



LORETO SECONDARY SCHOOL, CLONMEL

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

In setting out this Code of Behaviour, the Board of Management aims to present to students, parents and staff the norms of behaviour and relationships that are essential for meeting the aspirations of our Mission Statement and the ethos of the school as respectful of the rights of all involved in the school to go about their business in a safe, caring and comfortable environment. Our school discipline strategies seek to encourage responsible, positive behaviour and to provide all students with a satisfying school experience, characterised by Love, Laughter and Learning, as well as seeking to discourage misconduct.

Legislative Context

The Constitution of Ireland

The Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23.

The Education Act 1998, Sections 28 & 29.

The Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

The Equal Status Act 2000 – 2004.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The European Convention on Human Rights, 1950.

Non-fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997.

The Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004.

The Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002.

Disability Act 2005.

Health and Safety legislation.

Data Protection Act, 1988 and Amendment 2003.

Age of Majority Act, 1985.

The general principle of 'In Loco Parentis' and Natural Justice.

Learning, Relationships and behaviour are inextricably linked. Good behaviour is an outcome of effective learning and good relationships, as well as an influence on how students learn.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), 2015

The Code of Behaviour seeks to provide for:

- The personal development, safety and welfare of students.
- The right of each person, student and teacher to work and make progress in the classroom.
- The safety and welfare of staff and their ability to carry out their functions in an atmosphere free from threat or obstruction.

Parents/Guardians

- Supportive parents/guardians and a favourable home environment play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour in school.
- There is an expectation on behalf of the school that parents/guardians fulfil their role as partners with the school ensuring that both they and their children are familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support it.
- The support of parents/guardians is seen as crucial to the successful implementation of the Code and the realisation of the aims to all the stakeholders i.e. students, staff and parents/guardians.
- In the spirit of good communication the school will endeavour to keep parents/guardians informed of their children's progress and to alert them at an early stage if difficulties arise.

RULES OF THE SCHOOL

Because our policy on the Code of Behaviour is rooted in the school's fundamental aim:

- To develop a sense of community that reflects the ethos of the Loreto Order, and the Vision of Mary Ward.
- To develop mutual respect and co-operation.
- To foster a sense of order and discipline in order to ensure the personal growth of each student in knowledge, truth and goodness.
- To instil a sense of respect of persons and property.
- To encourage students to take control of and responsibility for their own behaviour.

The following Rules of the School are in place:

1. Students are required to show respect towards one another and towards staff.
2. Students are required to conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner at all times, in school, in the vicinity of the school, on school buses and school trips. Any form of misbehaviour or disruption on any occasion, in any place, that would bring disrepute to the school is considered unacceptable and is liable to sanctions.
3. Bullying or harassment in any form, including sexual harassment, and by any means, including social media, will not be tolerated and will be severely dealt with by the School Authorities. This is in line with the objectives of our anti-bullying policy.
4. In the interests of Health & Safety the school forbids the following on the school premises:
Chewing Gum
Tippex
Loitering
Aerosols
Tobacco or Vaping (or use of e-cigarettes)
Alcohol
All illegal substances and activities
5. The school uniform, as listed, must be worn at all times, including going to and from school. Regulation P.E. uniform must be worn for P.E. classes.
6. Attendance at all classes must be punctual. Unauthorised absences from class are forbidden.

7. Every student is required to have a Journal. If students either deface or lose their Journal, they will be required to replace it immediately at their own expense.
8. When a student is absent for part of a school day, a full school day or more than a school day, parents/guardians must fill in and sign an Explanation for Absence Note in the Student Journal. This note should be given to the Class Tutor.

A BLUE NOTE (at the back of journal) is required for part day absences and should be signed by the Class Tutor or Year Head, in advance where possible, and retained in the student's journal.

A RED NOTE (at the back of journal) is required for a full day or multiple days' absences in advance here possible. This note needs to be given promptly on return to school for retention by Year Head for school attendance records. It is the responsibility of students to present blue and red notes to the Class Tutor or Year Head.

9. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds without getting permission from their Class Tutor or other person in authority and without **SIGNING OUT**. On their return the students must **SIGN IN**.
10. Students who remain in school for lunch and/or for supervised study must obey the lunch-time and study regulations.
11. Students are required to respect school property.
12. Personal mobile devices i.e. phones, cameras etc. must be switched off (unheard and unseen) from arrival in school until they leave school and during school activities (e.g. Study, Exams, Extra-Curricular activities etc.). Should a mobile device sound accidentally during the school day the student in question will receive demerit points. Intentional phone usage is strictly forbidden. If a student is seen to be actively using their personal mobile device in school, they will be issued with a formal complaint. Use of digital cameras or use of mobile phones for photographic/video purposes is strictly forbidden at all times while on the school premises and during school related activities unless permission is given by the school authorities. (Please see Digital Technologies Acceptable Use Policy).
13. Homework must always be fully completed and neatly presented at the required time.
14. Single-Use plastics are forbidden. All students must have a reusable water bottle which is CLEARLY LABELLED.
15. All students are required to sign the **Digital Technologies Acceptable Usage Policy**.
16. All students are required to sign the **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for Student Owned Tablets**.

LOCKER POLICY

All lockers assigned to students are the property of Loreto Secondary School, Clonmel. In other words lockers are not the property of students, rather **students have the use of them during their time in school** and this use comes with definite responsibilities. At no time does the school relinquish its ownership of lockers.

Lockers are intended to assist students with their daily school activities and are assigned to students for use during the school year based on the following:

- Students pay the school a sum of money for the use of the locker for the length of the school year (the amount is noted when the school expenses details are sent to each family).
- Students receive the key to the locker at the start of the school year and lockers **MUST** be locked at all times.
- Students are responsible for their assigned locker.
- Students should keep lockers clean and organised.
- Books, etc., not stored in the locker must be stored in a closed bag on the bag racks.
- Students participate in a clean-up rota to maintain locker areas in good order.
- All belongings should be stored in lockers or on racks.
- Students are responsible for safeguarding their own property at all times.
- The school is not responsible for loss or theft or damage of material stored in lockers or on racks.
- Access to lockers is permitted before school, at break time, at lunch time and after school. Outside these times students need a teacher's permission to access lockers.
- If a locker requires maintenance, please inform an SNA or the Deputy Principal.
- In the event of a student mislaying or losing the locker key, a new a new key can be purchased from the school at the cost of €10.

In taking up use of a locker a student and their parent/guardian agree to the above.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When students break school rules, Demerit Points and/or Formal Complaint and/or other sanctions will be imposed. The reason for sanctions is to educate students as to why their behaviour is inappropriate, as well as to make students aware of and sensitive to all the possible consequences of the behaviour in question.

1. If students misbehaves they will be corrected in the first instance by her **SUBJECT TEACHER** and encouraged to change their behaviour and may receive appropriate demerit points at the teacher's discretion.
2. If the misbehaviour continues, the teacher may report the student to the **CLASS TUTOR** or **Year Head**. Year Head, Class Tutor or teacher may give further demerit points if appropriate.
3. Demerit points are for less serious misdemeanours and misbehaviour. More serious misconduct may result in **FORMAL COMPLAINT, ON REPORT, SUSPENSION** or even **EXPULSION**, depending on the severity of the misbehaviour. The relevant sanction will be at the Teacher, Tutor, Year Head or Deputy Principal's discretion and may be chosen after consultation and may include the Principal in very serious cases.
4. If students receive a **FORMAL COMPLAINT** they will be required to do **DETENTION** on an appointed day for 30 minutes. The parents/guardians will be notified by letter with a form attached and signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school. The Year Head will verbally inform the students of the detention. Failure to report for **DETENTION** is regarded as a serious breach of discipline and may result in **SUSPENSION**.
5. If a student receives a **SECOND FORMAL COMPLAINT**, the Year Head will put the student **ON REPORT** and again inform the parents by letter. The student will be required to do further **DETENTION**.

