

# Iniscealtra NS

**Iniscealtra N.S.**



*School Information Booklet*

Iniscealtra N.S.



Mountshannon, Co. Clare 061-927299

[mountshannonns@gmail.com](mailto:mountshannonns@gmail.com)

[mountshannonschool.net](http://mountshannonschool.net)

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Dear Parents / Guardians,

We would like to extend you a very warm welcome to Iniscealtra NS, Mountshannon.

We hope that your child will be very happy here.

Our school is a happy and safe place where every child matters. Without support we cannot succeed so we look forward to working in partnership with you in the interest of your child's all round learning and personal development.

This booklet provides information and guidelines for the parents of children starting in Iniscealtra NS, Mountshannon

We have a wonderful staff and you can be assured of our full co-operation and commitment at all times.

Should you have any query or concerns at any time please feel free to make an appointment to talk to us.

Le gach dea ghúí

*Lee O'Riordan*  
Principal

*Aisfe H. Sand*  
Vice Principal

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### *School Details*

**Address:** Iniscealtra National School, Mountshannon,  
Co.Clare  
**Tel :** 061927299  
**Email :** mountshannonns@gmail.com  
**Website/Blog:** www.mountshannonschool.net  
**Patron:** Bishop of Killaloe Fintan Monahan  
**Chairperson:** Tony O Rourke  
**Principal:** Mr. Joe O Riordan

### *School Opening and Closing*

	<b>ALL</b>	<b>JI &amp; SI</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup></b>
Doors Open	9:15		
School Starts	9:20		
First Break	11:00 – 11:10		
Lunch Break	12:30 – 1:00		
Going Home		2.00	3.00

A school calendar for the year, listing any school closures, is distributed each September. If there are any emergency closures the school will notify parents by text message. All pupils must be collected by a parent or nominated person from the school gate at home time. Please see our Arrival and Dismissal policy at the end of the booklet

### *School Ethos*

This school is committed to the development of the whole person in a Christian, caring child centred atmosphere. The staff work in partnership with the Board of Management, parents and the wider community. Iniscealtra N.S. welcomes pupils of other religious traditions and nationalities.

### **Staff- 2021/2022**

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class teachers

2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> teacher

Junior to 1<sup>st</sup> teacher

Special Education Teacher

SNA

Secretary

Aisling Bohan

Aoife Holland

Shannon Ryan

Joe O Riordan (Principal)

Mary Carey/Aisling Cahill

Theresa Nolan

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for the school, including finance, maintenance, staffing and the development of the school plan and policies. The Board comprises of two direct nominees of the Patron, two elected parents (a mother and a father) the Principal, one other teacher on the staff and two extra members proposed by these nominees. The current Chairperson of the Board of Management is Tony O Rourke. The other members are Joe O' Riordan, Aisling Bohan, Nuala Dooley, Lynda Dooley, Mary Rodgers, Ger Burke, and Kevin O Halloran. The term of office for the Board of Management is 4 years.

### **Curriculum**

The primary school curriculum is presented in seven primary areas, some of which are further subdivided into subjects. These are

- Religious Education
- Language (Gaeilge and English),
- Mathematics,
- Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (History, Geography and Science),
- Arts Education (Visual Arts, Music and Drama)
- Physical Education and
- Social, Personal and Health Education.

### *Belongings*

Please ensure your child's name is on all clothing, lunch boxes, books and copies.

### *School Uniform*

The school uniform consists of:

**Boys and Girls: Jumper-**Navy Blue (Round or v-neck) with crest

**Polo shirt-** White or Blue.

**Outdoor Shoes-** Parents choice

**Indoor Shoes-** Slippers or Runners

**Cost of Crest €3 per jumper.**

### *Book Lists*

The Book list for your child is distributed by the class teacher in June. The school operates a book rental scheme, details of which will accompany the booklist in June. Children need to have all their school books, copies and stationery for September.

### *Absences*

Under the Education Welfare Act 2002 the school is obliged to inform the Education Welfare officer of all absences exceeding 20 days during the academic year. Parents must inform the school **in writing** of the reason for their child's absence, regardless of any other communication with the school in respect of this absence. Please use the slips at the back of the school Homework Journal.

### *Pupils Leaving During School Time*

Parents/ guardians must notify the school if their child has to leave the school during school time. Parents who wish to collect their child early from school must collect him/her from the classroom door.

### **Homework**

Homework is assigned Monday to Thursday with the children being excused homework on weekends. If homework is not done a note to the teacher should be written in the homework diary. Parents should check their child's homework each evening and ensure that he/she has somewhere quiet to work away from noise and distraction.

