

# St Mary's Secondary School Ballina Co Mayo



## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

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### **DEFINITION**

The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well.

### **PURPOSE**

The Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The code of behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. The code expresses the vision, mission and values of the school and its Trustees. It translates the expectations of staff, parents and students into practical arrangements that will help to ensure continuity of instruction to all students. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported and high standards of Teaching and Learning are facilitated.

The code of behaviour enables school authorities to strike an appropriate balance between their duties to maintain an effective learning environment for all and their responsibility to students whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process.

The code of behaviour is a key tool in enabling the school authorities to support the learning of every student in the school.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

1. "Parent" means parent, parents, guardian or guardians:
2. "Pupils" means students in the school
3. "School staff" means teachers and all other members of the staff of the school.
4. "The school" means St.Mary's Secondary School, Ballina, Co. Mayo.

### **GENERAL:**

All pupils attending the school have the right to education in a disciplined and orderly environment. The staff has a right to conduct classes and work in such an environment. Any behaviour, which infringes on these rights, may cause grave injustice to others.

Every effort is made by the Board of Management and staff to develop and improve a good working environment in the school. Inappropriate behaviour by a pupil whether in breach of the guidelines set out below or bad behaviour generally will be dealt with in a fair, just, reasonable, and caring way. The pastoral care of all pupils particularly those in need of support, shall in so far as it is possible, receive priority from the staff.

### **PARENTS:**

The parents of a pupil are expected to cooperate with the Board of Management and staff to ensure that his / her daughter observes and obeys the code of behaviour of the school and to seek to ensure that order and discipline is maintained. A constant and continuing interest in the education of a pupil in the subjects studied, the homework to be done, the friends that are associated with the pupil's social activities is expected from a parent. The school seeks to maintain, establish and develop an effective partnership between it the school and parents. The cooperation of all parents is requested in bringing to the attention of the Principal or any staff member any incidents of bullying or otherwise which may cause suffering to any pupil.

## **SCHOOL RULES**

### **1. General**

- a) Students must show courtesy to and respect for all members of the Staff, visitors to the School and fellow Students.
- b) Students are expected to be co-operative and respectful in their dealings with all staff, to complete work assigned/directions of teaching staff and non-teaching staff, not to engage in any activity likely to disrupt the day to day running of the school and to respect school property.
- c) The Code of Discipline applies to students on school property and on all school related activities.

### **2. Specific**

- Students are advised to arrive at school no later than 9:00 a.m. to ensure adequate time to organise books, meet with Year Head. The the School daily schedule is as follows:

Class commences	9.10 a.m.
Morning Break	10:30 – 10:45 a.m.
Lunch Break	1.25 -2:00pm
End of School Day	4:00 p.m. (Monday & Tuesday) 3:20 p.m. (Wednesday – Friday)

- Under the terms of **The Education Welfare Act 2000 (Section 21)** schools are required to maintain a School Register and Attendance Record. Students are thus required to attend school regularly unless they are specifically excused. When a student is absent for one or more days an explanatory note signed by parent/guardian must be shown to the Year Head, on the morning they return to school, stating the exact reason for the reported absence.
- Students may not voluntarily leave the **School/ School grounds** at any time of the day. A student wishing to leave the school grounds at any time during the school day for a specified reason must present a written request signed by parent/guardian to their Year Head in the morning. This will then be counter-signed by Year Head and presented to the office when they go to sign out.
- Students are expected to be **well-groomed** at all times.
  - Official school uniform and footwear must be worn to and from school, in school and on all school-related activities including P.E. classes. All items of clothing should be clearly marked with the owner's name, as the school cannot be responsible for loss or damage to students' property.
  - Jewellery, other than watches, rings and small ear-rings is forbidden.
  - Make-up and hair colour must be discreet.
  - Visible body piercings/ facial studs, except ear studs, are not permitted.
  - Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- **Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002-2004** prohibits smoking in the School and School Grounds as part of the 'Smoke-free in the workplace policy'. Breaches of the directive will be dealt with as outlined in the school's no-smoking policy and as dictated by the terms of the above Act.

- The School adopts a zero tolerance approach to the possession/consumption of **alcohol** or the use of **illegal drugs**. Both are strictly forbidden in the School, its general environs and on School outings. Breaches of this directive warrant immediate suspension and Board of Management intervention.

