**Bunscoil na Toirbhirte**

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**Bunscoil na Toirbhirte Code of Behaviour**

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**Introduction**

The students of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte are aware that our school is a Catholic school which stands for Christian values.

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

We hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive Code of Behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 the Board of Management of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its pupils, parents and staff.

**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 to 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

7) The procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte has been developed in accordance with “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools”, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

**POLICY FORMULATION**

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

1. The Board of Management reviewed the existing Code of Behaviour

2. Parents and Staff members 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 policy

3. The School Rules were discussed by the Principal and the Students’ Council.

4. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where deemed appropriate was amended in line with the feedback received.

5. The Board of Management of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte approved and reatified the policy

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE**

* 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, recognising the rights of children to be educated in classes not disrupted by the behaviour of a tiny minority, and also the rights of teachers to work in conditions free from stress.
* 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 sanction are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

**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.

For avoidance of doubt any reference in the foregoing to Principal is to be construed as meaning Acting Principal or Deputy Principal in the absence of the Principal.

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

We aim over the time a child spends with us to develop, in partnership with the parents, the consciousness of the child from that of the four year old where discipline is usually external to that of the 12 or 13 year old who understands the need to exercise self discipline in dealing with teachers, parents, adults and other children. In relation to schoolwork and homework we aim to motivate the children in such a way that by the time they reach the senior standards they see the need to work for and by themselves. In terms of general behaviour, the children should begin to see, as they grow older, that they are part of a larger community and that what they do always affects others either positively or negatively. We expect that the children will give of their best effort while they are in Bunscoil na Toirbhirte and that the parents will support and join with us in our efforts to give the children the best education possible.

**SCHOOL RULES:**

1. **RESPECT AND COURTESY:** All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul language and any form of bullying is unacceptable.

2. **PUNCTUALITY:** The official opening time is 9 a.m. Classes for infants end at 1.40 p.m. Classes for the other pupils end at 2.40 p.m.

3. **ABSENCES:** Every absence of a child must be accounted for. This can be done via the Aladdin Connect App or by forwarding a note to the Teacher giving the reason for the absence on the return of the child. If a child wishes to leave school early a written note must be given to the class teacher. Prior to collecting a child early, the parent/guardian must sign the child out at the office. T

4. **ILLNESS:** Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.

5. **UNIFORM:** Children are expected to wear the school uniform every day except the day of their P.E. class when they should wear the School tracksuit. Leggings are not suitable.

6. **PERSONAL PROPERTY:** Children should have their names on their coats and other personal property such as school books, copies etc. If books etc are left in the school they are the responsibility of the child. Mobile phones and other electrical equipment is not to be used in school. If they cause a distraction at any time during the school day they will be taken from the child and held in the Office until a parent calls personally to collect the phone/electrical equipment.

7. **SCHOOL PROPERTY AND THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:** Pupils must respect all School property and keep the school environment clean and litter free.

8. **BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS:**

* Pupils must have all books and required material.
* Pupils are expected to work to the best of their ability and to present written exercises neatly.
* They are to show respect for their classmates and follow the teacher's instructions.
* Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others is unacceptable.

9. **BEHAVIOUR OUT OF CLASS:**

* Pupils must not behave in any way, which endangers themselves or others. If children behave in a violent or aggressive manner parents may be asked to attend the school immediately by the Principal and remove their child for the remainder of the school day.
* Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher are to be complied with.
* Children must line up in an orderly manner at the end of the break.
* Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. If children are being bullied teachers must be told so that the matter can be dealt with effectively.

**10. HOMEWORK:**

* It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Each class has its own requirements and parents are notified in writing of each class’s homework policy at the start of the school year. Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child’s homework.
* If homework causes worry for the child parents are asked to contact the teacher.
* Parents are asked to sign homework journals every night. Parents may be asked to sign homework.
* In the case of infants who do not have a homework journal, the homework itself is to be signed each night.

**NOTES**

A note from a parent/guardian is required when:

* A child is absent from school, stating the date(s) and reason for absence. This information is required by the National Education Welfare Board (N.E.W.B.). A note should be sent in advance, in the event of a planned absence.
* A child hasn’t done his/her homework.
* A child is unable to take part in P.E. class.

A parent/guardian/nominated adult must sign the ‘Signing In/Out Book’ at reception if we need to leave school early.

**REWARDS**

1. Oral and written praise for effort

2. ACE Awards for Attainment, Community Spirit and Effort.

3. Homework off.

4. Act of Kindness Award.

5. Occasional special privileges

6 A system of merit marks- Class Dojo

**SANCTIONS**

1. Reasoning with pupil.

2. Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)

3. Temporary separation from peers and friends.

4. Loss of privileges.

5. Detention during breaks.

6. Referral to Principal.

7. If a child continually misbehaves parents/guardians will be notified (e.g. note in homework diary; phone- call).

8. Suspension in accordance with the Rules for National Schools.

**STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

**PUPILS:**

**General Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and all Staff and visitors.
* 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, staff and visitors.
* 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 Behaviour**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Play – safely avoiding any games or play that is 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 duty teacher and fellow pupils.
* Avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling.