Suggested timeframe for homework:

- a) Infants: 10 – 15 mins.
- b) 1st/ 2nd: 20 – 30 mins
- c) 3rd/4th: 30 – 45 mins
- d) 5th/6th: 45 – 50 mins

### **Communication with Parents**

- An annual Parent / Teacher meeting usually takes place in November.
- Parents can request a meeting with a teacher by making an appointment.
- Summer reports for each child are sent home.
- Letters are distributed regularly to the pupils. Please check your child's schoolbag.
- Reminders and information about school activities may be sent to parents via text message.
- Information will also be shared on the school website and Facebook page

### **Complaints Procedure**

Parents are asked to discuss their concerns with the class teacher initially, by making an appointment and, if necessary to proceed further with the complaint, to contact the Principal by making an appointment.

### **Healthy Lunches**

As part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) Programme we encourage the children to become more aware of the need for healthy food in their lunch boxes.

The following foods are not allowed in school:

- Crisps
- Fizzy drinks or high energy drinks
- Sweets
- Chocolate biscuits/bars/buns/muffins
- Chocolate flavoured yogurts or yogurts with chocolate pieces
- Chocolate spread

Please note that due to a serious allergy (anaphylaxis) Kiwi fruit or products containing Kiwi are not permitted in school. Kiwi is occasionally found in multi-fruit juices, some yogurts, Hairbo Jelly Sweets and Chupa-chup lollipops. Please check ingredients if you are unsure. Thank you for your co-operation in this regard.

### **Health Problems**

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to notify the school if your child has a health problem. Should a problem develop then the school should be notified immediately. This information will be treated with respect and confidence. If a child needs to have medicine administered to him/her during school hours, parents must make a written request to the B.O.M.

### **Children Unwell in School**

When a child is unwell in school the class teacher or the Principal will contact the parents/guardians. If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the school will notify the child's emergency contact person.

### **Accidents**

In the case of serious accidents, such as head injuries, deep cuts etc. parents/guardians will be contacted by phone. In the event of being unable to contact the parent/guardian the child's emergency contact

person will be called. In an emergency, the school will contact a doctor or emergency services. Therefore, valid and up-to-date phone numbers are essential. It remains the responsibility of parents to give valid phone numbers to the school.

### **Infectious Diseases**

Please notify the school if your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease.

### **Head Lice**

Please check your child's hair regularly (i.e. at least once a week) for head lice. Please report any outbreak to the school so that we can alert others. Lotions and shampoos are readily available from your local pharmacy.

### **Child Protection**

The Board of Management has adopted the Department of Education and Skills' *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (2017) as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse (neglect, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse) they are obliged to refer this matter to Tusla. Tusla will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned. In our school the Designated Liaison Person for dealing with Child Protection is Aoife Holland.

### **Anti-Bullying**

In this school we strive to create a positive school climate, which focuses on respect for each child. We encourage the children to care for other people and to support others. Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Pupils are encouraged to report incidents of bullying, and all reports will be noted, investigated and dealt with by the teachers. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to

cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

### *Mobile Phone Policy*

Children are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. If a child needs to bring a mobile phone to school the teacher should be informed and the phone handed in for safe keeping and returned at home time. Failure to do so will see phone confiscated and handed into principal.

### *Affirming Positive Behaviour*

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. This is done by using the following strategies:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's copy or book.
- Referral to Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual class merit awards and award stamps and stickers.
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

### *Discouraging Misbehaviour*

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
- Time Out on yard for 5 or 10 minutes.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Loss of privileges.
- Detention during lunch break.

- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

### **How Parents can help**

Parents play a very important role in enabling their child to settle into school.

- Please have a positive attitude to our school. Speak positively about the school, the teachers and all school activities.
- Encourage your child to talk about school, their friends and their interests.
- Please supply all your child's books, copies and uniform and write your child's name clearly on them.
- Encourage your child to eat a healthy lunch.
- Ensure your child knows how to put on their own shoes and coat and can use the toilet properly before starting school.
- Check your child's homework regularly. Ask them their spellings and tables, listen to their reading and read to them.
- Encourage your child's talents.

### **School Rules**

1. We are gentle.
2. We are kind and helpful.
3. We are good listeners.

4. We are honest.
5. We work hard.
6. We look after property.

### **Practical Tips for your Junior Infant Child Starting Primary School**

The following list of suggestions will help your child to settle easily and be increasingly independent in the junior infant classroom. They may seem like obvious tips but are essential to a positive experience of school in the early years.

