



St. Mary's Secondary School

Code of Positive Behaviour



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Mercy Philosophy of Education

Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, Mercy Education is committed to the holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy Education is committed to ongoing whole school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, Staff, Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and the wider community.

CEIST Core Values

St. Mary's Secondary School is a voluntary Catholic Secondary School for girls under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust).

The Core Values of CEIST are:

- Promoting Spiritual & Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person
- Being Just and Responsible

Mission Statement

St. Mary's is a Mercy school which is concerned with developing the whole person within a Christian atmosphere.

By providing a balance of educational activities, we foster growth in self-esteem and respect for others.

School Ethos

The characteristic spirit of St. Mary's Secondary School is based on the Mercy Philosophy of Education which espouses the core values of respect, justice, care and joy. The school's ethos is holistic and person centered. The school encourages students to use and share their talents to their full potential, to recognise God's presence in their lives, to celebrate their Christian faith and to show respect to all persons in all areas of life and work. Students are encouraged by school staff to strive for excellence in learning and to participate to the best of their ability in all aspects of school life.

Upon enrolment parent(s)/guardian(s) confirmed that the existing Code of Positive Behaviour was acceptable to them by submitting an enrolment form. This consent pertains to all revised editions of our Code of Positive Behaviour and any revisions will be made available to stakeholder via the school website. We look forward to the active support of parent(s)/guardian(s) in implementing our Code of Positive Behaviour.



Rationale

The rationale behind our Code of Positive Behaviour is:

- To facilitate the delivery of curriculum to students and to ensure that teaching and learning can take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support.
- To define standards of behaviour and help students acquire good habits of self-discipline and behaviour.
- To ensure the safety of all members of the school community both on the school premises and on school activities.
- To inform students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of the procedures used by the school to address issues of discipline in the school.
- To inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of school procedures that will be followed before a student is suspended or expelled.
- To inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of their legal responsibilities relating to occasions when their daughter is absent from school.

Purpose

The Code of Positive 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 Positive 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 Positive 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 Positive Behaviour is a key tool in enabling the school authorities to support the learning of every student in the school.

Code of Positive Behaviour

- Each student has a right to a caring, safe and orderly school environment where learning can take place in order that she can reach her full potential.
- Students are required to show respect and to be courteous at all times to all members of the entire school community and visitors to the school.
- Each teacher has the right to work in an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.
- Therefore, we expect each student to adhere to our school's Code of Positive Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures.
- All partners in our school community have a role to play in maintaining



good order and discipline about the school.

- Adherence to school rules ensures that all who learn and work in our school are treated with dignity.
- Positive behaviour will be acknowledged and affirmed as outlined below.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

- Students are expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour and actions.
- Positive student behaviour creates a positive environment for teaching and learning.

Positive behaviour is promoted through:

- The school's positive behaviour reward model as outlined below.
- Support structures for all students in school: Class Tutor, Year Head, Student Support Team.
- The Year Head who works closely with the students in the year group to promote and encourage positive student behaviour.
- 6th year Senior Girl & Deputy Senior Girls.
- The Leaders Programme for first year students where 5th year students act as mentors to first years.
- School Events such as Friendship Week, Multi-Cultural days, Anti- Bullying and Cyber-bullying workshops and seminars, Mental Health Awareness Week and workshops, study skills workshops, etc.
- Celebration of students' achievements on Recognitions Day.
- Where appropriate the Year Head may bring the matter of improved behaviour to the attention of the Principal/Deputy Principal/Student Support Team.
- Student's positive engagement with school will be affirmed and acknowledged through Newsletters, Digital Screen, in school reception area, School Noticeboards, Newspapers, School Website, School Intercom announcements, etc.

Positive Behaviour for Learning – Classroom Expectations

As part of our commitment to fostering a positive, respectful, and inclusive school culture, St. Mary's Secondary School is implementing the National Council for Special Education **Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)** approach across the school from September 2025. PBL helps create a consistent and supportive learning environment where all students can thrive.