**Behaviour in other School Areas**

Each pupil is expected to:

* Walk – in the school corridors
* Be courteous to all members of the school community.
* Respect school property.
* Display good manners.

**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.

**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 Class rules are understood 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.

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Parents/Guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which product 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. It is understood by accepting a place for your child in the school you are consenting to abide by the code and policies of the school.

**Homework:**

It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child’s homework. If homework causes worry for the pupil, parents/guardians are asked to contact the teacher.

**PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

As a general rule the school will endeavour 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.

**REWARDS FOR GOOD BEHAVIOUR**

Good behaviour must be seen to be rewarded and this will be up to the discretion of the teacher. For example, oral and written praise, yearly reports, small prizes, merit lists, merit stars, certificates and extra privileges as appropriate.

**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 1: Minor Breaches**

Failure to wear school uniform/tracksuit, except when excused for a good reason with a written note from parents/guardians, or on special occasions. Failure to get homework/Journal signed. Careless presentation of schoolwork. Failure to complete homework. Playing in the wrong yard. Careless about not putting litter in bins provided. Wilful damage of a minor nature. Failure to follow the instructions of the class teacher, ancillary staff or yard supervisor.

Level 1: Sanctions:

* Correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff or special visitors. An apology from pupil.
* Repeated Minor Breaches: Repeated instances of the above.
* Further Sanctions: Further correction by class teacher, other teacher, ancillary staff or special visitors. Note to parents/guardians, Detention, lines or writing out of a page to be signed by parent/guardian, referral to Principal.

Level 1: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

* Classroom based interventions such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation (e.g. with parents/guardian 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 2: More Serious Breaches**

Use of foul or offensive language; Careless use of school property; Rough play; Repeated failure to complete homework; Disruption of class; Disrespect towards staff/ancillary staff.; Disrespect towards visitors to school or towards other children; Bullying; Derogatory reference towards another person’s race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability or ethnic origin. Use of a mobile phone by a pupil on school grounds during school hours; Possession of any item likely to be injurious to the child or others, or likely to damage school property

**Level 2: Sanctions**

* Referral to Principal. Detention. More formal contact with parents/guardians.
* Withdrawal of privileges. Confiscation of dangerous items.
* Confiscation of mobile phone during school hours and/or a letter home to parents.
* Cleaning up so as to restore school buildings, grounds or furnishings to correct state, where applicable.

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.

**Level 3: Gross Misbehaviour**

* Repeated instances of above after warning regarding future conduct; Use of threatening language or behaviour towards teachers or others; Any act of wilful violence towards other pupils, teachers, ancillary staff or special visitors; Stealing; Possession/supply or use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal drugs and/or other harmful substances.
* Bullying; Wilful damage or attempted wilful damage of school property; property of teachers, ancillary staff, other pupils or special visitors; Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission of Principal and notification from parents/guardians; Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions towards another person or group involving gender, religion, disability or ethnic origin.

Level 3: Supportive Interventions

* Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Education Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
* Referral for a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s) guardian(s) consent.

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

* Immediate contact with parent(s)/guardian(s).
* Written assurance of proper behaviour from school and contact with the Gardai after parental involvement if illegal activity was involved. 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.

The rules will also apply to all and any school-related activities either within or outside the school, during normal school hours or outside these hours if the school-related activities necessitates this e.g. sporting fixtures, educational trips, etc. Breaches by pupils from Junior Classes will be treated on a level more appropriate to their age, but the general expectation of good behaviour will apply to all pupils.

**PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSIONS**

**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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirtehas 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/circumstance. 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 in 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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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.

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)/Guardians 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 circumstances 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 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.
* 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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

* 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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte will initiate a formal investigation of the matter. The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

* Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
* An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision- making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

* 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.
* 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 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

**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 Suspend:

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 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). Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
* 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. 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:

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

(b) ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) 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.

(c) Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s).

**Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s (or BOM’s nominee)- Recommendations and 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:

(a) as to the date, location and time of the hearing.

(b) of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.

(c) 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:

(a) the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures.

(b) the Principal (or BOM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other’s presence.

(c) Each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party.

(d) The parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose.

(e) Board of Management Deliberations and 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:

(a) Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.

(b) 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.

(c) Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted.

(d) Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer.

(e) 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.

(f) 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 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

(a) No person with a vested 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.

(b) 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

**POLICY RATIFICATION**

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte at its meeting held on the 22/09/2022