#### **Before you start**

- Familiarise your child with the idea of school and its location e.g. point it out when you pass by, play building a school out of bricks, imagine being a teacher, read positive stories about school etc.
- Use the teacher's name and school vocabulary repeatedly.
- Get into good term-time habits ahead of school commencing. Regular meals, plenty of sleep and waking up in time for school are all important parts of a daily school routine and when established from the outset, make life easier for everyone.

#### **Lunches**

- Make sure your child is familiar with their own lunch box during the weeks prior to school.
- Can they open and close the lunchbox? Are they able to open yogurts, cheese packets or bananas? Can they peel a mandarin? Please consider these things when packing their lunch. Peeled oranges, for example, are easier for children to manage.
- Boxes and tubs with clipped lids are very accessible for fruit pieces, raisins, cheese and so on.
- Teach them how to open and close their drink bottle.
- Please familiarise yourself with our healthy eating policy.

#### **Possessions**

Junior infant pupils need a **minimal amount** of school equipment.

- Buy your child a good-sized school bag, one that will carry A4 sized books as well as their lunch box, pencil case and jumper. Children often have trouble fitting everything into their bag, so a big bag makes life easier for them.
- A simple zipped pencil case with a triangular gripped writing pencil and a packet of colouring pencils (10 pack- no more please) is more than sufficient.
- More equipment than this is hard to keep track of and frequently gets misplaced or mixed up with others.
- **Please label all belongings with your child's name or initials.**

### **Personal care**

- All pupils are expected to be fully competent using the toilet and washing their hands.
- Teach your child how to put on and take off their coat, jumper and shoes.
- Please encourage them to practise dressing and undressing as this will become important later with regard to swimming lessons.
- Coats with clasps and shoes with Velcro can help to aid independence. These are little things, but mean a lot when a child knows how to do them.

### **Play, oral language and homework**

Encourage your child to share their toys and to tidy up efficiently after playing. Talk with your child about how they are getting on in school; ask specific questions like what song they sung today or what letter sound they learned.

Children will receive a small amount of homework each day from about October onwards and it is important that it is completed carefully and accurately. Homework will be listed in your child's notebook and should only take about 10-15 minutes. This notebook will also be used as a day-to-day communication tool so please check it for messages or notes and sign it each evening.

Watch your child's letter formation when they are learning to write and encourage good pencil grip, paper position and posture. Encourage and reward good behaviour. Our behaviour policy has been included in your enrolment pack.

Please attempt to be on time when picking them up; even a few minutes late can seem like an eternity to a waiting child.

**And finally...**

Please talk to us if you have any questions, if there is a problem or if you are worried about something. We are here to make the most of your child's school experience.

# Policies & Procedures

Policies are reviewed and updated regularly.  
Please see our website for the most recent policies.



# Internet Acceptable Use Policy

## Contents

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2. General Approach
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## General Approach

The aim of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that pupils will benefit from the learning opportunities offered by the school's internet resources in a safe and effective manner.

Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. If the school AUP is not adhered to this privilege may be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions will be imposed.

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected:

- To treat others with respect at all times.
- Not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

- Respect the right to privacy of all other members of the school community.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to pupils who have access to and are users of the internet in Iniscealtra NS .

- It also applies to members of staff, volunteers, parents, carers and others who access the internet in Iniscealtra NS.

Misuse of the internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Iniscealtra NS will deal with incidents that take place outside the school that impact on the wellbeing of pupils or staff under this policy and associated codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies. In such cases Iniscealtra NS will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school and if deemed appropriate impose sanctions.

Iniscealtra NS implements the following strategies on promoting safer use of the internet :

- Pupils will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of our implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curriculum.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually by the following stakeholders:

- Board of Management

The school will monitor the impact of the policy using:

- Logs of reported incidents.
- Surveys and/or questionnaires of pupils.

Should serious online safety incidents take place, the principal should be informed.

The implementation of this Internet Acceptable Use policy will be monitored by the Board of Management Iniscealtra NS.

# Content Filtering

Iniscealtra NS has chosen to implement the following level on content filtering on the Schools Broadband Network:

- Level 4 This level allows access to millions of websites including games and YouTube but blocks access to websites belonging to the personal websites category and websites such as Facebook belonging to the Social Networking category.

Pupils taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion.

## Web Browsing and Downloading

Pupils will not intentionally visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.

Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in the classroom to their teacher.

Pupils will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in school but outside the classroom to a teacher.