The first phase of this initiative focuses on expectations **within the classroom**, where students spend most of their school day. These expectations were developed in



consultation with both students and staff and reflect the core values of our school community.

In our classrooms, we should be:

Respectful

- Listen when others are speaking
- Use kind words and tone
- Follow the teacher's instructions

Responsible

- Arrive on time
- At St. Mary's, we clean our own space
- Own our actions

Ready to Learn

- Bring everything we need
- Take part / Engage / Participate
- Try our best to finish our work, even when it's hard.

These expectations will be taught, modelled, and reinforced consistently across all classrooms, supporting a safe and productive learning environment for everyone. **We ask that you speak with your daughter regarding the above expectations and the importance of playing her part in maintaining a respectful and positive school community where all students can thrive.**

Permission to Leave Class – Student Record Page

As part of our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) approach, we are introducing a consistent system for students who need to leave class during lesson time.

Students must present their journal each time they request to leave a class. Teachers will approve the request by recording the appropriate code (e.g. T = Toilet, L = Locker) and initialling the request. Students are expected to carry their journal with them while out of class and to return promptly.

This process supports our focus on Responsibility and Readiness to Learn, and helps ensure that valuable learning time is respected for everyone.



General:

All pupils attending the school have the right to an 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 in general 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) of a pupil are expected to cooperate with the Board of Management and staff to ensure that their daughter observes and obeys the Code of Positive 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 and the pupil's social activities is expected from a parent. The school seeks to maintain, establish and develop an effective partnership between 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.

Communication

- a) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to communicate with the School.
- b) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) 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) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should not generally visit the school and expect to meet with Principal/Deputy Principal or staff members without prior appointment.

School Rules

1. General

- Students must show courtesy to and respect for all members of the staff, visitors to the school and fellow students.
- 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 and not to engage in any activity likely to disrupt the day to day running of the school. Students are expected to respect school property and the property of other members of the school community.
- The Code of Positive Behaviour applies to students on school property and on all school-related activities.



2. Specific

- Students are advised to arrive at school no later than 8:50 a.m. to ensure adequate time to organise their books & to meet with their Year Head. The school daily schedule is as follows:

Class commences	9.00 a.m.
Morning Break	10:20 – 10:35 a.m.
Lunch Break	1.15 -1:50pm
End of School Day	3:50 p.m. (Monday & Tuesday) 3:10 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 parents are requested to state the reason for absence/s using the Compass App. The note must state 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 premises for a legitimate reason during the school day must have a signed note from their Parent(s)/Guardian(s). Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are requested to use the notes provided at the back of their daughter's school journal. This note should include the reason for the absence, the time the student is leaving. The student must provide this note to their Year Head in the morning between 8:45 and 8:55 am. The Year Head will retain the original note and give the student a 'Permission to Leave' slip which must be presented at the School Office at the time of departure. If a Permission to Leave slip is not provided & signed by the relevant Year Head, the note must be presented to the Principal/Deputy Principal for signing. The Principal/Deputy Principal may make contact with the Parent/Guardian. Students will be required to scan their Student ID Card and a Departure Note will be entered on Compass. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may receive a notification/text message informing them that their daughter has left the school. Junior Students (1st – 3rd Year) must be collected at reception by a parent/guardian or nominated person. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or nominated person are requested to present at the school reception and to sign the Departure Note.
- 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 a watch, rings and small stud earrings 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.
- The school prohibits smoking in the school and on school grounds as set out in



the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002-2015. Breaches of this legislation directive will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour and as dictated by the terms of current legislation.

