

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

The Code of Behaviour establishes whole-school systems of support for all stake-holders of the school community. It assists the school in providing a consistent, safe, positive and effective learning environment for all. It enables the implementation of systems, structures, practices and procedures in a positive manner. The Code of Behaviour helps staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. A positive school climate and culture are fundamental to staff and student well-being. (Well-being in Post-Primary schools, 2017)

Mission Statement

The mission of Cabra Community College is to enable the provision of quality education, anchored in a warm, safe, secure and stimulating learning environment, inclusive of all and conducive to the purposeful use of time and successful learning.

Vision Statement

In Cabra Community College our motto is: *Educating, Inspiring, Motivating*. This vision informs our Code of Behaviour.

Value Judgements

Cabra Community College strives to educate by infusing in our students a set of values that will serve them well in coping with the challenges and opportunities of life.

These values are:

1. A safe, healthy, orderly, learning environment for all in an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity.
2. A warm, welcoming space that is comfortable and conducive to the pursuit of excellence in all learning endeavours – Academic, Artistic, Sporting, Practical and Technological.
3. The acquisition of essential life skills by our students necessary to live fulfilling lives and in contributing to society.

These are:

- (a) Learning to get along with people, learning to look after each other, learning to resolve conflict and difficulties in a non-aggressive way with fair and just outcomes

- (b) To be able to act responsibly and to take responsibility to make well balanced decisions
- (c) To develop healthy lifestyles by encouraging involvement in a variety of activities that will enhance wellbeing and promote a positive attitude and outlook in life.
- (d) The integrity of school life and confidential issues at school to protect and preserve by appropriate and responsible usage of social media.

From these value judgements we set our standards. These standards then guide our Code of Behaviour.

A Whole School Approach

The Code of Behaviour describes the school's expectations about how each member of the school community contributes to a conducive environment for teaching and learning.

The Code also describes how the school will respond to behaviour that interrupts, diminishes or prevents teaching and learning in the school. An effective Code makes clear that an orderly, harmonious school requires students to behave in accordance with that Code.

A whole school approach requires the school to provide opportunities for learning about expectations and responsibilities. This means, for example, that parents have opportunities to learn how their commitment to, and their relationship with, the school can impact on behaviour and learning. Students learn how their behaviour and learning, the learning of other students, and the wellbeing of staff, are linked together.

Parents / guardians are encouraged to share information or concerns about something that might affect student behaviour in school with the Caomhnóir, HSCL, Year Leader, Deputy Principal or Principal.

Staff communicate with parents/guardians using the student journal, texts and phonecalls. The Code has an early warning system to alert parents to concerns about a student's behaviour, so that ways of helping the student can be discussed and agreed.

How this policy was developed

This policy was developed as a result of a consultative process comprising of Staff, Parents, Students and Board of Management in line with the Guidelines of the National Education Welfare Board and City of Dublin Education and Training Board.

Links with other school policies

This Code of Behaviour works in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying policy, Special Educational Needs policy and Substance Misuse Policy. In forming this policy we were cognisant of the Child Safeguarding Procedures, Wellbeing Strategy and our School Improvement Plan.

Behaviour Expectations

Cabra Community College has developed a Positive Behaviour Matrix which outlines our expectations on how students are expected to behave throughout the school. The matrix focusses on 3 main themes; *Be Respectful, Be Prepared, Be your Best*. These expectations are discussed with students each year with the Caomhnóir, included in the student journal and displayed around the school as a visual cue.

A student is expected to:

1. Show respect to all members of the school community at all times. This is achieved by being well mannered, cooperative, helpful and kind to each other.
2. To come to school regularly and on time for each timetabled class and to attend all classes.
3. To carry all books and class equipment in an appropriate bag for safe keeping
4. To do one's best in learning in school and to complete homework diligently and on time.
5. To be responsible for their own work and behaviour and to consider the impact that actions have on others and the school environment.
6. To partake in and contribute to activities that enhance personal wellbeing and promote positive benefits to the school community.
7. To use technology and social media in a responsible and appropriate way that preserves the integrity of school life and pays attention to confidentiality within certain school issues.