Pupils and staff will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Pupils will not download or view any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

- Downloading by pupils of materials or images not relevant to their studies is allowed with staff permission.

## Email and Messaging

- The use of personal email accounts is only allowed at Iniscealtra NS with expressed permission from members of the teaching staff.
- Pupils should not use school email accounts to register for online services such as social networking services, apps, and games.
- Pupils will use approved class email accounts only under supervision by or permission from a teacher.

Pupils will not send any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.

Pupils should immediately report the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication.

Pupils should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, pupils should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders.

## Social Media

The following statements apply to the use of messaging, blogging and video streaming services in Iniscealtra NS :

- Use of instant messaging services and apps including Snapchat, Whats Apps, G Chat etc. is not allowed in Iniscealtra NS.
- Use of blogs such as Word Press, Tumblr etc. is allowed in Iniscealtra NS with express permission from teaching staff.
- Use of video streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo etc. is with express permission from teaching staff.

Staff and pupils must not use social media and the internet in any way to harass, insult, abuse or defame pupils, their family members, staff, other members of the Iniscealtra NS community

Staff and pupils must not discuss personal information about pupils, staff and other members of the Iniscealtra NS community on social media.

Staff and pupils must not use school email addresses for setting up personal social media accounts or to communicate through such media.

Staff and pupils must not engage in activities involving social media which might bring Iniscealtra NS into disrepute.

# Personal Devices

Pupils using their own technology in school should follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if they were using school equipment.

The following statements apply to the use of internet-enabled devices such as tablets, gaming devices, and digital music players in Iniscealtra NS :

- Pupils are only allowed to bring personal internet-enabled devices into Iniscealtra NS with expressed permission from staff.

# Images & Video

Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.

At Iniscealtra NS pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission.

Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.

Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website.

Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.

Sharing explicit images and in particular explicit images of pupils and/or minors is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved. Sharing explicit images of other pupils automatically incurs suspension as a sanction.

# Cyberbullying

When using the internet pupils, parents and staff are expected to treat others with respect at all times.

Engaging in online activities with the intention to harm, harass, or embarrass and another pupil or member of staff is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour, with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

Measures are taken to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

Measures are taken by Iniscealtra NS to ensure that staff and pupils are aware that bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. This definition includes cyber-bullying even when it happens outside the school or at night.

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

The prevention of cyber bullying is an integral part of the anti-bullying policy of our school.

## School Websites

Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the internet in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website.

The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety, privacy, or reputation of students or staff.

The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.

Personal student information including home address and contact details will not be published on Iniscealtra NS web pages.

The Iniscealtra NS will avoid publishing the first name and last name of pupils in video or photograph captions published online.

The school has a social media presence, however, no facial images of children will appear on school accounts.

## **Code of Behaviour**

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

In Iniscealtra NS, 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.

### **Aims of the code**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others
- To facilitate the education and development of every child
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

### **Responsibility of Adults**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.

- To discourage physical aggression and encourage 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.

A Code of Conduct for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

### **School Rules**

1. We show respect for self and others
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others
3. We show respect other students and their learning
4. We are kind and willing to help others
5. WE follow instructions from staff immediately
6. We walk quietly in the school building
7. We show courtesy and good manners
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class
11. We take responsibility for your own work
12. We wear the appropriate uniform.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.

These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules:

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for infant classes. Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

### **Class Rules**

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. 'Walk' and not, 'Don't run'). Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Incentives/Reward System**

Part of the vision of *Iniscealtra NS School* is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework journal
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- 'Bualadh Bos' in class or special mention at assembly.

Field trips, annual school tours and our end of year special event will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

### **Unacceptable Behaviour**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile-phones to school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform; bringing in chewing-gum
- Not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. "Cyber/text" bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

*Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.*

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

*In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.*

## **Sanctions**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

1. Reasoning with pupil
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
3. Incomplete homework without a note will have to be completed the following night. Failure to do this will result in the pupil completing the work during break time
4. Time out to be given for a unacceptable behaviour

5. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
6. Prescribing extra work/ writing out the story of what happened
7. Loss of privileges
8. Communication with parents
9. Referral to Principal
10. Principal communicating with parents
11. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

## **Children with Special Needs**

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

## **Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher
- Through children's homework journal
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- Newsletters/school web-site/e-mails
- TextaParent service.

I don't like bullying, its not not cool  
So don't be mean to people in school

I will treat my class with respect and care  
And encourage all to share

Keep this in mind when faced with a test  
Keep trying and trying and do your best.