- The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to the possession/consumption/use of **alcohol, tobacco, vapes or illegal drugs**. These are strictly forbidden in the school, its general environs and on school outings. Breaches of this directive will warrant immediate suspension and Board of Management intervention.
- In the interest of promoting the health, safety, and well-being of all students, St. Mary's Secondary School has implemented a ban on energy drinks within school grounds and on school trips/outings. Energy drinks, which often contain high levels of caffeine and sugar, have been shown to pose significant health risks, including increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, and dehydration. These drinks may also negatively impact students' concentration and behaviour, potentially affecting academic performance and the overall school environment. As part of our commitment to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment, the consumption of energy drinks is strictly prohibited during school hours, on school grounds and on school trips/outings. This policy is in place to safeguard the health of our students and maintain a positive atmosphere for learning.
- Mobile phones are not to be used during the school day nor on school-related activities. The only exceptions to this rule are:
 - a. The classroom teacher gives permission to use a mobile phone in their class for educational and/or instructional purposes.
 - b. On medical grounds where the device is essential to manage a medical condition and only with prior permission of the relevant Year Head and with medical documentation to support the need for the phone to monitor the named condition.
- Each student is assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. It is the responsibility of each student to bring their Pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

Students who fail to pouch their phone/smartwatch or who remove their phone/smartwatch from their Pouch without permission during the day will have their phone/smartwatch confiscated. Their parent/guardian will be contacted by text to inform them that the student's phone/smartwatch has been confiscated. Refusal to allow confiscation of the device will be treated as a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and will result in a suspension for the following school day.

The phone/smartwatch can be collected **at the end of the school** day by a



parent/guardian between:

- 3.50pm – 5.00pm on Monday, Tuesday
- 3.10pm – 4.30pm on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

If a parent/guardian is not available to collect the phone/smartwatch, it will be kept overnight and returned to the student on the next school day. This also applies across weekends where a phone/smartwatch is confiscated on a Friday and a parent/guardian is not available to collect the phone.

The student will receive Lunchtime Detention.

Please refer to the school's *Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy* for further details.

3. 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) should be made aware.
- b) The School Journal is an official rather than a private document. The School Journal must be brought to school every day and placed on the student's desk at the beginning of each class period.
- c) Students must use the School Journal to note details of homework assigned, school timetables etc.
- d) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should use the School Journal to communicate with the school as regards requests to leave the school during school hours etc. as detailed further in this Code of Positive Behaviour. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) notes authorising the students release from school will only be accepted on official School Journal slips (available at the back of the School Journal)
- e) Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should also use the School Journal as a source of information as regards their students' performance in school. We request that parent(s)/guardian(s) to keep a close check on School Journals in this regard throughout the school year.
- f) Failure to present the School Journal to any staff member when requested to do so is a serious breach of this Code of Positive 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 Positive Behaviour.
- h) The school journal must be used by teachers to formally record and authorise any student request to leave class during lesson time (e.g., to use the toilet, access their locker, or take a movement break). Permission must be noted in the designated section at the back of the journal.



Students must have their journal with them at all times when outside of class during lesson periods. If a student is found outside class without their journal and without a recorded teacher permission, it will be treated as being **absent from class without permission** under the school's points system.

Remaining in class for the full duration of each lesson is essential for effective learning, maintaining focus, and supporting class routines. Students are expected to arrive prepared, with all necessary materials, to minimise disruption and maximise learning for all.

4. School Books

The school operates a Free Book Scheme for all students.

All books loaned to students under the book rental schemes 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, they must be paid for at their replacement cost.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invoiced the replacement cost of the books where a student fails to return all, or some, of the books rented.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