Since Telephone Calls/Texts disrupt class work or may contribute to cyber bullying, students are not allowed use **Mobile Phones** during the school day unless under the direction of a staff member for educational purposes. Unauthorised use will lead to confiscation a period of 10 school days subsequent to which parents/guardians will be obliged to come to the school to retrieve it. Parents will be informed if a phone is confiscated.

## 2. The School Journal

- a) Each student will have a School Journal in which staff members may record details of the student's academic progress, disciplinary record and any other information of which parents/guardians should be made aware.
- b) The School Journal is an official rather than a private document and must be in students' possession at all times.
- c) Students must use the School Journal to note details of homework assigned, school timetables etc.
- d) Parents/guardians should use the School Journal to communicate with the School as regards students' absences, lateness, requests to leave the School during school hours etc. as detailed further in this Code of Behaviour. Parents/guardians should also use the School Journal as a source of information as regards their students' performance in School. We are asking parents/guardians to keep a close check on School Journals in this regard throughout the school year.
- e) Parents/Guardians notes authorising the students release from school or explaining any student absences will only be accepted on official School Journal slips.
- f) Failure to present the School Journal to any staff member when requested to do so is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- g) Under no circumstances should a student remove a page or deface the School Journal. Loss/accidental damage should be reported to the appropriate Class Tutor immediately. Failure to do so is a breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- h) The school journal should be used by the teacher to record/give permission to students requesting to absence themselves from class.

### 3. School Books

The school operates a book rental scheme.

All books loaned to students under the book rental scheme remain the property of St. Mary's Secondary School.

Students must ensure that:

- Books are always maintained in good order
- Books are not defaced or damaged
- Books are always kept in the student locker/bag and never left in classrooms or on desks etc.
- All books loaned to students are returned to the school upon completion of your studies

If books are mislaid, damaged, stolen or rendered unfit for further use while in your charge must be paid for at their replacement.

Parents will be invoiced the replacement cost of the books where a student fails to return all, or some, of the books rented.

### 4. Attendance and Punctuality

#### General

- (a) The School generally opens at 8.00 a.m.  
Class finishes at 4:00pm/3:20pm.  
The Office staff finish at 4:30 p.m.  
The school closes at the end of Evening Study at approx 7:00pm.
- (b) Students are required to be in attendance at the School on every school day. Regular attendance is absolutely essential to academic achievement. Reporting of all Student Absences is required by the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* as this facilitates early identification of attendance difficulties and enables appropriate interventions to be made by the Education and Welfare Board.
- (c) The School does not accept liability for students arriving at the School Grounds before the School opens or remaining on the School Grounds after the School closes unless such students are participating in an official school activity.

#### Specific

- Students should arrive in school before **9:00 a.m.**
- Students must be dropped outside the **School Gates**.
- Students meet their **Year Heads** every morning between **8.50 -9.05** to present all notes for authorisation / permission to leave school or sick leave notes. School uniform is also checked at this time.
- Students returning from an absence must present a written explanation for same in their School Journal signed by a parent/guardian. As these notes inform regular reports to the EWB (Education Welfare Board) it is essential that they are accurate and if students have been recently absent written explanations for such absences must state the exact reason for such ( **Illness, Urgent Family**

**Reasons, Other [e.g. Religious Observance, Death, Emigration] Suspended, Expelled, Transfer to another school )**

- Students returning from an absence *without* a written explanation as described above will be requested to do so by their Year Head and a parent/guardian will be contacted.
- **Class start time is 9:10 am.** Attendance is recorded electronically by class teacher and students not present at 9:10 to be deemed 'absent' and recorded as such. Absenteeism is noted and regularly monitored.
- **Students arriving after 9:10** must present to the Main Office and will be registered as 'present but late'. Students arriving after 9:20 should present a note to explain their reason for being late.
- **A class roll is recorded electronically at the beginning of every class.** All students must be present for this roll even if they wish to be then excused, either for part or all of the class, to attend to other school related activities or to meet with another teacher. Student must seek the class teacher's written permission to leave and then carry their school journal displaying said written permission for inspection by any staff member.
- **Morning Break is from 10:30 to 10:45** –students may not leave school grounds during this time
- **Lunch Break is from 1:25 to 2:00** – Lunch facilities available in canteen.
- **No student** may leave school grounds during **lunchtime** except by written /oral arrangement
- Students wishing to leave school **with permission** at any time during the day :
  - Must present at the office with a Permission slip signed by Parent/Guardian and counter signed by Year Head that morning They are then required to '**sign out**'.
  - Should student wish to return to school that day they must '**sign in**' again.
- Students wishing to leave the school **without permission** or **due to illness** :
  - Must contact home **through the Office** and arrange to be collected from there **or**
  - Parents may make alternative arrangements with Principal/Deputy Principal by phone
- **School day ends at 4:00pm/3:20pm.**