6. If a student is put **ON REPORT A SECOND TIME** in the school year the parents/guardians will be asked to meet the **PRINCIPAL** and/or **DEPUTY PRINCIPAL**. **SUSPENSION** may be considered at this stage.
7. If a matter is sufficiently serious the **PRINCIPAL** (or the Acting Principal) has the right to **SUSPEND** a student at any time without going through the above procedures.
8. The **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT** may be obliged to resort to **EXPULSION** in the most extreme cases of indiscipline after all pastoral resources available within and to the school have been utilised, every other sanction has been exhausted and due procedures have been followed.

Note:

1. In cases of unacceptable behaviour a teacher may decide to give a written **FORMAL COMPLAINT** to a student at the time of the incident.
2. When a student is **ON REPORT** for the duration of a week, at the end of each class, the class teacher writes a report on the student's behaviour. (The **On Report Form** must be given to class teacher at the start of each class). This report must be collected by students from their Year Head before first period each day and the completed form must be returned by the students to their Year Head at the end of the school day).
3. Students who break School Rules may be **DENIED PRIVILEGES** at the discretion of the **PRINCIPAL**. Any student who has received a **FORMAL COMPLAINT** at any time during the school year must get written permission from the **PRINCIPAL** or **DEPUTY PRINCIPAL** before going on any school trip.
4. It is the students' responsibility to make themselves aware of the time and date of **DETENTION**.
5. As all students are given their own Office 365 account and students in first and second year will have their own device, it is necessary for students to sign an **ACCEPTABLE USER POLICY (AUP)** for each of these. Failure to follow the AUP guidelines will include sanctions with Demerit Points for minor breaches and Formal Complaints for more serious breaches and very serious breaches of the AUP may result in suspension or expulsion of students. The guidelines are put in place to provide a safe and secure environment for our students to use all forms of digital technologies sanctioned by our school.

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER MULTI-MEDIA EQUIPMENT

The unauthorised use of mobile phones, digital cameras, photographs, video recordings, audio and visual clips etc. have the potential to seriously infringe on people's rights. The mobile phone in particular is one of the most intrusive features of modern living and it can have a very disruptive influence in the classroom. Our policy on mobile phone and other multi-media equipment is therefore devised with the intention of ensuring that teaching and learning can take place without interruption and also with the intention of protecting students and staff from potential harassment or bullying.

POLICY CONTENT

- The school authorities **strongly** request that students **do not** bring mobile phones, iPods, discmans, digital cameras or any other multi-media equipment to school.
- Urgent messages from a parent to a student and vice versa may be transmitted through the office. Students are not permitted to use a personal mobile device to communicate with home.

This qualifies as intentional phone usage and the appropriate sanction, i.e. a **FORMAL COMPLAINT**, will apply.

- Should it be absolutely necessary for a student to have a mobile phone for **use coming to and from school**, it must remain switched off (**unseen and unheard**) from arrival in school until they leave school and during school activities. It should be kept, preferably, in the student's locker.
- Students participating in school related activities (e.g. study, extra-curricular activities, school trips, tours etc.) must abide by the rules governing these activities.
- Any breach of policy will result in rigorous enforcement of the Code of Behaviour (**DEMERIT POINTS, DETENTION and FORMAL COMPLAINT**).
- Use tablets or any device that records digital images or videos without the subject's prior knowledge and permission is strictly forbidden at all times while on school premises and during all school related activities. Sharing of any photographs, images or videos without prior permission is strictly forbidden. Any infringement of this rule will result in automatic confiscation of the item, which may only be retrieved after due discussion by a parent/guardian with the school management, and will also result in the enforcement of the code of behavior (Demerit Points, Detention, Formal Complaint, Suspension).
- Bullying or harassment in any form, including sexual harassment involving mobile phones will be severely dealt with by the school authorities and may warrant suspension and/or report to the Gardaí (Ref. Non Fatal Offences against the Person Act).

Photographs, Video Recordings, Computer Images etc.