General

- a) The school generally opens at 8.00 a.m.
Class finishes at 3.50pm/3:10pm as outlined above.
The Office staff finish at 4:30 pm
The school closes at the end of Evening Study at approx. 6:00pm (5.30pm Wed-Fri inclusive).
- b) Students are required to be in attendance at 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 Welfare Services.
- 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 8:50 a.m.
- Students should meet their Year Heads every morning between 8.45am - 8.55am to present all notes for authorisation / permission to leave school. School uniform is also checked at this time.
- Notes to explain absence/s should be entered by parents on Compass. As these notes inform regular reports to the EWS (Education Welfare Service) 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 absence.
- Class start time is 9:00 am. Attendance is recorded electronically by the class teacher and students who are not present at 9:00 are deemed to be 'absent' and recorded as such. Absenteeism is noted and regularly monitored.
- Students arriving after 9:00 am must present to the Main Office and will be registered as '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 excused from the class. Students must seek their class teacher's permission to leave to attend other school related activities or to meet with another teacher.
- Morning Break is from 10:20 to 10:35 and Lunch Break from 1:15 to 1:50. Students may not leave school grounds during these times.
- Food is available to students from the school canteen during designated times. Students are **not permitted** to carry plated food through the school corridors.
- A student wishing to leave the school premises for a legitimate reason during the school day must have a signed note from their Parent(s)/Guardian(s). This note should include the reason for the absence, the time the student is leaving. The student must provide this note to their Year Head in the morning between 8:45 and 8:55 am. The Year Head will give the student a Permission to Leave slip which must be presented at the school office at the time stated in the note. If a Permission to Leave slip is not provided & signed by the relevant Year Head, the note must be presented to the Principal/Deputy Principal for signing. The Principal/Deputy Principal may make contact with the Parent/Guardian. Students will be required to scan their Student ID Card and a Departure Note will be entered on Compass. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may a notification/text message informing them that their daughter has left the school.
- A student who signed out for an appointment and who wishes to return to school after the appointment sign in at the main office on her return to school. Students will be required to scan their Student ID Card and an Arrival Note will be entered on Compass. The student will be given a Printed Slip documenting her arrival time which she must bring to the relevant class teacher. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may receive a notification/text message informing them that their daughter has arrived back at school.
- In the event of a student becoming ill or getting injured during the day they should inform their class teacher or supervisor who will send them to the Principal or Deputy Principal to obtain permission to go home. If such permission is granted, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by the school office. Students should never contact home themselves either prior to or after getting permission to leave the school premises. This will be treated as a serious violation of our School Mobile Phone Policy.



- In the event of a student being ill or injured, parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to make arrangements for the collection of their daughter at the main office. When collecting a Junior Student (1st – 3rd Year) before the end of the school day, parent(s)/guardian(s) or nominated person are requested to present at the school reception and to sign the Departure Note.
- School day ends at 3:50pm/3:10pm.
- Truancy is regarded a serious breach of the school Code of Positive Behaviour and will be dealt with as such. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be contacted and will be treated as leaving school/not attending school without permission under the school's points system.
- 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 'out' and signs 'back in' at reception.

Please refer to the school's *Attendance and Punctuality Policy*.

6. The School Grounds

- (a) A clean, litter free environment is attainable with the co-operation of all members of the school community.
- (b) Any student wishing to park on school must adhere to the School's Parking Policy.

7. School Uniform and Dress Code

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 a full clean uniform 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. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are asked to co-operate with the school authorities in this regard.

- **The School Uniform is as follows:**
 - Navy school crested V-neck jumper
 - Navy **knee length** school pinafore with school crest. The length of the school pinafore must be at or below the knee.
 - Navy school tie
 - Navy school jacket with school crest
 - Navy school approved trousers with red stripe
 - White shirt /blouse
 - Black or navy tights/socks
 - Black/navy shoes or **all** black runners



The PE Uniform is as follows

- Navy school sweatshirt with crest
- Plain navy tracksuit pants
- White T-shirt
- Suitable Supportive Sports Footwear (not Converse or similar)

For 1st year students from September 2023, the PE uniform is as follows:

- Quarter Zip with school crest
- School Tee-Shirt with crest
- A choice of Skinny Bottoms **or** Leggings with school crest
- Suitable Supportive Sports Footwear (not Converse or similar)
- School shorts are also available and can only be worn for the duration of the PE class.
- 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. Non-Compliance with the uniform requirements may disallow the student from attending class or school activity.
- In exceptional circumstances, students who present at school in incomplete uniform or without uniform must provide the Principal or Deputy Principal with a note of explanation written in school journal and signed by parent/guardian. The student will be expected to change into a clean uniform provided by the school. The uniform will be provided on a loan basis for that school day only and must be returned to the school before classes commence on the following school morning.
- Students may wear their PE uniform for the duration of the school day that they have PE classes.
- 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.
- 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.
- **The length of the school pinafore must be at or below the knee. No unnecessary modifications or stylistic alterations (including length) to the school uniform is permitted.**



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
 - Pinafore length must be at or below the knee.
 - 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

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 Positive Behaviour.
- (b) The school reserves the right to decide whether any aspect of a student's appearance is in compliance with this Code of Positive 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.

8. Homework

Please refer to our Assessment Policy

9. Property

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 Positive 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 immediately by the students responsible immediately to a member of staff. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) 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 Positive Behaviour, whether occurring on school grounds and during school hours



or not. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) 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 Positive Behaviour.

- (f) Stealing is a serious breach of this Code of Positive Behaviour, whether the incident of theft occurs on school grounds and during school hours or not. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) 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 Positive 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 in line with our Data Protection Policy.

Lockers

- (a) The school provides locker facilities together with an inbuilt combination lock 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
 - During lunch break
 - After the final class in the afternoon

Students are not permitted to access their lockers at the break of classes.

- (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 are responsible for all items left in their locker whether such items belong to the student or not. Students are requested not to leave food in their locker overnight.
- (e) 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student concerned will be contacted and asked to come to the school. Pending arrival of a parent/guardian, the student may not have access to her locker.
- 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student.
- v. If parent(s)/guardian(s) consent to the procedure described above the locker will be opened and its contents examined in the presence of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student concerned.
- vi. If parent(s)/guardian(s) 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.
- 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 Positive 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 her parent(s)/guardian(s) in order to enable them to attend the school should they so wish, in which case the normal procedure described above will apply.



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 such 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted etc.
- (c) Under no circumstances will school staff attempt to affect 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.

10. Bullying

- (a) Bullying in any form is a serious breach of this Code of Positive Behaviour.
- (b) Where an incident of bullying comes to the school's attention, it will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy and/or the Anti-Racism Policy where relevant. It is the responsibility of all students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to familiarise themselves with the provisions of these policies. These policies apply to any incident of bullying or discriminatory behaviour which the school becomes aware of, whether it occurs on school property and/or during a school activity.



11. Substance use

The school has a **zero-tolerance** approach to incidents of substance abuse. Possession, use or distribution of harmful or illegal substances including alcohol, tobacco and vapes will not be tolerated at *any* time and under *any* circumstances and may lead to sanctions up to and including expulsion. This applies when students are on the school grounds, its general environs and/or engaged in a school activity.

Positive Behaviour Reward Model

Aims

- To promote respectful relationships for effective learning and behaviour in the school community.
- To promote positive behaviour and an environment of safety, inclusion and forgiveness
- To effectively communicate personal responsibility for behaviour and the consequences of behaviour to all members of the school community.
- To maintain equality and fairness for all members of the school community.
- To promote an encouraging school environment with a positive culture.

Rewards

Each student will begin with 100 points. Points will be added for positive behaviour and deducted for negative behaviour. Points will be reset to 100 every 10 weeks, providing students with regular opportunities to reflect, improve, and make a fresh start.

Positive points are awarded on our points system as follows:

+2 Points	+4 Points
• Helping to keep the school environment clean • Random Act of Kindness • Helping others • Notable improvement in behaviour	• Participating in school events • Extra-curricular activities • Volunteering • Helping out a staff member • Exceptional classwork/homework
+8 Points	+12 Points
• Leadership • Reporting concerns / bullying • Speaking up for others	• Promoting the school in a positive way • School Spirit Awardee/Cara Awardee • Outstanding achievement • Perfect attendance for a term



Students' behaviour will be monitored through the points system on Compass by both the Year Head and Senior Management. Each student will have access to their own personal Compass portal on which they can view their cumulative points. Through continued positive behaviour there are a number of rewards available to students. The rewards are in three separate stages:

Stage 1: (130 Points)

When a student reaches 130 points, a letter of commendation is sent home to parents highlighting the student's excellent contribution to the school.

Stage 2: (150 Points)

When a student reaches 150 points through continued positive behaviour they receive a voucher/gift card.

Stage 3: (170 Points)

If a student continues their excellent behaviour and reaches over 170 points, they will go on a trip at the end of term with the winning class group

Class Groups

Along with opportunities for students to achieve rewards through individual behaviour each class group will join together and compete against their peers to try and score the highest positive points each term. The class group that has the highest overall positive points at the end of term will engage in an organised activity at the start of the following term which is organised by the Year Head/ Class Tutor. Along with the winning group any individual student with a score of over 170 points will attend the organised activity. Examples of organised activities include bowling, cinema, pizza party, movie day, outdoor activity etc.

Organisation of Class groups

- Groups will be chosen based on their base group i.e. 1A1, 2A1 & 3A1 will make up Team A1
- Group scores will be made available to students regularly via the schools electronic noticeboards.

Additional Information:

- (i) At each stage of this process the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal may discuss positive progression with parents of student.
- (ii) These procedures will not interfere with the ability of a teacher to offer positive affirmation in the following ways: verbal praise, positive note in journal, positive note on Compass, verbal acknowledgement by class tutor/year head etc.
- (iii) Rewards through the positive points system may be used as a guide to assist in end of year awards.



Sanctions

Students will receive negative points if they are in breach of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour. Students are deducted points for the following:

- 2 Points	-4 Points
• Late for class (unexplained) • Wearing jewellery not part of uniform including piercings • Littering • Homework not attempted • No Journal in class • Not having correct resources for class • Not following attendance policy	• Disrupting class • Inappropriate behaviour • Non participation in class • Out of uniform • Chewing gum
-8 Points	-12 Points
• Damaging school property • Not attending class (without permission) • Disrespectful behaviour	• Defiance • Leaving school/Not attending school (without permission) • Vaping/Smoking

The disciplinary process occurs in seven stages which are outlined below:

Stage 1 (< 100 Points):

The student will meet with her Year Head in an effort to address the reasons for the loss of points.

Stage 2 (< 90 Points):

When a student falls below 90 points, she must attend a lunchtime detention from 1.20pm to 1.45pm. Students must bring lunch to school on the day of the lunchtime detention as purchasing a lunch in the school canteen will not be possible given the time available.

Stage 3 (< 80 Points):

If student's points go below 80, the sanction will be an afterschool detention. The Year Head will meet with the student and parents will be informed. A minimum of 24 hours' notice of evening detention will be given by Year Head to parents.

In order to support and maintain high standards of behaviour, students must have a minimum of 80 points to be eligible to participate in any school trips, sporting/other events, or outings.



Points will be reviewed in advance of each trip's departure. Any student whose points have fallen below 80 at that time will not be permitted to attend, even if payment has already been made. Unfortunately, refunds will not be possible in such cases. This measure is designed to promote personal responsibility and consistent positive behaviour throughout the school year.

Stage 4 (<70 points):

If the problem continues and the student reaches less than 70 points the matter is referred to the Deputy Principal by the Year Head. A Behaviour Support Intervention Meeting is held with school management, Year Head, the student concerned, parents and others as deemed appropriate. A behaviour support intervention plan is put in place and a contract with agreed interventions is signed by all parties and a timeframe is set. The student may be placed on a Student Support Programme to assist her in managing her behaviour.

Stage 5 (< 60 points):

Having exhausted all other measures and the student reaches less than 60 points the matter is referred to the Principal by the Deputy Principal and in-school suspension/suspension from school may be considered.

Stage 6 (< 50 points):

If disciplinary problems continue and the student reaches less than 50 points and all other measures have been exhausted, the matter may then be referred to the Board of Management where all options up to and including expulsion may have to be considered.

Additional Information:

- (i)* At each stage of this process the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal may inform the parents and/or apply sanctions. If the problem is of a serious nature the parents will be informed and their support and cooperation will be sought in the resolution of the matter.
- (ii)* These procedures will not interfere with the rights of a student and/or her parents to make a submission to the next level of authority in the school with a view to resolving any matter in a spirit of trust and cooperation.
- (iii)* Under normal circumstances the above procedures will apply. This in no way precludes the Principal or Deputy Principal from dealing immediately with any problem that may arise.
- (iv)* Any pupil whose behaviour or presence in the school shall be deemed, by the Principal, to be detrimental or pose a serious risk to the safety or wellbeing of teachers, pupils and other school staff, shall be liable to immediate suspension. In such cases the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.



Disciplinary Procedures

Where the Code of Positive 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
- Recording of negative points via Compass
- Detention
 - Lunchtime: 1.20pm – 1.45pm
 - Evening: e.g. 4.00pm – 5.00pm/6.00pm
 - Parents will be notified in advance of the scheduled detention. Failure to attend will result in the student receiving a more serious sanction.
- Notification to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Student put on 'Student Support Card'
- Loss of privileges
- In-school suspension
- Suspension
- Expulsion

This list is not exhaustive.

- a) Teachers or Year Heads may also refer students to members of the Student Support Team for help and advice.
- b) 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.
- c) Where a student's behaviour warrants suspension, the following procedures will apply:
 - i. School will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of their concerns and request that parent(s)/guardian(s) advise the student appropriately.
 - ii. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may be requested to come to the school to meet with the appropriate Year Head and/or the Principal or Deputy Principal. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be given as much notice 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. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) 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, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be requested to accompany the student to a meeting of the Board of Management to discuss the student's



ongoing participation in the school. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) 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, parent(s)/guardian(s) 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, parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) 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:
 - i. written undertakings by the student to be on good behaviour
 - ii. return to school subject to loss of specified privileges
 - iii. a successful appeal to the Board of Management (if the suspension is imposed by the Principal) or to the Department of Education (if the suspension is imposed by the Board of Management)
 - iv. the elapse of the time for which the suspension is stated to apply
 - v. 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, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing of the expulsion, the reason for same and the fact that the student will be regarded as being in the care of the parents from the end of the school day on which the expulsion is imposed.
- g) Where the Board of Management decides to suspend a student for 6 days or longer or if the student has been suspended for more than 20 days in the year the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. This will also apply in the case where the Board of Management decide to expel a student.
- h) While suspension or expulsion are generally used only when all other options have been exhausted, 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.



- i) It is not possible to cover every eventuality in a Code of Positive 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) 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.

Policy On Suspensions And Expulsions

General Principles

All pupils, teachers and other staff have the right to education and to 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 Positive 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 parent(s)/guardian(s).

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 Positive 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 Positive Behaviour 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 behaviour record.
- 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.
- Where the Board of Management decides to suspend a student for 6 days or longer or if the student has been suspended for more than 20 days in the year the Education Welfare Officer will be notified.

In cases of serious misconduct, the Principal may immediately suspend a pupil following contact with parents. Arrangements for the safety of the pupil will be made. A letter of notification as outlined above will be issued to parent(s)/guardian(s).

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 against 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 the 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.
5. The pupil's conduct compromises the health & safety of other students, staff or visitors in the school.

Expulsion will generally be considered by the Board of Management, when all other sanctions in the Code of Positive 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) and the 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 parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student will be invited to respond to the Principal's Report.
5. The Board will then request that the Principal and the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) and /or the 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. The Education Welfare Offices -TESS 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 TESS. (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.

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

Ratification

This *Code of Positive Behaviour Policy* was ratified by the Board of Management on: 23rd June 2025.

Signed: Bonifata Ky
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Donal O'Shelly
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management