**Truancy** is regarded a serious breach of the school Code of Discipline and will be dealt with as such. Parents will be contacted by phone and letter. This will warrant Evening Detention.

#### **4. The School grounds**

- (a) Students may not leave the School Grounds during school hours except in accordance with the following procedure :
- **A parent/guardian must sign a written note giving permission for the student to leave and stating the reason for the Student so doing in the Student's School Journal. This must be presented to the relevant Year Head before 9.05. who will counter sign said permission.**
  - **A parent/guardian must collect the student at the School Office if the Student is in the Junior School.**
  - **The Student must also sign out in the Record Book kept for this purpose at the School Office and indicate the time at which they leave the School.**

- (b) Students returning to the School in accordance with the above procedure must sign the Record Book kept for this purpose at the School Office on their return to the School.
- (c) Failure to comply with the above procedure as regards leaving and re-entering the School is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- (d) The School does not accept liability for students who are permitted to leave the School Grounds in accordance with this procedure for the period during which the Student is absent from school, i.e. the period between the time at which the Student signs the appropriate Record Book on leaving the School Grounds and the time at which the Student signs the appropriate Record Book on arriving back to the School.
- (e) A clean, litter free environment is attainable with the co-operation of all members of the school community.
- (f) Any Student wishing to park on school/Convent grounds must adhere to the School's Parking Policy.

## **5. School Uniform and Dress Code**

### **i. Uniform**

The School Uniform, as the most visible outward symbol of our school, has been carefully designed and colour co-ordinated to represent the values and traditions of the Mercy ethos. Since this uniform is seen as the badge of honour of our school, we expect it to be worn with pride and dignity at all times.

Students must wear the School Uniform at all times during school hours and official school functions and during the holding of in-house examinations and State examinations. Parents/Guardians are asked to co-operate with the school authorities in this regard.

- **The School Uniform is as follows :**

- Navy School v-neck jumper/cardigan with crest
- Navy School pinafore with crest
- Navy School Tie
- Navy School jacket with crest
- Navy School Trousers
- White shirt blouse
- Navy tights/socks
- Black/ Navy shoes

- **The PE Uniform is as follows**

- Navy School sweatshirt with crest
- Plain Navy tracksuit bottoms
- White Polo Shirt
- Athletic shoes, 'trainers' or 'runners' that must be securely fastened.
- All jewellery must be removed before the start of PE class.

- The School Uniform must be worn at all times during school hours and at official school functions and during the holding of in-house examinations and State examinations.
- The official PE Uniform must be worn at all PE classes and at all School sanctioned sports events. Failure to wear the appropriate PE gear is a breach of the school rules and will incur a sanction.
- Students must always be neat and tidy in appearance. This also applies if students are given permission not to wear school uniform (e.g. school tours or other extra-curricular activities connected with the school).
- The School reserves the right to decide whether any aspect of a student's uniform or appearance is in compliance with school policy. Failure to comply with policy on the School Uniform and Students' appearance is in breach of School Rules and resultant sanctions will apply

## **ii. Appearance**

- (a) Students must be neat and tidy in appearance. This also applies if students are given permission not to wear school uniform (e.g. non-uniform days, school tours or other extra-curricular activities connected with the school).
- (b) The following specific provisions apply to students' appearance
  - Hair must be neat and tidy.
  - Excessive make-up is not permitted
  - Visible body/facial piercings except stud earrings are not permitted
  - Visible tattoos are not permitted

## **iii. General – School Uniform & Appearance**

- (a) Failure to comply with the above rules concerning the School Uniform and students' appearance is in breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- (b) The School reserves the right to decide whether any aspect of a student's appearance is in compliance with this Code of Behaviour.
- (c) Students' who do not comply with the above rules concerning students' appearance may be suspended until the rules are observed to the School's satisfaction.