- From time to time photographs will be taken of students for use in the local newspaper and in various school publications such as Newsletters, Year Book, School Website, Loreto App, and all Loreto Schools and Trust social media, etc. Photographs serve to enhance school publications and are a means of acknowledging the achievements of students in various activities.
- Video Recordings may also be made from time to time as part of various activities.
- It is proposed that photographs on our website will usually be group photographs of teams, and other group activities, or action photographs of games.
- Where an individual photograph of a student may be used on the website we will not identify, as a general rule, the individual student.
- **Parents, who wish their children to be excluded from such photographs, videos, computer images etc., should indicate this on the relevant form**
- Students are reminded that they are not permitted to take photographs of members of the school community such as students and staff members without the express permission of the person being photographed. The posting of such photographs, written text or information about any student or staff member onto websites is not permitted without the written permission of the person in question.

The school does not accept any responsibility for loss of, theft or damage to, mobile phones, multi-media, electronic or digital equipment.

SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

The Student Council compiled a short document to help students use social media safely and has a particular emphasis on avoiding any form of 'cyber-bullying' in its use. This allows the student body to self-regulate their own practice and provides a positive peer influence in the safe use of social media.

DO'S	DONT'S
Keep your social media page(s) on private	Don't put personal details online.
Think before you write/say something	Don't meet up with people you only know from the internet
Only add/accept people you know	Don't say anything you wouldn't say to someone's face
Tell someone if you see someone being bullied online	Don't give your password to someone else
Block anyone who's bullying	Don't put up indirect status
Report abuse	Don't get involved in bullying or online disputes
Keep evidence of bullying e.g. save abusive messages	Don't be afraid to leave a website
Respect people, their views, photos, their opinion, their race and religion	Don't hack on to someone's page and say mean things
Respect yourself	Don't start rumours
Ask people's permission before uploading photos	Don't say stuff about others that you wouldn't want to be said about you
Be careful and sensible	Don't threaten/bully the bully back
Laugh with them not at them	Don't respond to hurtful/nasty messages i.e. don't add fuel to the fire
Include everyone	Don't put up information about being away e.g. going on holiday for a week
Talk to your friends/family/teachers if you are getting bullied	
'Being nice is a two-way street'	

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The purpose of having a school uniform is to foster a sense of community and school identity. It equally promotes uniformity of dress standards and consequently reduces peer pressure and enables the school to comply with Health and Safety Regulations. The full uniform includes the Loreto School Crest.

DRESS CODE

- Students are expected to be neat and tidy in dress and appearance.
- Full uniform must be worn going to and from school. A Dark Green Uniform **PINAFORE** must be purchased by all students.

- If, for any **unavoidable reason or in unforeseen circumstances**, a student is unable to wear her uniform, a BLUE NOTE must be presented to the Class Tutor/Year Head stating the reason. The student must then wear her school P.E. uniform for that interval.
- In the interest of **HEALTH & SAFETY**:
 - (i) All students must wear dark-coloured, low-heeled shoes.
 - (ii) Jewellery is limited to wearing one pair of small earrings and one small finger ring. All additional piercings are forbidden, including tongue and nose piercings.
 - (iii) Hair must be tidy and long hair must be tied back. Hair should be a natural hair colour.
- The use of lipstick, nail varnish, gel nails or any make-up is strictly forbidden.
- Students must not wear headgear, scarves or any uniform item which is not included in the uniform dress code, unless authorized by the school management.
- Badges or symbols relating to political or interest groups may not be worn without authorization by school management.

SANCTIONS

- Regular spot checks will be carried out. Any student who is found to be not in the authorised uniform at the time of the spot check and who does not have a satisfactory note of explanation, will be required to do **Detention**.
- Non-Uniform items may be **confiscated** and will be retained in the office until the end of term.
- Students in breach of the uniform regulations **forfeit** their right to be considered for, or to continue in, **positions of leadership** within the school (i.e. Student Council, CARA etc.).

NOTE

Students are reminded that failure to report for **Detention** is one of the possible grounds for **Suspension** and it is the student's responsibility to make herself aware of the date and time of Detention.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Dark green knee-length pinafore.

Loreto red cardigan (not lumber-jacket or jumper).

White shirt.

Uniform tie: red tie for Juniors i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students.

striped tie for Seniors i.e. Transition Year, 5th and 6th year students.