## Anti- Bullying Policy

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

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

**(a) A positive school culture and climate which** is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity; encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

**(b) Effective leadership**

**(c) A school-wide approach**

**(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

**(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-**

**(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils**

**(g) Supports for staff**

**(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and**

**(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.**

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

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

See Appendix 1 for examples of bullying behaviours.

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

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

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

### Roles and Responsibilities

The relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying is the class teacher (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools). If another teacher is informed or aware of suspected bullying behaviour, he/she should inform the class teacher. The class teacher will investigate and deal with any bullying behaviour and will keep the principal informed of such investigations.

### Education and prevention strategies

#### School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.

- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual review of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, Lunchtime Buddies and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school on enrolment.
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention; annual Anti bullying Week and parents/guardians seminars organised by P/A.; annual student surveys during Anti Bullying Week; regular school assemblies by principal or deputy principal.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
  - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
  - Hand note up with homework.
  - Make a phone call to the school
  - Anti-bully or Worry box?
  - Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
  - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school.

### **Implementation of curricula**

- The full implementation of the SPHE and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Bí Folláin

- School wide delivery of lessons on Relational aggression (Web wise Primary teachers' resources)
- The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see Appendix 2).

### **Links to other policies**

Here under is a List of school policies, practices and activities that are particularly relevant to bullying:

- Code of Behaviour, Child Protection Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, RSE Policy, Complaints Policy

### **Investigating, Recording and Following-up Bullying Behaviour**

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

#### **6.8.9. Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying**

**The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);**

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved, including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s), understand this approach from the outset.

#### **Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a suspected bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

#### **Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach (see section 6.8.9)**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.

- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.

### **Follow up and recording**

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;

Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;

Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;

feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Recording of bullying behaviour**

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

#### **Informal- pre-determination that bullying has occurred**

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them in the incident book.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same in the incident book.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

#### **Formal Stage 1-determination that bullying has occurred**

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- All records retained by the relevant teacher should be stored in the Anti-Bullying file.

#### **Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)**

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 4** to record the bullying behaviour in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. The completed form will be stored in the Anti-Bullying file while the child is at primary school.

#### **Established intervention strategies**

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing

### **Programme of Support**

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see Section 6.8.16 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
- Buddy / Peer mentoring system
- Group work such as circle time
- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

### **Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

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

When using the internet, children are supervised by their class teacher. Internet safety lessons will be taught regularly to encourage children to use the internet in a safe and responsible manner, at school and at home. Pupils' internet usage will be monitored by teachers through the history function.

### **Prevention of Harassment**

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

### **Ratification and Review**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ .

This policy has been made available to school personnel and published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

## Child Safeguarding Statement Template

Iniscealtra National School is a primary school providing primary education to pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

In accordance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 and Tusla Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements, the Board of Management of Iniscealtra N.S. has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for primary and post-primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is: Aoife Holland
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is: Aisling Bohan
- The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. The school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare. The school will:
  - recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations
  - fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children
  - fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters
  - adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect
  - develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
  - fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters

The school will also adhere to the above principles in relation to any adult pupil with a special vulnerability.

- The following procedures/measures are in place:
  - In relation to any member of staff who is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child attending the school, the school adheres to the relevant procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017 and to the relevant agreed disciplinary procedures for school staff which are published on the DES website

- In relation to the selection or recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children, the school adheres to the statutory vetting requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and to the wider duty of care guidance set out in relevant Garda vetting and recruitment circulars published by the DES and available on the DES website
- In relation to the provision of information and, where necessary instruction and training to staff in respect of the identification of the occurrence of harm (as defined in the 2015 Act) the school:
  - Has provided each member of staff with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Ensures all new staff are provided with a copy of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement
  - Encourages staff to avail of relevant training
  - Encourages Board of Management members to avail of relevant training
  - The Board of Management maintains records of all staff and Board member training.
- In relation to reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla, all school personnel are required to adhere to the procedures set out in the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, including in the case of registered teachers, those in relation to mandated reporting under the Children First Act 2015
- In this school, the Board has appointed the above named DLP as the 'relevant person' (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the school's child safeguarding statement.
- All registered teachers employed by the school are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015
- In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, the Board has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the school or participating in school activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the school's procedures for managing those risks is attached as an appendix to these procedures
- The various procedures referred to in this Statement can be accessed via the school's website, the DES website or will be made available on request by the school
- This statement has been published on the school's website and has been provided to all members of school personnel, the Parents' Association and the patron. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and the Department if requested.
- This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this statement refers

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by the Board of Management on 12 March 2018