## **6. Homework**

Please refer to our Homework Policy



## **7. Property**

### **i. General**

- (a) Each student is responsible for her own property. The students' property should be clearly marked with name and contact details.
- (b) Interference of any kind with another person's property including property belonging to the School is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. Interference includes, but is not limited to, theft.
- (c) Students should not bring valuable or irreplaceable items or large sums of money to school except where absolutely necessary. Such items or money may be left in the School Office for safekeeping. However the School does not accept liability for property or money lost, stolen or damaged while on the School Grounds.
- (d) Accidental damage to school property through carelessness should be reported by the students responsible immediately to a member of staff. Parents/guardians of students concerned may be required by the School to pay for the repair or replacement of damaged property as appropriate.
- (e) Deliberate damage to property or vandalism is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour, whether occurring on school grounds and during school hours or not. Parents/guardians of students responsible will be required to pay for the repair or replacement of property damaged deliberately or vandalised as appropriate in addition to other sanctions which may be imposed on students in accordance with this Code of Behaviour.
- (f) Stealing is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour, whether the incident of theft occurs on school grounds and during school hours or not. Parents/guardians of students responsible will be required to pay for the replacement of stolen property in addition to other sanctions which may be imposed on students in accordance with this Code of Behaviour.
- (g) CCTV Cameras are installed throughout the corridors of the school and may be used to assist investigation into any incidents of vandalism or theft. Such CCTV footage may be submitted to an Garda Síochána on request.
- (h) Mobile phones and other electronic music devices must be switched off at all times in the school unless used under the direction of a staff member for educational purposes. Unauthorised use of a mobile phone will lead to confiscation for a period of 10 school days after which it may be reclaimed by a Parent/Guardian from the Main office.

## **ii. Lockers**

- (a) The School provides locker facilities for students subject to payment of an annual administration fee. Lockers remain the property of the School.
- (b) Students will have access to their lockers during the following times :
  - Before the first class in the morning
  - During morning break
  - 12:05
  - During lunch break
  - After the final class in the afternoon
- (c) Students should report damaged lockers immediately. Failure to do so will result in the student concerned being held responsible for the damage.
- (d) Students to whom a locker has been assigned will supply their own lock and key. Duplicating a locker key, whether by the person to whom the locker is assigned or any other person is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- (e) Students are responsible for all items left in their locker whether such items belong to the student or not. Students should report lost locker keys immediately. Failure to do so is a breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- (f) In the interests of maintaining safety and discipline in the School, students may be required to open and empty their locker in accordance with the following procedure :
  - i. The student will be requested to open and empty the locker in the presence of the Principal/Deputy Principal, another adult nominated by the Principal/Deputy Principal and, if the student requests, another member of school staff or a student nominated by the student whose locker is to be opened and emptied.
  - ii. If the student agrees the locker will be opened by the student and its contents examined in the presence of the student and the other persons described above.
  - iii. If the student refuses to permit the locker to be opened parents/guardians of the student concerned will be contacted and asked to come to the school. Pending arrival of a parent/guardian the student's locker key will be confiscated.
  - iv. On arriving at the school parent(s)/guardians will be requested to consent to the student's locker being opened and emptied in the presence of the Principal/Deputy Principal, another adult nominated by the Principal/Deputy Principal, the parents/guardians and the student.
  - v. If parents/guardians consent to the procedure described above the locker will be opened and its contents examined in the presence of the parents/guardians and the student concerned.

- vi. If parents/guardians refuse to permit the locker to be opened or are unable to attend the school as described above the school may contact the Garda Síochána. The student's locker key will remain confiscated pending a search of the locker by members of the Garda Síochána.
- vii. Failure to comply with a request to open a locker and empty its contents in accordance with the procedure described above is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour by the student concerned.
- viii. Where it is not practical to operate this procedure (i.e. where the student concerned is absent from school) the Principal/Deputy Principal accompanied by another member of school staff may open a locker and examine its contents. Prior to doing so the Principal/Deputy Principal will make reasonable efforts to contact the student concerned and his/her parents/guardians in order to enable them to attend the school should they so wish, in which case the normal procedure described above will apply.

### **iii. Stolen property & dangerous items/substances**

- (a) A dangerous item/substance is any item/substance which could cause damage to a person or to property; possession of which item/substance is not necessary for a school sanctioned activity.
- (b) Where the School has reasonable grounds for believing that a student has in her possession stolen property or a dangerous item/substance the procedure described above in relation to lockers will be applied as regards the student's person and property, i.e. the student will first be requested to voluntarily disclose contents of pockets/schoolbags in the presence of witnesses, failing which parents/guardians will be contacted etc.
- (c) Under no circumstances will school staff attempt to effect a search of a student's person.
- (d) Where an incident to which this provision applies occurs outside the Republic of Ireland i.e. on a school tour, the School may contact appropriate police authorities in place of the Garda Síochána.
- (e) Possession of a dangerous item/substance is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour, whether the item/substance is brought onto the School Grounds or not.

## 8. Bullying

- (a) Bullying in any form is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- (b) Where an incident of bullying comes to the School's attention the following measures will be taken it will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. It is the responsibility of all students and their parents/guardians to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- (c) The School's Anti-Bullying Policy applies to *any* incident of bullying which the School becomes aware of, whether it occurs on school property and/or during a school activity or not.

## 9. Substance use

- (a) Smoking is forbidden on the School Grounds. Smoking on the School Grounds at any time is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour and also contravenes the **Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002-2004**. If any student is seen smoking on school grounds her parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.
- (b) The School has a **zero-tolerance** approach to incidents of substance abuse. Possession, use or distribution of harmful or illegal substances including alcohol and tobacco will not be tolerated at *any* time and under *any* circumstances and may lead to suspension or expulsion. This applies whether students are on school property and/or engaged in a school activity.
- (c) The School has a comprehensive Substance Use Policy in place. It is the responsibility of all students and their parents/guardians to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the Substance Use Policy.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

- (a) Where the Code of Behaviour has been breached some or all of the following strategies may be used, as the School considers appropriate :
  - Reasoning with the student(s) concerned
  - Sending of Referrals via ePortal
  - Student put 'On Report'
  - Notification to parents/guardians
  - Loss of privileges

- Detention
  - Lunchtime: 1.30pm – 1.50pm
  - Evening: 4.00pm – 5.00pm/6.00pm
- In school Suspension / Suspension
- Expulsion

This list is not exhaustive.

- (b) Teachers or Year Heads may also refer students to members of the Pastoral Care Team for help and advice.
- (c) Written records and/or incident report forms as appropriate will be kept in relation to breaches of the Code and measures taken in response to same.
- (d) Where a student's behaviour warrants suspension the following procedures will apply :
  - i. School will notify parents/guardians of their concerns and request that parents/guardians advise the student appropriately.
  - ii. Parents/guardians will be requested to come to the school to meet with the appropriate Year Head and/or the Principal or Deputy Principal. Parents will be given as much notification in advance of this meeting as is reasonably possible.
  - iii. The sanctions described above at (a) may be implemented at any stage in this process.
  - iv. The Principal may suspend a pupil for up to five school days. Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Board of Management.
  - v. Where a student's conduct justifies a longer period of suspension/expulsion than the Principal may impose parents/guardians will be requested to attend with the student at a meeting of the Board of Management to discuss the student's ongoing participation in the school. Parents/guardians will be given as much notification in advance of this meeting as is reasonably practicable. Teaching staff who have had dealings with the student concerned may also be requested to attend this meeting. If the Board of Management suspends or expels a student parents/guardians and, in the case of a student who is over the age of 18, the student, may appeal this decision to the Department of Education & Science pursuant to s. 29 of the Education Act 1998.
  - vi. The Principal may also suspend a student immediately in the following circumstances :