Classroom Expectations

Students should:

1. Attend all timetabled classes on time
2. Enter the classroom only when directed by the teacher
3. Sit in a seat assigned by the teacher
4. Follow instructions given by the teacher, treating teacher and all members of staff with respect at all times.
5. Make the best effort during class to gain the full benefit from the lesson taught
6. Use homework journal to note lesson taught and homework given and complete homework to the best of their ability
7. Ask a question or make a comment in an appropriate way i.e. hands up, one voice.
8. Take personal responsibility for their actions and consider the impact on others in the class.
9. Mobile phones, tablets or any electronic equipment must be switched off and out of sight in students' school bag.

10. Pay attention to safety considerations when using tools, equipment, machinery etc. in the practical subject classrooms.

11. Classrooms and classroom property and equipment must be treated with care and respect.

The above expectations also apply while on school outings, sporting events and trips.

Electronic Equipment / Mobile Phones/ Ear Phones

- Students are not permitted to use mobile phones/earphones/ electronic devices on the school premises.
- If a student is seen by a member of staff using a mobile phones, earphones or electronic devices, the device will be confiscated immediately and placed in storage in the Principals or Deputy Principals office. The student can collect the device at 4.00pm on the same day.
- If a student refuses to cooperate with the above rule, this will be regarded as a serious breach of behaviour. The parent/ guardian will be contacted by the Principal or Deputy Principal and the student will be sent home immediately.
- The use, by students, of mobile phones, tablets or any other electronic equipment to take photographs, videos and audio clips is forbidden on school premises / grounds and during school trips and outings.
- The uploading of school related material, video, audio clips or photographs to social media websites or any non-school related website is forbidden. If a student engages in this behaviour, it will be regarded as a serious misbehaviour issue and may result in suspension or involvement of the Board of Management, all of which could lead to expulsion.

Promotion of positive behaviour

Acknowledging and affirming positive behaviour may include:

- Verbal praise
- Positive comment on VsWare
- Note in the journal
- Student Certificates
- Class Trips and Activities
- Postcards home to parents/guardian.
- A letter from the Principal commenting on achievements

Responses to Behaviour

It is the responsibility of the school to maintain a school environment which is supportive of the learning of every student in the school. Cabra Community College has a strategy in place for intervening early and positively when student behaviour does not meet expectations. There is an agreed system of responding to behaviour in class, to recording behaviour and a supportive ladder of referral.

The teacher may use various methods to signal to the student that their behaviour is disruptive i.e. verbal warnings, tracking sheet, note in student journal, signal or other appropriate actions.

Where a student is deemed to be disrupting the teaching and learning, the teacher will give the student a first warning to indicate a change in behaviour is needed. Further poor behaviour will result in a second warning. If a student receives a third warning, a referral to the Year Leader is advised. The teacher uses VSware to detail the misbehaviour and assigns this referral to the Year Leader.

Ladder of Referral

Upon receiving the referral the Year Leader will do the following:

Referral 1 : Caomhnóir speaks to student:

(Year Leader will assign this Referral to Caomhnoir)

A dialogue is carried out between the Caomhnóir and student regarding behaviour. The Caomhnóir may use solution-focussed conversations, restorative practice, work with the student on alternative ways to behave or use other appropriate techniques to aid the student to improve their behaviour.

Referral 2: Year Leader speaks to student:

A dialogue is carried out between the Year Leader and student regarding student behaviour. The Year Leader may use solution-focussed conversations, restorative practice, work with the student on alternative ways to behave or use other appropriate techniques to aid the student to improve their behaviour.

Referral 3: Detention:

If the behaviour of the student has not improved following the second referral, the Year Leader may place the student on detention in order to provide the student with time to reflect on their past actions and to plan for improved behaviour.

Referral 4: Contact with home:

Year Leader contacts parent/ guardian to inform of student behaviour and of interventions and

supports that have been put in place to date to aid improvement in behaviour.

Referral 5: Suspension

A student may be suspended from school if they have persistently displayed behaviour that is deemed to be disrupting teaching and learning.

Throughout the ladder of referral process the Year Leader may put additional supports in place for example; Reflection sheet, Target Card, Student Support Team referral, School Completion referral, Behaviour Contract or other supports to respond to the needs of the student.

Suspension

The suspension of a student will be sanctioned where:

- The students behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The students continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to their own safety or safety of others
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property
- The student is alleged to have been involved in a serious incident that in some way affects the rights of other students or members of staff in the school.

