p.m.

#### **25. UNAPPROVED OUTINGS**

Students travelling as a group on buses organised by parents/ students / other individual's during school time is strictly prohibited. The school is take no responsibility for such outings and sanctions may be imposed on students attending.

#### **26. MISUSE OF FIREWORKS/POSSESSION OF WEAPONS/DAMAGE:**

- Bangers and fireworks are not permitted in the school or school grounds. Students caught in possession of or setting off bangers or fireworks will receive an automatic suspension of at least five days. Students selling or supplying bangers or fireworks will be suspended.
- Students are not permitted to bring any kind of knife or dangerous implement to school. Possession of same will result in automatic suspension.



- Students who damage the uniforms of other students will be suspended. Students are not permitted to write on school shirts/blouses.

## 27. BREACHES OF CODE OF BEHAVIOUR/SANCTIONS

Junior Cycle students participate in a wellbeing programme, which offers them the opportunity to understand the need for rules and sanctions within our school.

All breaches of Code of Behaviour will be fully investigated with the basic tenants of natural justice being applied. A recording system will be in place, and all parties to the dispute will have an opportunity to explain their position.

A number of sanctions will be in place which will be appropriate and proportionate. The purpose of the sanction(s) is to bring about rehabilitation and this will be explained to students.

Each situation is different and therefore discretion is an important consideration. Progressive sanctions (getting more severe) will apply.

### Sanctions:

- Verbal reprimand - teacher/student
- Note in the Journal
- Separation within class
- Formal meeting between teacher, Yearhead and student
- Formal meeting between teacher, student, Yearhead, Deputy Principals/Principal
- **Clean Up** – This involves cleaning up the canteen after lunch. Students are required to report and co-operate with the supervising teacher. Students placed on ‘Clean-Up’ will have their journal stamped.
- **On-Report**’ involves a student presenting a special On Report Card to their teacher at the commencement of each class and collecting it at the end. They must then bring it home, have it signed by parents and return it to the Yearhead the next morning. Repeated continuous misconduct can bring further sanctions including longer exclusion of the student from school.
- **Study Hall** – Students may be sent to Study Hall following dismissal from class. They will be required to complete Form A – an explanation of what occurred from their perspective. The teacher will also be required to complete Form B – an explanation from their perspective. These forms will form the basis of further discussion on this incident. (These forms will also be used for serious incidents.)
- **Internal Suspension** – This means students spending the day in the Study Hall.
- **Detention** – This involves students being detained at lunchtime. Students detained will have their journal stamped and parents will be informed.
- **Suspension** – If suspension is being considered parents will first be informed. They will be asked to meet with Yearhead and student. Parents may appeal any suspension.

## **DEALING WITH BREACHES OF CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

**Breaches of Code of Behaviour will be categorised as follows:**

### **(a) MISDEMEANOURS**

Misdemeanours include isolated minor breaches of school regulations and isolated infringements related to schoolwork, homework, lack of effort, discipline, and general order, litter. Parents can help at these times by checking the school Journal each day, reprimanding their child, supporting the school and monitoring progress. Standard sanctions in general use may be applied by subject teachers and class teachers, such as:

- Verbal reprimand
- Note in the Journal
- Separation within the classroom.
- Additional homework such as essay, extra question or work appropriate to the subject area.
- Removal from class and placed under supervision.
- Report to Tutor, Yearhead, Deputy Principal, or Principal.
- Supervised detention by the teacher
- Being assigned tasks within the school building and grounds, e.g. clean up duty, internal suspension.

### **(b) ISOLATED BREACHES OF GOOD ORDER.**

Isolated breaches of good order include the following:

- Use of abusive language
- Misbehaviour in class of an isolated nature
- A fight between students in the school
- A temper tantrum in class
- Sanctions for such offences may include clean up/ detention / suspension

### **(c) CONTINUOUS MISCONDUCT**

Continuous misconduct includes **repeated misdemeanours** or repeated breaches of good order. Examples of this type of behaviour include:

- Continuous disruption of classes.
- Failure to present homework on a continuous basis
- Failure to bring necessary books, equipment and resources on a continuous basis, lack of commitment.
- Bullying or harassment of other students '**Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others**'. This includes harassment and sexual harassment. If a student feels they are being bullied they should report the matter to their Tutor/Yearhead or any Teacher. The school has a separate policy on Bullying (available [www.moatecs.com](http://www.moatecs.com))
- General behaviour inappropriate to the smooth operation of the school

Sanctions for such offences include clean up / detention, the placing of the student on report or suspension. It should be noted that a suspension may result in a student being excluded from school related activities / or school privileges (canteen).

### **(e) SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR**

As a guide for parents and pupils, the following is a list of some of the offences, which will be regarded as serious:

- Assault, threat or abuse of a member of staff by a student.

- Assault, threat or abuse of a fellow student.
- Damage to property of staff or students.
- Putting a teacher's or fellow student's health or safety at risk.
- **Possession of drugs or alcohol.** Sale, consumption or distribution of such alcohol or drugs.
- Possession of knife or offensive weapon.
- Malicious damage to property
- Theft within the school.
- Serious misbehaviour on school-related activities.

Serious misbehaviour will warrant instant suspension, a full investigation or possible expulsion.

#### **Procedures Relating to Serious Misbehaviour**

Suspension or possible expulsion will be applied, following an enquiry by the Principal, Deputy Principal/ Yearhead.

#### **Procedures /relating to Serious Misbehaviour – (following an enquiry)**

- The student will be suspended immediately.
- The parents/guardians will be notified in writing informing them of the reason for and duration of suspension.
- The parents/guardians may discuss the decision with the Yearhead by meeting him/her.
- At this meeting the case may be reviewed.
- Parents/guardians may appeal the decision of the Principal to the Board of Management where they may present a case to the Board.
- The suspended student must meet with the Principal or his/her representative before the student is readmitted to the school.
- Students who have been suspended for behaviour-related offences may not be permitted to represent the school in any capacity.
- Any work in preparation for state examinations missed through suspension is the responsibility of the student.

#### **(f) PROCEDURE IN CASES OF EXPULSION**

- The student will be suspended immediately pending a decision on expulsion.
- Parents/guardians will be notified in writing, informing them of the reason for and advising them of the Principal's recommendation for expulsion.
- Parents/guardians may present a case to the Principal by meeting him/her. Following such a meeting the principal will inform them of decision/recommendation made.
- If an expulsion is recommended by the Principal, the Board of Management will meet to make a decision on the matter.
- Parents/guardians will be advised in writing of their rights to present a case to the Board of Management of the school before a decision is reached. Parents/guardians or the student himself/herself, if over eighteen years of age, have a right of appeal to the Board of Management in the first instance and subsequently such further rights of appeal as set out in Section 28 and 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Parents/Guardians and students are asked to note that it is not possible to detail every little rule and regulation governing one's behaviour at school. Full details on all relevant school policies and procedures are available on our website [www.moatecs.com](http://www.moatecs.com). Each student

is accepted into the school on the understanding that she/he will comply with the school rules detailed above. School Authorities reserve the right to resign responsibility for any student who is disruptive or who is not amenable to school policy and regulations.

I agree that the school rules are acceptable and will support the school in upholding the standards set therein:

Parent/Guardian's Signature:.....  
Date:...../...../20.....

Emergency Contact No.:.....

Student's Signature:..... Date:...../...../20.....

**PLEASE BRING THIS JOURNAL TO THE PARENT/TEACHER MEETING**  
**Please note that all personal data will be collected and used in compliance with GDPR 2018.**

**Replacements Journals will only be issued to students on receipt of an explanatory note from parents and at an additional cost of €10.00**

We the undersigned,

Parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_

- Grant permission to Moate Community School to photograph our son/daughter, either alone or together with others and to use the image in school publications, on the school website /twitter account and /or for promotional purposes in local newspapers.

Permission is granted subject to an undertaking that the privacy or integrity of our son/daughter's image will be respected at all times.

- Agree to allow our son / daughter to participate in the school's SPHE Programme (Social, Personal, Health Education)
- Agree to the school's 'Internet Acceptable use' Policy. This is explained to all students and must be adhered to. It is available for viewing on the school's website and by request from the school.

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

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note** the above Code not only relates to school time but also after school activities, school bus, school tours, school linked activities before and after school.

This Code will be reviewed on an Annual basis by the Board of Management/Trustees/ Staff/Parents/Students of Moate Community School and was approved by the Board of Management on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022.