- where he or she considers that the student's behaviour is a threat to the safety, welfare and/or property of other members of the school community
  - where the student is guilty of serious misbehaviour
  - where he or she considers that suspension of the student is necessary to maintain discipline within the school
- (d) Where a student is suspended parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the reason for the suspension. The period of suspension, means that the student will be regarded as in the care of his or her parents/guardians from the end of the school day on which the suspension is imposed.
- (e) A notice of suspension will set out the conditions which must be fulfilled before the suspended student is permitted to return to the School. Conditions which may be imposed include one or more of the following :
- written undertakings by the Student to be of good behaviour
  - return to School subject to loss of specified privileges
  - a successful appeal to the Board of Management (if the suspension is imposed by the Principal) or to the Department of Education & Science (if the suspension is imposed by the Board of Management)
  - the elapse of the time for which the suspension is stated to apply
  - The above are merely examples of conditions which may be attached to suspensions and are without prejudice to the School's right to impose different conditions as appropriate
- (f) Where the Board of Management decides to expel a student parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the expulsion, the reason for same and the fact that the student will be regarded as in the care of the parents from the end of the school day on which the expulsion is imposed.
- (g) While suspension or expulsion are generally used only when all other options have been tried, a student may be suspended or expelled for a single serious breach of discipline or for consistent breaches of discipline of a less serious nature.
- (h) It is not possible to cover every eventuality in a Code of Behaviour. The important thing is that the spirit of the law is upheld. Ultimately each individual case must be taken on its own merits and judged accordingly.
- (j) Where a student has a grievance against a member of school staff the student /her parents/guardians may complain directly to the Principal/Deputy Principal. Where a grievance is against the Principal/Deputy Principal, the grievance will be dealt with by the BOM Chairperson.

(k) Appeals to the Board of Management must be made in writing

## **Referral System**

(i) The following will warrant the immediate sending of a **Referral Slip**:

- Persistent talking in Class,
- Regularly Presenting for class without appropriate Class Books / Equipment
- Disruptive behaviour
- Abuse of School Furniture
- Graffiti
- This list is not exhaustive

(ii) On of **3 Referral** the Year Head put the Student on **Report for 5 days** and inform her parents in writing that their daughter is On Report.

The student will receive a Daily **Green** Report Card from her Year Head. The student carries the Report Card to every class for each day having it signed at the end of every class by her teacher together with a comment on behaviour in the class. The Report Card is returned to the Year Head the following morning and the Year Head issues a Report Card for day 2. This continue until the student has completed 5 days on Report.

In the unlikely event of a student arriving late to school while On Report, she should present herself to the Principal/Deputy Principal who will collect her previous days report and give her one for that day.

Should a student present incomplete Green Report Cards at the end of the 5-day period, receive negative comments from her teachers on her Report Card or accumulate a further 3 referral slips, the Year Head will investigate the reason/s for this and in an effort to encourage improved behaviour the process is repeated for a further 5-day period when the Student carries an **Amber** Report Card and Parents/Guardians are again informed of this by the Year Head.

Should the Student fail to present a fully signed Amber Report Card at the end of this period, receive negative comments from her teachers on her Report Card or accumulate a further 3 referral slips, the behaviour is now deemed to be very serious and the Year Head will issue a **Red** Report Card. Since this stage may lead to suspension/expulsion Parents/Guardians are now invited to meet with the Year Head/Principal or Deputy Principal to discuss this behaviour.

When a period of suspension be imposed the student will only be readmitted to school on foot of signing a Contract of Good Behaviour in the presence of their Parents, Year Head and Principal/Deputy Principal. Records of this will be maintained by school and will be reported to the Board of Management.

The Parent retains the right to appeal any of the above to the Board of Management.

## **POLICY ON SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS**

### **General Principles**

All pupils, teachers and other staff have the right to education and work in a disciplined and orderly environment. Any behaviour, which infringes on this right, will be dealt with under to provisions of the Code of Behaviour.

There will be cases of unacceptable behaviour, where it will be necessary to remove a student from school for a period of time or for the Board of Management to expel a student permanently from the school.

Suspension and expulsion are the options available to the Principal and/or the Board of Management in these cases.

Suspension allows students time to reflect on and accept responsibility for their behaviour. It affords an opportunity also to Parents and the school to plan strategies for the improvement and/or reform of such behaviour.

Counselling may also be arranged to assist the pupil and Parents.

### **Responsibilities**

Responsibility for suspending a student lies with the Principal, who derives this authority from the Articles of Management for Secondary Schools. The Principal may normally suspend a student for up to 3 days unless authorised to suspend for longer by the Board of Management. The Principal reports all suspensions to the Board of Management at its next meeting. If, in the judgement of the Principal, a pupil should be expelled, the Principal shall refer the matter to the Board of Management for its decision.

### **Procedure for Suspending a Pupil**

The reasons a student may be suspended are given in the Code of Behaviour.

While every effort is made to develop and improve a good working environment in the school, there will be cases where misconduct can only be sanctioned by a suspension from school.

In the event of a pupil refusing to co-operate with the school Code of Discipline she may be suspended after the following procedures have been put in place.

- The pupil has been spoken to/advised by support personnel in the school. (Principal, Deputy Principal/Year Head/Class Tutor/Chaplain/Counsellor).
- The pupil has shown no willingness to change her behaviour.
- A discussion has taken place with the student and parent/guardian regarding the pupil's record of misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable.
- The record of misbehaviour has been supplied to the student and parent/guardian including Referrals and Report Cards
- The Student has exhausted the Green, Amber and Red Report facility.
- A letter of notification is sent to parent/guardian which includes inter alia;



- Notice of suspension
- Date of suspension
- Duration of suspension
- Reasons for suspension
- Expectation that the pupil's behaviour will improve on her return to school
- Right of Appeal to the Board of Management
- Conditions, if any for the return of the pupil to school
- Agreement to attend counselling, if relevant.

In cases of serious misconduct, the Principal may suspend a pupil pending an immediate meeting with parents. Arrangements for the safety of the pupil will be made.

The Principal or the Board of Management may agree to the removal of a suspension on the following grounds:

- Successful Appeal to the Board of Management.
- Successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.
- The period of suspension has been completed.
- New circumstances affecting the decision to suspend have come to light.

## **Appeals**

A parent/guardian or a student over 18 years of age may appeal a suspension by the Principal to the Board of Management. A letter of appeal should be written to the Secretary of the Board of Management setting out the grounds for the appeal.

The student will remain at home while any such appeal is in process. It is possible that a suspension may be served before the hearing by the Board of Management of the appeal. In this case, if the appeal is successful the record of suspension will be removed from the student's record.

Appeals will be heard as soon as is practically possible.

## **EXPULSION**

### **General Principles**

Only the Board of Management may finally decide to expel a pupil. It is a last resort and an admission that the school can do absolutely nothing more to help the pupil.

The circumstances which would justify the expulsion of a pupil may include the following:

1. The pupil is so disruptive that she is seriously preventing other pupils from learning.
2. The pupil is uncontrollable and is not amenable to any form of school authority.
3. The parents refuse to exercise their responsibility for the pupil.

4. The pupil's conduct is a source of serious bad example and is having an adverse influence on other pupils in the school.

Expulsion will generally be considered by the Board of Management, when all other sanctions in the Code of Behaviour have been exhausted.

### **Procedures for Expulsion**

1. All documentation relating to the record of behaviour of the pupil will be supplied by the Principal to all parties prior to the Board of Management meeting, at which the case will be heard.
2. The Parents/student will be invited to the Board of Management meeting by letter.
3. The Board of Management will hear the Principal's Report in the presence of the Parents.
4. The Parents/student will be invited to respond to the Principal's Report.
5. The Board will then request that the Principal and the Parents/student leave the meeting while a decision is being made.
6. The Board will discuss all matters in detail and may request further information from the Principal and/or Parents/student.
7. The General Principles above will be consulted to help the Board of Management reach its decision.
8. The Board will make a final decision to expel/not to expel the pupil.
9. The decision will be communicated to the parents formally by the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
10. TULSA will be informed of the Board's intention to expel a pupil.
11. The decision to expel will not take effect for 20 days following the receipt of the notice of expulsion by TULSA. (see Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 24)

### **Appeals**

The Parent/student will be informed of their right to appeal a decision to expel a student under Section 29 of the Education Act.

Documentation will be supplied in relation to an Appeal under Section 29 with the letter, giving notice of intention to expel.

Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the Parent/student.

### **Principles of Natural Justice**

In all of the above procedures relating to suspension and expulsion the principles of natural justice will be followed.

## **COMMUNICATION**

- a) Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with the School.
- b) Parents/guardians who wish to meet with staff members outside of formal parent/guardian & teacher meetings should telephone the School Office in order to make an appointment.
- c) Parents/guardians should not generally visit the School and expect to meet with Principal/Deputy Principal or staff members without prior appointment.

**THE SCHOOL WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR HELP AND CO-OPERATION  
IN ENSURING THAT THE ABOVE RULES ARE RESPECTED AND UPHELD.**

Signed: Michael Brett (Board of Management)

Date Ratified: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2017