Dark green knee socks or tights.

School uniform jacket.

Dark coloured, low-heeled shoes.

Scarves must be in the school uniform colours, red or green.

P.E. Uniform

O'Neills Track-suit bottoms with red and green stripe and Loreto crest.

White O'Neill's shorts with red & green stripes on the side.

Plain red Polo T-Shirt (with school logo)

Red Hoodie (with school logo).

A Pair of Sports Runners.

All items of school uniform must be **CLEARLY LABELLED**. Similarly clearly label the student's reusable bottle and lunch box.

All uniform items (except shoes) are available in Uniform World, Ard Gaoithe Business Park, Clonmel and Minnie Mia, Mitchel Street, Clonmel. All above items of clothing must be clearly marked with student's name.

ATTENDANCE

Recognising that attendance is a vital component of a student's progress and development, the purpose of this policy is to record and monitor student attendance, facilitate students to achieve their full potential through regular attendance and to encourage and reward full attendance. It also enables the school to comply with Health and Safety regulations.

Procedures for monitoring attendance:

1. Attendance is taken at each class every day.
2. Parents/Guardians are requested to telephone the school on the morning of the absence before 9.30am.
3. When a student is absent for **part of a school day, a full school day or more than a school day**, parents/guardians must supply a **written explanation** of the reason for absence. This is a legal requirement under the **Education Welfare Act**. Please use notes provided in the Student Journal. This note should be given to the Class Tutor/Year Head.
4. Students must attend **all** scheduled classes each day.
5. Any student leaving the school during school hours must give a note of explanation to the Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal and then sign **OUT** from the Secretary's office. On her return the student must sign **IN**.
6. If a student is absent for more than 20 days on aggregate the Principal is obliged to notify the Educational Welfare Officer/Tusla.
7. If a student is late for class due to an appointment with another teacher a signed **pink docket** must be presented to class teacher.
8. Students may not leave class during class time to go to the toilet unless they have written verification of a medical problem from the doctor. (There is a break of class at least every 40 mins).
9. All students' attendance records form part of their term report to Parents/Guardians.
10. Full attendance for the school year will be rewarded by the presentation of a Certificate. Full attendance for the duration of students 5/6 years in school will be rewarded by the presentation of a Certificate and a Trophy.

Consequences for unauthorised non-attendance

- The sanction for a student who is absent without permission from school for a full day or more is **SUSPENSION**. The duration depends on the number of days absent without permission and may result in a report being sent to the local Education Welfare Officer. The student must be accompanied by a parent/guardian on return to school and will be required to renew the commitment to the school's Code of Behaviour by signing the Statement of Contract.

- A student who is absent from school for part of a school day without permission from the school authorities receives a **FORMAL COMPLAINT and DETENTION**.
- A student who is on the school premises but is absent from classes without permission will receive a **FORMAL COMPLAINT and DETENTION**.
- Any student who is absent without permission may be **DENIED PRIVILEGES** (e.g. school trips etc.) at the discretion of the Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Students do not have permission to work or study anywhere on the school premises at any time without the supervision of a staff member.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WHO FEEL UNWELL

1. Students who feel unwell must report to the Secretary's office, having first sought permission from their class teacher.
2. In general students may spend one class period in the Sick Bay. If students are unable to return to class the Secretary will telephone their parents/guardians.
3. Parents/Guardians must provide the school with emergency contact numbers and ensure that there is always someone available for the school to contact, should it be necessary.
4. Students must sign in the medical note-book in the Secretary's office and state the length of time spent in the Sick Bay.
5. If students leave the school, they must sign OUT from the Secretary's office.
6. On the student's return to school, a note of explanation must be given to the Class Tutor.
7. If students need to go home unexpectedly parents/guardians must come into the school to sign the student OUT.

Note: In the case of an emergency, if the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the school will call a doctor or bring the student to hospital.

For health and safety reasons no student may leave the school at any time without permission from Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. Signing out only is not sufficient.

PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING PUNCTUALITY

Punctuality is a valuable aspect of class management. It is essential that students attend class punctually to ensure an orderly learning environment.