The City of Dublin ETB and the Board of Management has devolved authority to the Principal the right to make the decision to suspend students, as appropriate, with reference to the Code of Behaviour. The Principal has the authority to suspend a student for up to three days, or up to five days after consultation with the Chairperson of the board.

For all suspensions, the parent, student, or student if over 18, will be given a letter outlining;

- The reason for suspension.
- The period of suspension.
- Details of a meeting with the Year Leader/ Deputy Principal/ Principal that must be attended before the student returns to school.
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed (If the suspension is longer than 5 days, or the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date)
- Information on appeal rights.
- Requirements which need to be in place when the student returns.
- If consideration is being given to proceeding to expulsion.

Suspension should allow the student and their parents/guardian to reflect on the behaviour that led

to the suspension and to engage jointly with the issues. Before the student returns to school, agreement will be reached between the Year Leader/ Principal/ Deputy Principal, the parents and the student on the future behaviour of the student in the school.

Grounds for Removing a Suspension

Section 23 (2) d of the Education Welfare Act 2000 requires the school to publish the grounds for removing a suspension. This implies that a system is in place for review / appeal of a suspension.

Grounds may include:

- Successful appeal to the Board of Management.
- Successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.
- New circumstances come to light.
- Following discussion with parents/guardians.

Guidelines for Appeals:

City of Dublin ETB offers an opportunity to parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age to appeal the Principal's decision to suspend. All appeals will be made in writing to the Board of Management. All appeals will be heard as soon as is practically possible.

A section 29 Appeal may be taken in the case where a student cumulative number of suspensions in one academic year exceeds 20 days.

If the appeal is successful the suspension will be removed from the student's file/record.

Procedure for Investigating a Serious Incident

- The Principal or his designated representative will conduct an investigation into the alleged incident
- The student/s may be suspended while this investigation is ongoing
- For all suspensions, the parents of the student or the student themselves if 18 or over, will be given a letter outlining:
 - The reason for the suspension
 - The period of suspension
 - Details of a meeting with the Principal/ Deputy Principal that must be attended before the student returns to school.
- On concluding the investigation the Principal will apply the appropriate sanction as outlined in the code of behaviour or proceed to implement permanent expulsion procedures if he/she feels this is required.

Permanent Exclusion of a Student

Expulsion from a school is a very serious matter. The school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid an expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with the parents and the student to discuss approaches to changing the students behaviour.
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been considered.
- Seeking the assistance, where relevant, of outside agencies.

Expulsion will be considered in situations where:

- The students behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The student has been found to have been involved in a serious incident that in some way affects the rights of other students or members of staff in the school

Automatic expulsion will be considered in situations where:

- There is a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
- There is actual violence or physical assault.
- A student supplies illegal drugs to other students in the school
- There is a sexual assault.

The City of Dublin ETB has devolved authority to the board of management the right to make the decision to propose the expulsion of individual students as appropriate, with reference to the schools code of behaviour.

Expulsion Procedure

A proposal to exclude a student permanently from school is a formal procedure and is regulated by the Department of Education and Skills.

The procedure is as follows:

1. A student cannot be expelled without first having been suspended.
2. The Principal recommends the expulsion of a student and prepares a report, a copy of which is sent to the parent/guardian of the student.
3. A meeting of the School Board of Management is called to hear the proposal. Parents/guardians of the student are invited to attend this meeting.
4. The Board of Management consider all of the facts and make a recommendation on the

expulsion. All relevant parties are informed in writing of the boards recommendation.

5. After a period of 20 school days have elapsed, the board convenes again to consider the expulsion. If the board of management remains of the view that the student should be expelled they formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents are notified of this decision immediately, informed about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.
6. The parent, or a student aged eighteen years, may appeal the decision to expel to the Department of Education and Skills. An appeal must be made within 42 days from the date of the decision of the board of management.
7. An appeal hearing will be held within 21 days from the date of receipt of the fully completed application form.
8. The appeals committee will come to its conclusion having examined and considered all the evidence made available. The Appeals committee will notify all relevant parties in writing of its preliminary decision.
9. All relevant parties can make observations on that decision within seven calendar days of the preliminary decision.
10. The Appeals committee will then make its final decision and inform all parties.

Review date: 19th May 2026

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____