- All students are expected to be punctual for each class, each day.
- Students who are late at 8.55am and 2pm must sign the **PUNCTUALITY BOOK** and will receive a **LATE SLIP** from the Office – to be presented to the relevant teacher.
- Punctuality is monitored by the Year Head and students will receive one demerit point for each late arrival.
- Students who report late to class at other times will be sanctioned by the class teacher with Demerit Points.
- Students' punctuality records form part of their term report to parents/guardians.
- Failure to report for Detention is considered a serious breach of discipline and may result in **SUSPENSION**. It is the students' responsibility to make themselves aware of **DETENTION** time and date.
- For students late on a regular basis this could mean a **Formal Complaint and Detention**.

LUNCH-TIME ARRANGEMENTS 1.10pm – 2.00pm.

1st, 2nd and 3rd Year students may leave at lunch time ONLY to have lunch in their parents'/guardians' home. A letter of verification from parents/guardians is required. The following arrangements apply to Junior Cycle students.

- 1. Any student who leaves the school grounds without permission will get an automatic FORMAL COMPLAINT.**
2. Regular spot checks will be made.
3. If Junior Cycle students wish to leave the school grounds with their Parents/Guardians permission they must present a dated signed letter to the **CLASS TUTOR/YEAR HEAD before morning break.**
4. Junior Cycle students must wait for any visitors inside the school gates at lunch time.
5. In certain circumstances, for a specified period, a student may be obliged to **SIGN IN** at specified times during the lunch hour.
6. Students are NOT permitted to leave the school grounds at breaktime (which is from 10.55am to 11.10am).

Unauthorised absence from the school premises or from classes by students is a serious breach of health and safety guidelines and is a serious breach of discipline.

The school authorities cannot accept responsibility for students who absent themselves from school or from a class for any purpose without prior permission.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for students when they sign out during the school day.

The Principal/Deputy Principal reserve the right to exercise discretion in the implementation of the sanctions in exceptional circumstances.

SUSPENSION

In cases where students fail to observe the Code of Behaviour and in the interests of Health & Safety, it is necessary, for the good of the school community as a whole, to impose sanctions on such students, including suspension or expulsion where warranted. The school's approach to suspension and expulsion takes due consideration of the rights and responsibilities inherent in the Education Act 1998, Education Welfare Act 2000, Equal Status Act 2000 and the principles of fairness and natural justice.

POSSIBLE GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION

Suspension will be considered for serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour. Such breaches of the Code of Behaviour include but are not limited to:

- Endangering the safety or health of any member of the school community.
- Disrespect or defiance towards any member of staff and the harassment, intimidation or bullying of any member of the school community
- Refusal to obey clear and reasonable instructions of staff members on a repeated basis.
- Possession, use, or supply of prohibited substances (including alcohol, drugs or associated paraphernalia) in the school, on school trips, or in the course of any school related activity. Exception will be made only for legitimate medicinal use with the prior notification of the school authorities.
- Deliberate vandalism, including the writing of graffiti, in relation to school property or the property of a member of the school community.
- Interference with or persistent disruption of teaching and learning.
- Smoking, vaping and use of e-cigarettes anywhere inside or in the immediate vicinity of the school grounds.
- The use of obscene, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate language.
- Hitting, punching or slapping or using any form of physical violence on any member of the school community.
- Stealing, fighting, or the possession of offensive weapons. In addition to being serious breaches that incur suspension, these are criminal offences that will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- Damaging the good name and reputation of the school.
- Truancy.
- Failure to report for detention without reasonable and timely explanation.
- Inappropriate use of technological devices including videoing and recording without permission on school premises or during school activities.

PRINCIPAL'S ROLE RE SUSPENSION (or the Acting Principal)

Suspension will occur after the Principal has:

- ensured that all **discipline options** under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented.
- ensured that all **appropriate support personnel** (internal and external) have been involved.
- ensured that **discussion** has occurred with the student and parent/guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to suspension.
- ensured that **diagnostic assessments** have been carried out where appropriate, particularly where unacceptable behaviour is ongoing and consistent.
- provided a **formal written warning** detailing these behaviours as well as clear expectations of what is required of the student in the future (except in cases of very serious misconduct)
- recorded all **action** taken.
- copied all **correspondence**.

PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION

- The Principal makes the decision to suspend a student on the basis of the reasons set out in the Code of Behaviour and the parameters set out by the Board of Management.
- The student will be informed of the precise grounds which gave rise to the suspension.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed by post and invited to come to the school for a meeting. If suspension is to be immediate (e.g. in the interests of health and safety), Parents/Guardians may be informed by phone, with written follow-up.
- Students will not be sent home during a school day unless collected by a parent/guardian or some other suitable arrangement is made.
- Before a long suspension is imposed, a formal meeting comprising the Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Year Head and Parents/Guardians may be convened in an attempt to resolve matters and/or to explain the reasons for the long suspension.
- The school may insist that the student remain at home while an appeal on a suspension is being processed.
- Where a suspension may already have been served before the appeal is actually heard, in cases where the appeal is successful, the record of the suspension will be removed from the student's file.
- The Principal (or the Acting Principal or in the Principal's absence the Deputy Principal) may suspend immediately in some circumstances e.g. violence, threats of violence, illegal drugs etc.

All suspension decisions will include a **formal letter of notification** to Parents/Guardians that will include the following, where relevant:

- Notice of suspension.
- Effective date of suspension.
- Duration of suspension.
- Reasons for suspension.
- Expectations of the student while on suspension. (Study programme may be attached).
- Importance of the assistance of parents/guardians in resolving the matter.
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians while on suspension.
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed. (If the suspension is longer than 6 days cumulatively, or the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date).
- Information on appeal rights (internal school appeal/Section 29 Appeal)
- Requirements which may need to be in place when a student returns (e.g. written apology, completed assignments etc.)

If consideration is being given to proceeding to expulsion.

All cases of suspension shall be reported to the Board of Management at the next scheduled meeting of the Board. In exceptional circumstances, an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Management may be convened.

LENGTH OF SUSPENSION

- The Principal has the authority to suspend a student from attending school for a period of up to and including 3 days.
- Suspensions beyond 3 days are the responsibility of the Board of Management.
- The Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal to impose suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion.

- If a student is suspended for 6 days or more consecutively, the Principal must inform the local Education Welfare Officer.
- If a student is suspended for a cumulative total of 20 days or more in one school year, the Principal must also inform the Education Welfare Officer.

PROCEDURE FOR RE-INTRODUCTION FOLLOWING SUSPENSION

- Parents/Guardians will be requested to attend with the student on the day of her return to the school.
- The student may be required to furnish a written apology.
- The student will be required to renew a commitment to the Code of Behaviour by signing the Statement of Contract re same.
- Parent/Guardian and student may be required to agree to certain procedures which would seek to assist in the student's rehabilitation (e.g. counselling, referral to NEPS, other pastoral supports).

GROUNDINGS FOR REMOVING A SUSPENSION

The Principal/Board of Management may agree that a sanction other than suspension be applied, after discussion with the parents:

- Following a successful appeal to the Board of Management.
- Following a successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.
- Where new circumstances come to light.

APPEALS

- A student has the right to appeal a suspension to the Board of Management in which case the appeal may be heard by a sub-committee of the Board.
- A student may also appeal to the Secretary General under Section 29 of the Education Act where a student has been suspended for 20 days or more.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the ultimate sanction imposed by the school and is exercised by the Board of Management in extreme cases of indiscipline.

In advance of any hearing which could result in an expulsion, the school will investigate the matter in accordance with the principles of natural justice (see Appendix : Principles of Natural Justice).

POSSIBLE GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION

In general, there are two sets of circumstances in which expulsion may be considered to be appropriate by the school.

- (a) Cases where the in-discipline of a student is so pervasive that teaching and learning, and the general running of the school, become extremely difficult. Such cases include but are not limited to:
- The student being so disruptive that they are seriously preventing other pupils from learning.
 - The student being uncontrollable and not amenable to any form of school discipline or authority.
 - Parents/Guardians being unable, or refusing, to exercise their responsibility for the student.
 - The student being a danger to themselves or to others.

- When guarantees of reasonable behaviour following repeated suspensions are not forthcoming or not being met.
- The student's conduct acting as a source of serious bad example and having an adverse influence on other students in the school.
- When the student shows continuous defiant and aggressive behaviour and a total lack of respect for the school's Code of Behaviour.
- When the student shows threatening or continuous defiant behaviour towards school staff.
- When a student shows continuous threatening behaviour towards a fellow student or any member of the school community, which is unwelcome, inappropriate and/or offensive.

(b) First time offences of a very serious nature. Such cases include but are not limited to:

- Serious assault.
- Trafficking in drugs.
- Arriving in school under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Serious burglary or theft.
- Causing major damage to school property.
- Gross insubordination to the Principal or other staff members.
- Brandishing of an offensive weapon.

PRINCIPAL'S ROLE RE EXPULSION (or the Acting Principal)

The Principal will always refer to the Board of Management in matters of expulsion. However, the Principal may suspend a student immediately in some circumstances e.g. violence, threats of violence, illegal drugs etc., pending a referral to the Board of Management with a recommendation of expulsion. In general, expulsion will occur after the Principal has followed the following **procedures**:

- Ensured that all **discipline options** under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented.
- Ensured that all **appropriate support personnel** (internal and external) have been involved.
- Ensured that **discussion** has occurred with the student and parent/guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to suspension.
- Ensured that **diagnostic assessments** have been carried out where appropriate, particularly where unacceptable behaviour is ongoing and consistent.
- Provided a **formal written warning** detailing these behaviours as well as clear expectations of what is required of the student in the future (except in cases of very serious misconduct).
- **Recorded all action** taken.
- **Copied all correspondence.**
- Informed the parents/guardians of his/her intention to **recommend expulsion** to the Board of Management.
- Invited the parents/guardians to the **Board of Management** hearing.
- Invited the parents/guardians to make a **written submission** in advance of the Board Meeting.
- Provided the parents/guardians with a full, **written description** of the allegations against the student and the case being made at the Board, together with copies of all documentation, statements etc., supporting the case.
- Made a **formal expulsion recommendation** to the Board with full supporting documentation.

ROLE OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT:

Expulsion can only occur after the Board of Management has followed the following procedures:

- Heard the **Principal's case against the student** (this case will be made in the presence of the parents/guardians).
- Heard the **parents'/guardian's response**.
- Examined all the **documentation**.
- Considered the **student's record** in the school.
- Taken legal/expert **advice**.
- Ensured the **Principal is not present for the Board's discussion and decision** on the matter.
- **Discussed** the case in detail.
- **Considered all matters** having regard to the Board's responsibilities to the whole school community and to the principles of natural justice.
- Made a **final decision to expel**.
- **Communicated the decision** to the parents/guardians formally through the Secretary to the Board (registered letter).
- **Informed the Education Welfare Officer** under Section 24 (1) of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

The **formal letter of notification** to parents/guardians will include:

- Notice of the expulsion.
- Effective date of the expulsion.
- Reasons for the expulsion.
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed.
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians for the period of 20 days required by the Education Welfare Officer to examine alternative provisions for the education of the student.
- Information and documentation on Appeal rights (i.e. Section 29 Appeal).

APPEALS

A student has the right to appeal expulsion (ref. Education Welfare Act).

- A student may appeal to the Board of Management in which case the appeal may be heard by a sub-committee of the Board.
- A student may also appeal to the Secretary General under Section 29 of the Education Act.

APPENDIX:

PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE

PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All communities have a legitimate expectation that schools (Boards, Principals and teaching staff) will follow these principles in all circumstances, particularly when dealing with suspensions and expulsions.

Procedural fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements.

- 1. The right to be heard** which includes:

- The right to know why the action is happening.
- The right to know the way in which the issues will be determined.
- The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account.
- The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegation.
- The right to an appeal.

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision which includes:

- The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision-making phases.
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker.