



St Gerald's DLS College

Code of Behaviour

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1: Introduction by the Board of Management

This policy was devised in consultation with all the teaching staff, Parent Association and Student Council in our school. It was submitted to the Board of Management. It is being reviewed as part of the School Development Planning Process.

In devising this policy, we have given great consideration to the democratic and child centred principles of this school. The establishment of a sound learning environment at school and classroom level is critical to effective learning and teaching.

2: School Ethos

“St Gerald’s DLS College, is a Lasallian Centre and the mission of the school is to give a human and Christian education to the young, with special concern for the disadvantaged”.

3: Legislative and International Conventions Contextual Considerations

To comply with the following legislation and international conventions:

- Children First Act 2015
- Tusla Student Attendance Guidelines (2022)
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)
- Child Care Act 1991
- Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice
- Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers
- The Constitution of Ireland
 - The rights of parents and of the child in the matter of education as set out in Articles 42 and 44.2.4. of the Constitution of Ireland
 - The requirement for fair procedures derives from Articles 40.3 and 42.4 of the Constitution of Ireland.
- The right to education and the right to fair procedures (Art 6.1) are provided for in the ECHR which was transposed into Irish law in the European Convention on Human Rights Act (2003)



- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) ratified by Ireland in 1992, provides that the State shall ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the dignity of the child
 - This Convention requires that the voice of the child must be heard on matters that affect them, having regard to the age and maturity of the child.
- Under the Education Act 1998 key provisions relevant to the code of behaviour provide for:
 - access to records (section 9(g))
 - publication of policies (section 15(2))
 - the responsibilities of the Board of Management (sections 14–21)
 - the Principal’s responsibility for setting objectives (sections 22 & 23)
 - information for students and Student Councils and student involvement (section 27)
 - provision for appeals (section 29)
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. This Act amends the provisions of section 29 of the Education Act 1998
 - It provides for a range of factors which must be considered by an Appeals Committee in relation to suspensions and expulsions.
 - It also makes a number of procedural changes to the section 29 appeals process in relation to time limits and the circumstances in which an appeal can be made.
- The provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 most relevant to the code of behaviour are the following:
 - general duties of NEWB towards schools (sections 10 & 11)
 - provisions relating to notification by parents of reasons for a
 - student’s non-attendance at school (section 18)
 - provisions for school codes of behaviour (section 23)
 - provisions relating to expulsion of a student (section 24)
 - provisions relating to appeals (section 26)



- The Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 apply to primary and post-primary schools. The Acts promote equality of opportunity and prohibit discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment on these nine grounds:
 - gender
 - marital status
 - family status
 - sexual orientation
 - religion
 - age
 - disability
 - race
 - membership of the Traveller Community.
 - They require reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities and allow a broad range of positive action measures. These Acts also prohibit victimisation of any person who makes a complaint about discrimination, who opposes any acts that are unlawful under the equal status legislation, or who gives evidence in proceedings under the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004, or who gives notice that they intend to do any of these.
- Ombudsman for Children Act 2002
 - The Ombudsman for Children is empowered to investigate any action taken by, or on behalf of, a school in connection with its functions under section 9 of the Education Act 1998, where the school's own complaints procedure has been exhausted.
- Education of Persons with Special Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN Act)
 - The EPSEN Act 2004 provides for the provision of education plans for students with special educational needs (SEN). Under the Act, children with SEN will be educated "in an inclusive environment with children who do not have SEN", unless this should be inconsistent either with the best interest of the child, or with the effective provision for the other children.
- Disability Act 2005



- The Disability Act 2005 establishes a basis for an independent assessment of individual needs, including education needs, a related service statement and independent redress and enforcement for persons with disabilities. From 1st June 2007 the provisions of the Act are in place for children up to the age of 5 years and will apply to older children at a future date.
- Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997
 - The Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act removes the legal immunity of teachers from criminal liability in respect of physical chastisement of students (section 24).
 - Section 15 of the Act forbids false imprisonment. The Act also forbids threats, intimidation, assault and the use of force and also sets out specific circumstances under which the use of force may not be unlawful (section 18).
- Health and Safety legislation
 - The legislation requires Boards of Management, as employers, to provide in as far as reasonably practicable, a safe place of work for employees. The Boards of Management is also required to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that students, parents and visitors, who may be on the school premises, are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.
 - The legislation further requires the Boards of Management to conduct their business, as far as reasonably practicable, in ways that prevent improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare at work of employees, or the health and safety of students, parents or visitors, at risk.
- Data Protection legislation
 - Schools that record, maintain and/or store personal data are required by the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) to protect the privacy rights of individuals. Section 2 of the Act requires that any data schools process is:
 - obtained and processed fairly
 - accurate and kept up to date
 - kept for a specified and lawful purpose
 - used or disclosed in a manner consistent with the purpose



- adequate, relevant and not excessive
 - not kept longer than is necessary
 - kept secure
 - The Act also requires that an individual be given a copy of the records upon request (section 3)
- Age of Majority Act, 1985
 - This Act provides that a person aged eighteen or over is an adult and has capacity to enter contracts and make decisions, which affect the adult's legal and other rights. The Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 reflect these provisions.

4: Roles and Responsibilities

4.1: The Patron

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, each school has a Patron who carries out certain functions specified in the Act. The Board of Management manages the school on behalf of the Patron and for the benefit of the students and their parents. The Board must:

- uphold the characteristic spirit of the school and be accountable to the Patron in this respect
- consult with and keep the Patron informed of decisions and proposals
- publish its policies on admissions, participation, suspension and expulsion in a manner that has been agreed with the Patron (section 15(d), Education Act 1998)
- In order to comply with these provisions, the Board of Management should submit the code of behaviour to the Patron for approval.

4.2: The Board of Management

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared in the school rests with the Board of Management. Each school has its unique identity, ethos, values and culture.

- The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies.



- The Board should play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's ethos and responsibilities.
- The Board should make sure it consults with the school community who are then give the opportunity have the opportunity to be involved in work on the code of behaviour.
- The Board of Management should formally record the adoption of the code of behaviour, the commencement date and decisions about when the code will be reviewed.

4.3: The Principal

Leading the audit and review of the code of behaviour, and ensuring that it is implemented in the school, are important leadership tasks. It is the responsibility of the Principal, under the direction of the Board, to lead the work on the code of behaviour.

4.4: Teachers and Other Staff Members

Teachers and other staff members can play important roles in the work in the review and updating of the code. They bring to this work their professional expertise in understanding the links between behaviour and learning; their experience of what works to help students to behave well; and their knowledge of the school and of the school community.

4.5: Parents

The code of behaviour will be more likely to work well where parents have meaningful ways of contributing to the development or review of the code. Their involvement will draw on their expectations, insights and experience. It will help to underline their responsibilities for their children's behaviour. Joint work between parents and staff in the development of the code of behaviour can:

- give parents insight into what teachers need in order to be able to teach effectively
- equip parents to reinforce at home the messages about learning and behaviour that are conducive to a happy school
- help parents to have a strong sense of pride in the school and ownership of its work



- help to ensure that parents give consistent messages to students about how to treat others.

4.6: Students

Students are more likely to support a code of behaviour when they have helped to develop it. Relationships of trust between teachers and students can grow stronger through the process. Through their involvement, students can:

- hear directly from teachers about what is needed for teaching and learning
- experience being part of a collective effort to make sure the school is a good place to teach and learn
- learn about taking personal responsibility for their behaviour and for each other's wellbeing and the wellbeing of the teachers
- learn essential skills of listening, negotiating and managing differences
- have their experience, insights and expectations recognised and used.

5: Principles Underpinning an Effective Code of Behaviour

There are some basic principles that underpin an effective code of behaviour. When the code takes account of and is in keeping with these principles, it is likely to be successful in achieving its goals.

These goals include:

- creating a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- creating a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning
- encouraging students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- helping young people to mature into responsible participating citizens
- building positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- ensuring that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.



- co-creation of classroom agreements – students involved in setting norms

5.1: Providing Clarity

- This code of behaviour describes the school's expectations about how each member of the school community (students, staff and parents) will help to make the school a good place for teaching and learning.
- This 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 this code.

5.2: Affirming that Everyone's Behaviour Matters

- The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everyone in the school.
- The behaviour of the adults in a child's life, including parents and teachers, is a significant influence on how a child acts

5.3: Focusing on Promoting Good Behaviour

- This code gives priority to promoting good behaviour. The tone and good behaviour emphasis of the code should be on setting high expectations and affirming good behaviour.

5.4: Balancing Needs

- This code makes clear that the educational needs of a student whose behaviour is unacceptable will be balanced with the educational needs of other students in the school.



5.5: Recognising that Relationships Are Crucial

- The quality of relationships is important between teachers and students and is a powerful influence on behaviour in a school. This school code fosters relationships of trust between students and teachers. Adults have more responsibility than students for building these relationships.
- Relationships with vulnerable students will be nurtured and encouraged so that confidence in self and school life can be developed. This will mean that provision is given to time with SNAs, with and AEN core person who will deal with certain year groups and Yearheads / Guidance Counsellor / Class Tutors will have time to give emotional and behavioural support to students when needed.
- Check and connect will be used by Yearheads / those with specific duties eg Anti Bullying Coordinator with students who have experienced sadness / trauma / difficulties both inside and outside school.

5.6: Focusing on Personal Responsibility

- This code helps young people to experience the value of being responsible, participating members of the school community.

5.7: Ensuring Fairness and Equality

- This code is underpinned by the principle of fairness. It respects the principles of natural justice, and ensures a consistent approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel.

5.8: Promoting Equality

- This code promotes equality for all members of the school community.
- This code prevents discrimination and allows for appropriate accommodation of difference, in accordance with Equal Status legislation.



5.9: Recognising Educational Vulnerability

- This code of behaviour reflects the school's commitment to provide positive support, including active teaching of relevant skills, for those students who are more vulnerable to behaviour problems.

5.10: Attending to the Welfare of Students

- This code of behaviour is based on a commitment to the welfare of every student, including the right to participate in, and benefit from, education. We are cognisant that the mental health of our students often impacts their behaviour and we encourage them to see our Guidance Counsellor if they feel they need to. In turn they and their parents maybe directed towards Mindspace, Jigsaw, Foroige and they may be discussed by the Student Support Team / Pastoral Care team.

5.11: Attending to the Welfare of Teachers

- This code helps to promote a positive and safe working environment for all staff, including a positive and safe classroom environment for teachers.

5.12: Promoting Safety and Freedom from Threat

- The code promotes the conditions for learning and teaching, dignity and freedom from threat of violence for both staff and students.

6: Rationale

A school cannot function without an appropriate code of behaviour. If all adhere to this code, we can look forward to working in relative peace, harmony and security. The following code is based upon the fundamental principle that St Gerald's is a Christian community where mutual respect, co-operation and natural justice are integral features and where students of other faiths are welcome. It has regard to the rights and responsibilities of all parties concerned in school life; management, teachers, students, parents and visitors. Our code is based on natural justice; hence we are always seen to be fair, impartial and unprejudiced in our dealings with each other.



7: SCHOOL RULES

Rules are there to safeguard student's right to learn and the teacher's right to teach in a caring, safe and respectful environment. In our school everybody is valued. Differences of any type do not make it acceptable to bully a person. Silence allows people to suffer so we speak out when we know we should. Our community in St Gerald's College have the right to be themselves and the responsibility to treat others, as they would like themselves to be treated.

Therefore, we expect:

- 1. That you come to school every day and arrive on time. If you need to sign out, your parent / guardian posts a note on the Compass app, you go to the office at the appropriate time and sign out with the secretary when your parent / guardian arrives to collect you.**
- 2. That you come to school in full uniform (grey trousers / blue shirt / navy jumper / black shoes), clean and tidy.**
- 3. That you have respect for people and for property and that you report any accidental damage that you may cause.**
- 4. That you do your best in class and at your homework.**
- 5. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects.**
- 6. That you act in a proper manner around the school.**

School rules must be obeyed whenever you are wearing the school uniform. Any misbehaviour by a student not specified in these rules, but which in the opinion of the Board of Management constitutes a serious offence, will be dealt with by detention, suspension or expulsion.

REMEMBER; respecting your teacher means following the teacher's instructions the first time asked.



8: SCHOOL RULES EXPLAINED

8.1: That you come to school every day and arrive on time.

This means:

- i. That you attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable. Any absence from school without permission is regarded as being a particularly serious transgression of the rules.
- ii. That if you miss school, either for a whole day or a partial day, a note is supplied via the Compass app, from your parent/guardian on the day you are absent.
- iii. That if you are regularly late, you are disrupting the learning of other students in the class, and may be assigned a lunchtime detention in order to discourage lateness.
- iv. That if you must leave the school grounds during the day (this includes first break), you have the necessary note via Compass **and** you sign out at the office once your parent / guardian is present in reception to collect you. If a student does not follow the full signing-out procedure (note – collection – sign out), they will receive a lunchtime detention the following day for a first offence. Repeat offences will result in a Friday detention / in-school suspension.
- v. All appointments should be made outside of school time where possible. Students who miss classes due to appointments / absences are expected to get their homework from a friend.
- vi. That you proceed to all classes without delay and arrive on time – otherwise you will be marked as late and this will incur a -1 sanction.
- vii. That you do not go to the toilets/lockers between classes without your teacher's permission.
- viii. That you behave yourself on the way to and from school and on any activity related to the school or while wearing the school uniform.

Purpose:

- Time missed is hard to make up.
- The school is entitled to an explanation for your absences.
- It is expected that a late arrival to school be explained out of courtesy.





- Arriving late for class wastes your time, the teacher's time, and class time.
- Going to the toilets/lockers between classes without permission delays the start of class.

8.2: That you come to school in uniform, clean and tidy.

This means:

- You wear the school uniform in school at all times, while representing the school, and at all school related activities, other than instances where the school uniform is expected not to be worn. Students going on supporters buses or on school related trips (such as plays / debates / quizzes) are expected to be in full school uniform and will not be allowed to attend if they are not in uniform.
- An exception to this relates to times at which you have PE which requires gear as specified by the PE teacher.
- Students should have back-up items of uniform as excuses such as uniforms in the wash / ripped / dirty etc. are not acceptable. Students presenting excuses like these may not be admitted to class and parents may be contacted to have the appropriate items brought to the school, or to bring their son home.
- The official uniform consists of:
 - Blue shirt, round-neck crested jumper, grey trousers, black shoes and if necessary, a prescribed mask.
- Students may not be allowed to attend classes wearing jeans or tracksuit bottoms. Defacing or altering items of the school uniform is not permitted and will be regarded as not conforming to uniform rules.
- All students should have a neat, tidy and natural looking hairstyle, suitable for school. Hair should have one natural colour—no stripes or multi-coloured styles.
- Students may wear one single stud earring. No other type of earring including drop, cluster, dangle, spacer, hoop, threader etc. may be worn.
- Eye, nose, lip etc. piercings are not allowed for any students. No plasters are allowed to cover up piercings; no excuse is accepted for wearing piercings, or plaster covers etc. Students may be compelled to remove such items before being allowed to attend



- classes. Parents may be required to have students taken to appropriate medical personnel for the removal of such items before students can continue to classes.
- ix. The Uniform Coordinator or teachers will carry out uniform inspections and may impose sanctions on students who are not complying with the rules on school uniform. These may include uniform referrals (which will incur a minus 1 penalty on Compass) or the student may be sent home to change by the Principal.
 - x. Caps, hats and scarves are to remain in your school bag for the duration of the school day.
 - xi. Consuming and/or being in possession of products containing nicotine such as cigarettes, vapes, gum etc. e.g., Snuss, tobacco, liquids etc. is forbidden in school and anytime you are wearing the school uniform, representing the school, or when engaged in any school activity.

Purpose:

- Students should wear their uniform with pride, be dressed suitably for school activities and be good ambassadors when representing the school in uniform.
- Hair style/colour should be in keeping with a dress code for school.
- Wearing certain jewellery can be dangerous—it should be left at home.
- Caps, hats and scarves can be a distraction in class.
- Consuming nicotine is unhealthy.
- Students should always be good ambassadors of their school.

8.3: That you have respect for people and for property.

This means:

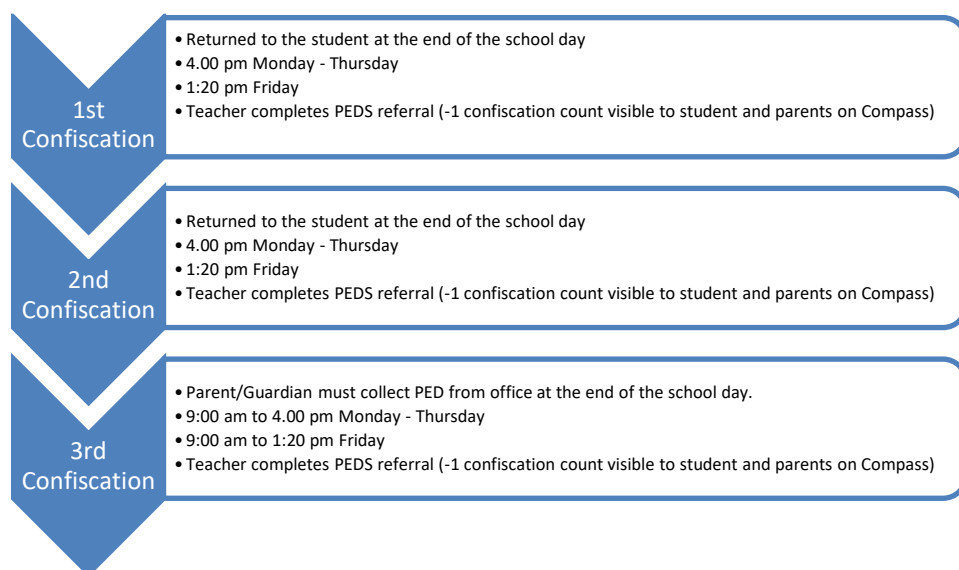
- i. Being helpful and treating other students, all staff and visitors to the school with good manners and respect.
- ii. Students are expected to respect the instructions of staff. Defamation, harassment or abuse of staff members or students on social networking sites or any internet site or other medium will be dealt with very seriously and sanctions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion may be imposed.



- iii. Students are expected to use respectful and appropriate language at all times. This includes avoiding casual expletives and any language that is offensive, inappropriate, or disrespectful. Our school promotes a culture of positive communication, and all members of the school community should contribute to a supportive and considerate environment through their choice of words.
- iv. Not picking on or bullying of others either in person or on social media / message forums.
- v. That you don't push or shove your way around the corridors.
- vi. That you don't use offensive or abusive language.
- vii. That you use the litter bins in class and in the school grounds.
- viii. That you do not spit.
- ix. That you do observe any social distancing rules that may be in operation.
- x. That you observe recommended hand and respiratory hygiene.
- xi. That you do not deliberately put the health of any other person in danger.
- xii. That you respect school property and the property of other people.
- xiii. Reporting any accidental damage that you may have caused.
- xiv. Chewing gum is totally forbidden in the school buildings and grounds.
- xv. A high standard of loyalty and personal behaviour is expected from the students of the school.
- xvi. Politeness, courtesy and respect for all members of the school including staff and fellow students is required at all times.
- xvii. Picture/video phones/recorders or camcorders are allowed for use in the school or school grounds only with the permission of the Principal. Phones are permitted in school only when they are required for essential communication with parents or for medical reasons.
- xviii. PEDs (including all phones) should be switched off and not be visible at any times during class, at break of class times, used in corridors during class time, or during morning break or lunchtime on the school grounds, except with the express permission of the teacher and/or Principal/Deputy.



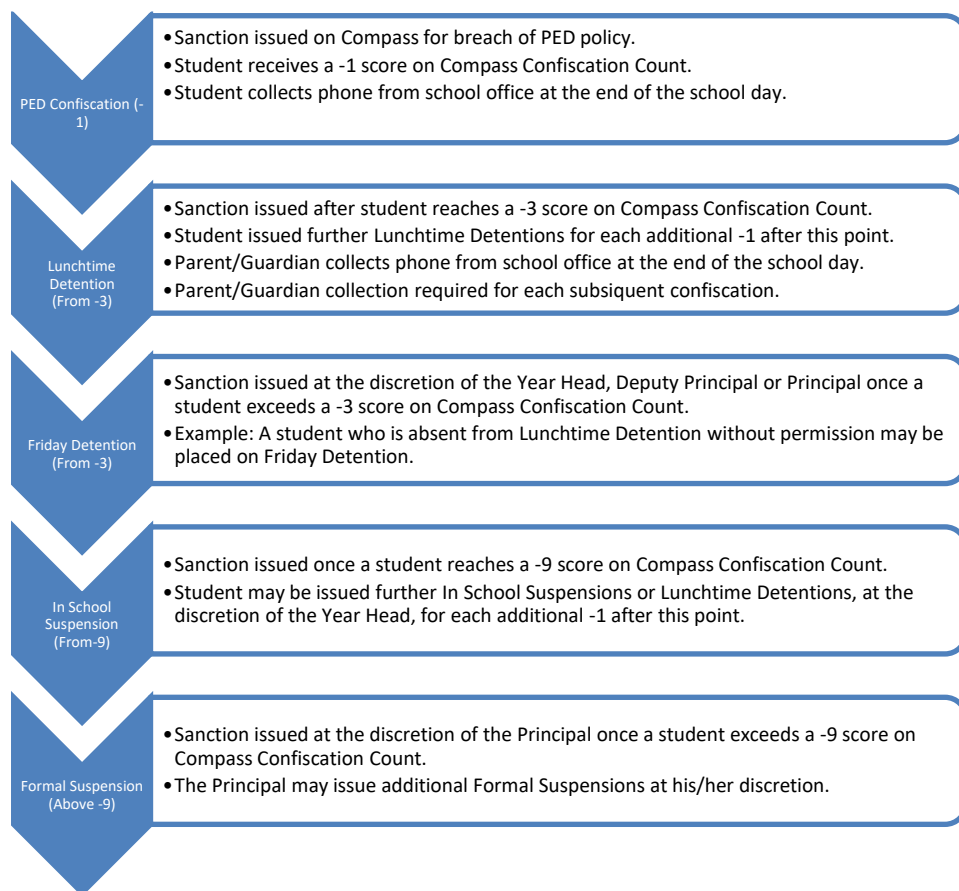
- It is strictly forbidden to photograph/film/record another person as it violates a person's right to privacy and dignity without their express written/oral consent. Taking photographs / videos / recordings in classrooms or anywhere on the school premises may result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
 - Sharing photographs / videos / recordings on social media or with any third party may also result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion. The number of days suspension will be determined on the basis of the action(s).
- xix. Any PED equipment seen, heard or used in school may be immediately confiscated by teaching staff. The teacher will take the phone/device, write details on a labelled envelope and send it to the office with the student, or to the Deputy Principal if the office is closed. No responsibility will be taken for loss or damage.
- xx. The teacher will then record the confiscation as a chronicle entry which will incur a minus one on the system. Minus points for confiscation of PED's will be reset annually at the start of the academic year. The points count will run independently of the referral and lateness count and any related sanctions will stem from PED confiscations only, as outlined below.



- xxi. Inappropriate use of PEDs in school or on school-related activities will be dealt with as per the sanctions outlined below which are taken from the 'St Gerald's DLS College



Personal Electronic Device (PEDs) Policy available on the school website or on request from the office.



- xxii. Failure or refusal to hand over the PED at any time is a serious offence and will be referred to the Year Head or Deputy Principal.
- xxiii. The school building, furniture and equipment are to be treated with the utmost care. Any student who damages school property will be required to make good the damage.

Purpose:

- Like you, school staff and visitors are entitled to good manners and respect.
- Teachers are entitled to your respect and cooperation.
- Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery.
- Pushing can lead to accident or injury.
- Offensive or abusive language shows disrespect and can cause hurt.
- Keeping the school environment pleasant and litter free is everyone's responsibility.



- Spitting makes the school grounds unpleasant and may spread infections.
- Personal Electronic Devices are permitted in school only when they are required for in-class educational purposes, essential communication with parents, or for medical reasons.
- You would expect the same respect for your property.
- The school authorities might have no other way of knowing if damage is caused to property or equipment.
- Chewing gum destroys flooring, school furniture, tarmac etc. It is a possible health hazard.

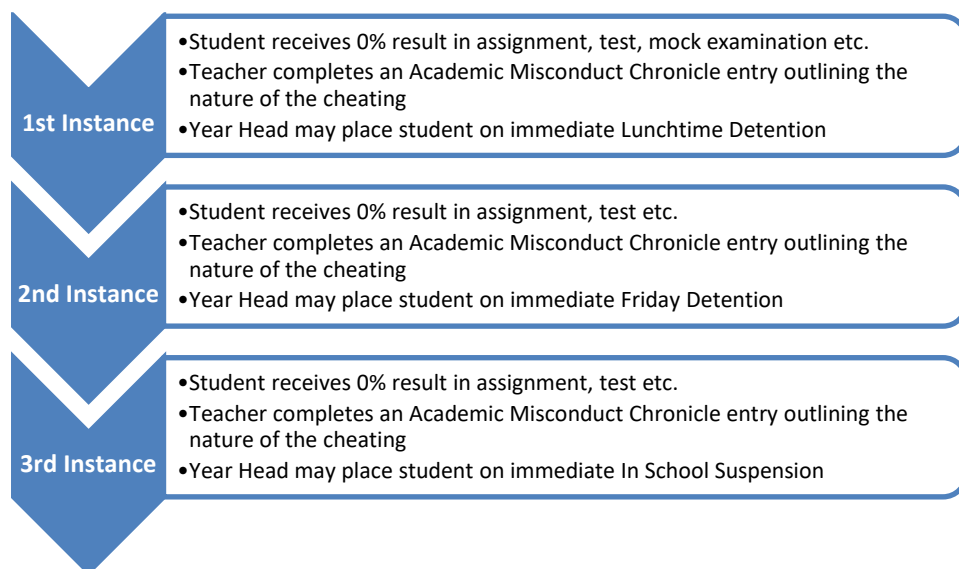
8.4: That you do your best in class and at your homework.

This means:

- i. That you listen to your teachers and observe classroom expectations of behaviour.
- ii. That you don't disturb the class or the learning of other students.
- iii. That you respect the right to education of the majority of students and it must not be subverted by a disruptive minority.
- iv. That you sit with four legs of your chair or stool on the floor at all times.
- v. That you do your homework each night, written and oral.
- vi. That if you need to leave your classroom, you must get permission from the teacher.
- vii. That you help keep your classroom tidy.
- viii. That you do not use improper assistance, including the use of AI, to complete assigned work and/or tests or exams. Examples of improper assistance defined as cheating are:
 - a. Copying/scanning papers or pages of homework assignments or submitting any work that belongs to another person or other forms of AI intelligence.
 - b. Giving or loaning assigned work to another student to be submitted or copied.
 - c. Using papers/reports/projects or any portions thereof without appropriate citation, that are posted on the Internet or taken from other sources.
 - d. Engaging in any form of cheating during a quiz, test or exam will result in the student receiving 0%. Students caught cheating during mock examinations will receive 0% and the examination will not be sent away for correction.



- e. Giving information about a quiz, test or exam to any other students and/or receiving information about a quiz, test or exam from anyone other than the teacher.
- ix. Improper assistance in the completion of assigned work and/or tests or exams defined as cheating will be dealt with as per the sanctions outlined below:



Purpose:

- The teacher is trying to help you.
- Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn.
- All students have a right to participate in all their classes without interruption by a disruptive minority. The teacher should not have to spend valuable class time dealing with a disruptive minority.
- All students are entitled to an equal share of the teacher's time and attention. All students should feel free to contribute positively to their lessons without fear of bullying or interruption. Students who continually disrupt the education of the majority may be subject to serious disciplinary sanctions including detention, suspension and removal from class.
- It is dangerous to swing back on two legs of your chair and it may damage the chair.
- Homework is a back-up to the work done in class.
- It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves.



- Cheating in exams and assignments is unacceptable, lazy, shows disregard for others and may lead to embarrassment and reputational damage.

8.5: That you come in properly prepared for your subjects.

This means:

- i. That you have the proper P.E. gear, pens, books, copies, etc. required for each class.
- ii. That you bring in any special materials/equipment needed for class and ensure that they are charged and operational as necessary. Failure to have a charged Chromebook may result in a referral.
- iii. Items not required for class e.g., magazines, iPods, MP3 players etc. will not be brought into the classroom. Mobile phones and PEDs will remain powered-off and out of sight at all times in the classroom unless otherwise directed by the teacher.
- iv. All bags, books and Chromebooks be kept in good condition and free of graffiti.
- v. That you will be responsible for the safe custody of your own property.

Purpose:

- It only wastes time if you haven't got your pens, books etc.
- It is impossible to do subjects without the materials/equipment needed.
- Having items not needed for class causes distractions and wastes time and may be confiscated.
- Graffiti can offend. Neatness helps students stay organised.
- You are old enough now to look after your own property.

8.6: That you act in a proper manner around the school.

This means:

- i. Walking in an orderly way between rooms, obeying the one-way system.
- ii. You must line up outside the room for each class and wait quietly for your teacher.
- iii. You should avoid loitering in the toilets during the break times or any other times.
- iv. That eating and drinking is allowed within the school building only at specified times and areas.



- v. Students are expected to use respectful and appropriate language at all times, refraining from offensive, derogatory, racist, sexist or any inappropriate remarks in all areas of the school. Deliberate use of offensive, threatening or abusive language to either staff, students or the public may result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
- vi. Taking your break in the manner and area specified and obeying the instructions of the teachers on duty.
- vii. That you don't break, damage or deface school property.
- viii. That you must report to a teacher should you notice graffiti or damage to school property and especially if you notice graffiti on your own desk or chair.
- ix. Consuming and/or being in possession of products containing nicotine or any mood-altering substance (e.g., THC, HHC, CBD etc) such as cigarettes, vapes, gum, tobacco, liquids etc. is forbidden in school and anytime you are wearing the school uniform, representing the school, or when engaged in any school activity.
- x. That there is an absolute ban on knives, lasers, water guns and any offensive or potentially offensive weapons. Students found to be in possession of any of these items may face sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion.
- xi. That possession or use of alcohol, drugs, illegal substances or drugs paraphernalia on the school property or on school related activities is forbidden and will not be tolerated and students may face sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Possession of illegal substances/drugs will also be reported to the Gardaí.
- xii. Students bringing bikes, scooters, e-scooters or similar vehicles to school must ensure they are locked at all times. Riding of such vehicles in the school grounds is forbidden.
- xiii. Students are also prohibited by the school insurers from parking their cars on school grounds, including the car park in front of the De La Salle Hall, due to insurance liability concerns. Students are not encouraged to drive to school but should they have cars they must park their cars in an appropriate designated parking area outside of the school grounds and will be asked to move their car immediately if they park in the DLS carpark. Sanctions will result in Friday detention and repeated faults will result in suspension.



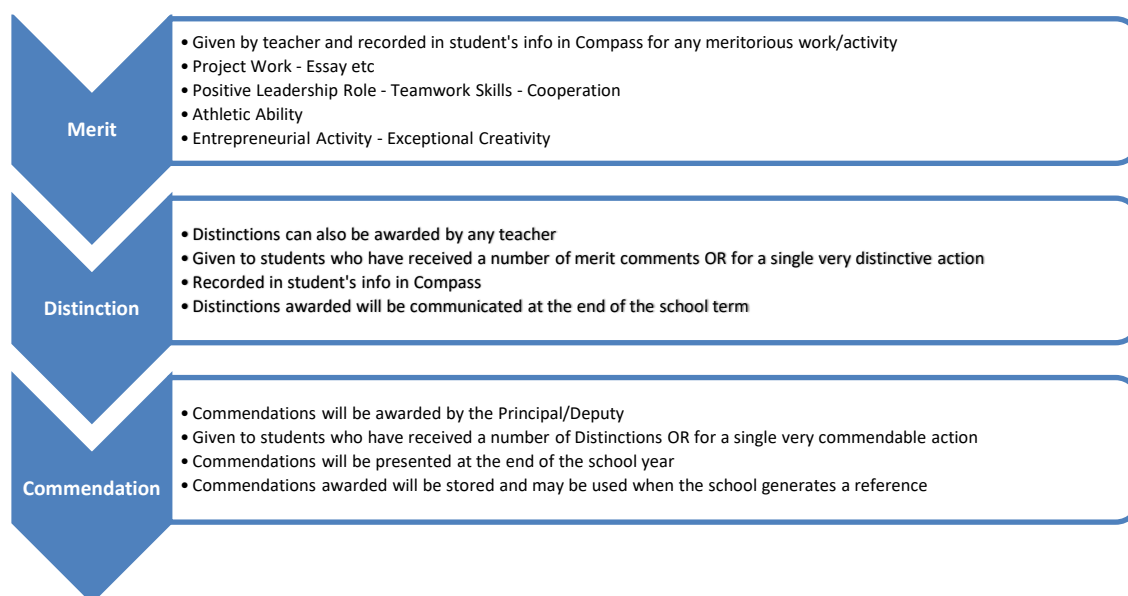
Purpose:

- The one-way system avoids confusion and accidents.
- Lining up quietly is safer.
- Loitering in toilets leads to congestion.
- Specified times and places for eating/drinking helps to keep the school clean and pleasant.
- Obeying break time rules and teacher's instructions is safer and helps with supervision.
- Others have to use school property and repairs/replacements are expensive.
- Everyone is responsible for helping to keep the school environment pleasant.
- Smoking or vaping on the school premises is prohibited by law, and besides, it is unhealthy and dangerous.
- Knives, lasers etc. are banned for very obvious safety and legal reasons.
- Substance abuse is dangerous, unhealthy, addictive and illegal. It can cause misery and in the longer term may even destroy a young person's life.
- The school insurance policy does not cover theft of student property.
- The school insurance policy does not provide cover for students driving in the school grounds.
- Students should not bring the name of the school into disrepute causing conflict with community members.



9.0: Systems for Acknowledging Positive Behaviour, Progress and Effort

9.1: Student Affirmation Intervention



9.2: Merit

A 'Merit' notification is awarded via Compass Chronicle to any student who has demonstrated any meritorious work or activity. This may include classwork, homework, project work, positive leadership, teamwork, cooperation, athletic ability, entrepreneurial ability, musical ability, creativity etc.

The purpose of the 'Merit' is to offer positive encouragement to the student in the hope that they come to understand that effort makes them resilient and develops a Growth Mindset and they will continue with the positive behaviour identified and may then be awarded a 'Distinction' in the future.

Students may be awarded multiple 'Merits' by the same teacher for different positive behaviours. Parents/guardians are automatically notified of the award via Compass.

Our goal is also to help each student on the road to becoming a '*Daonchara*', that is, to be a humanitarian or philanthropist. We believe in the philosophy described in the Irish seanfhocal '*Ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid*' which means, 'we live in each other's shadow'. Any student who has contributed to this goal should also be considered for at least a 'Merit'.



We would hope that teachers award 'Merits' to some students in each of their classes at the end of each week.

9.3: Distinction

Where a student produces work, demonstrates actions/skills or is involved in an activity that a teacher considers to be very good, that student should be awarded a 'Distinction'.

The teacher must feel that it is particularly outstanding, more significant than a 'Merit', and/or that an exceptional amount of effort has been put into it.

A student may be awarded a 'Distinction' without first having been awarded a 'Merit'

Typically, a teacher might award 1-3 distinctions per class in any given assessment term. This should give students a measure of the level they should seek to reach in order to achieve such an award.

It is important to acknowledge that Distinctions will not be restricted exclusively to written work so that students come to understand that effort in all areas makes them resilient and develops a Growth Mindset. It can be for non-academic achievement also, for example if student breaks the SGC "bleep test" record in PE, or creates an exceptional piece of Art, this shall be considered worthy of a distinction. Awarding a distinction is entirely at the discretion of the teacher and the Principal or Deputy Principal. Any attempts by students/parents to lobby or pressure teachers to award a distinction shall immediately disqualify them from attaining such an award. In the interest of fairness two teachers cannot give a distinction for the same piece of work.

9.3: Commendation

Where a student receives several distinctions in the academic year, they shall be awarded a Commendation, at the discretion of the Principal. This shall constitute a certificate, which shall be awarded at the annual Awards celebrations.

In very rare cases, a truly extraordinary achievement may result in the student being awarded a Commendation without needing to attain several distinctions.



10: How Students, Staff and Parents Can Help Each Other to Meet the Standard

Expected in the School

Students, staff and parents can help each other to meet the standards expected in the school by promoting the key values the school has, respect for all and only engaging in activities that promote and establish the development of the students of the school physically, socially, spiritually, morally, aesthetically and academically. Promoting and developing a sense of responsibility towards self and others in the school community is central to our school's ethos. All members of the community should seek to uphold these traits and hence the standards that have been set forth in this code of behaviour. The Code of Conduct (both good and bad behaviour) will be discussed at assemblies by the Principal / Deputy Principal / Year-Head and in SPHE / Wellbeing classes and indirectly during RE lessons on moral topics so that students come to an understanding of praiseworthy, expected behaviour and the reasons behind behaviour that is not tolerated.

11: Where Parents or Students can get Help when Problems Arise

Parents and students are advised to contact the teacher or Year Head where a problem arises. Email addresses of all teachers are available on the school website under 'Staff' and can be found under 'Favourites' on Compass. Parents or students may speak to an individual teacher regarding an issue to seek advice. Parents may also contact the Principal/ Deputy Principal in relation to matters of urgency.

NOTE: Parents wishing to make contact with a teacher should do so initially by email.

12: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

12.1: Introduction

This section outlines the consequences of unacceptable behaviour and what happens when students do not follow the Code of Behaviour.

This code of behaviour has always run parallel with a system of care, which is intended, through the Year Heads and the school Counsellor, to help students through their years in the school. However, from time to time it is necessary to invoke the school disciplinary code. In order to help parents and students understand how this is operated the following outline



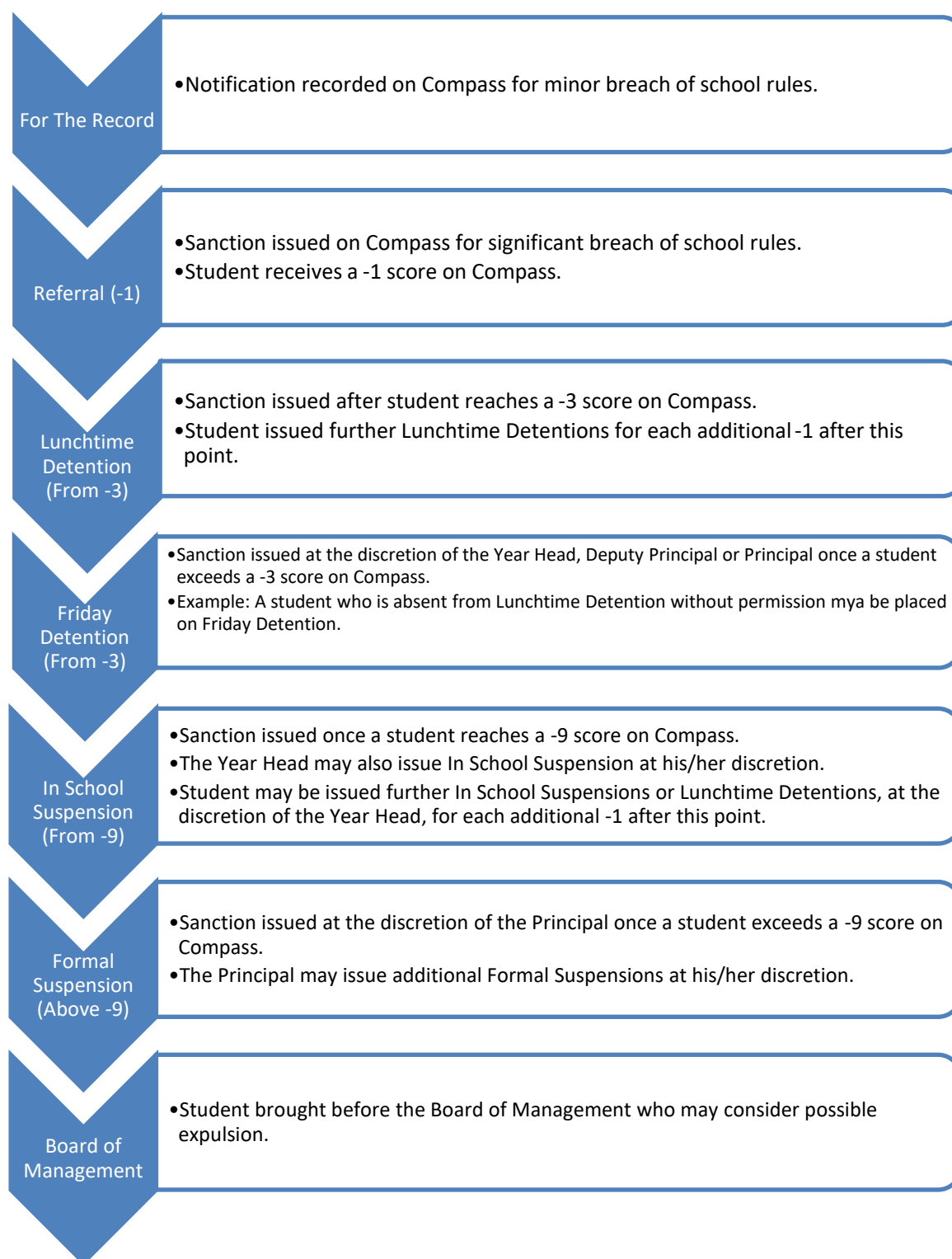
Code of Behaviour



of the procedure is enclosed. It is important to note that both detention and suspension are seen as indicating the school's strong displeasure at the actions of a student. They should be viewed as a warning to the student and that such misbehaviour must cease or further sanctions, including expulsion can result.



12.2: Code of Behaviour Sanctions





- i. The Principal has sole authority under the code of behaviour to issue any sanction up to Formal Suspension to any student subject to the principles of **Natural Justice and Fair Procedures**.
- ii. The Deputy Principal has authority under the code of behaviour to issue any penalty up to In-School Suspension to any student subject to the principles of **Natural Justice and Fair Procedures**.
- iii. Year Heads have authority under the code of behaviour to issue any sanction up to In-School Suspension to any student subject to the principles of **Natural Justice and Fair Procedures**.
- iv. Students who have been referred for minor misbehaviour will find those misdemeanours filed for future reference should the student engage in a serious breach of the code of behaviour. The accrued referrals for minor misbehaviour will be expunged in a new school year.
- v. **Data Protection:** All personal information recorded will be stored securely by the school and will be used for the purposes of the disciplinary action. These forms will be retained by the Principal for the duration of 7 years after the student leaves school. This information will not be disclosed to any third party without the students' consent, except where necessary to comply with statutory requirements or to provide normal services. Internally, your information will be kept confidential and only made available as necessary. You may, at any time, make a request for access to the personal information held about the student.

12.3: Lunchtime Detention

Lunchtime detentions are held in school on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Failure to attend or late attendance at a Lunchtime Detention may lead to a Friday Detention or In-School Suspension. Students must bring books and/or suitable school work with them. Failure to bring suitable work may result in them being refused entry and the detention being rescheduled. Students on Lunchtime Detention are informed in advance via Compass.



12.4: Friday Detention

Friday Detention will be held in the school from 13.45 to 15.00 every Friday, or as required. A student may be assigned a Friday Detention by his Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. All students must attend any assigned Friday Detention as per the date shown on Compass. Failure to attend or late attendance at a Friday Detention may lead to additional Detentions and/or In-School Suspensions. Students must bring books and/or suitable school work with them. Failure to bring suitable work may result in them being refused entry and the detention being rescheduled. Students on Friday Detention are informed in advance via Compass.

12.5: In-School Suspension

This sanction may be assigned by the Year Head, Deputy Principal, or Principal, and takes place in school for the duration of a full school day. Notification will be posted on Compass for both student and their parent/guardian. Students will be required to undertake prescribed work and will be given an opportunity to catch up on school work.

12.6: Formal Suspension

Formal Suspension may be assigned by the Principal only and means that a student is required to absent himself from school for a specified limited number of school days. It may be deemed necessary after several In-School Suspensions, or for a single serious instance of misbehaviour (violence / sharing of images on social media or to a third person / drugs possession / bullying etc), or for repeated instances of less serious misbehaviour. Notice is sent to parents/guardians.

12.7: Contract of Good Behaviour

Following an In-School or Formal Suspension, a student may be asked to sign a *Contract of Good Behaviour*. This contract will also be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s).



12.8 Restorative Justice

Our approach to behaviour is grounded in **restorative practices** that prioritise repairing harm, restoring relationships, and fostering accountability over punishment alone.

When incidents occur, we initially focus on understanding the impact on others, taking responsibility, and making amends.

- **The Year Head** leads initial restorative conversations with students and coordinates responses to recurring or serious concerns, liaising with parents and subject teachers and the guidance counsellor where applicable.
- **The Deputy Principal** oversees restorative conferencing (if suitable) as an alternative / in addition to detention / suspension for certain incidents, bringing together those affected—students, staff, and families—to discuss what happened, who was harmed, and how to put things right.
- **The Guidance Counsellor** provides individual support where underlying social, emotional, or personal issues contribute to behaviour difficulties, helping students develop strategies for self-regulation and positive relationships.
- **The Anti-Bullying Coordinator** applies restorative approaches when investigating bullying incidents, ensuring both the student who caused harm and those affected have opportunities to be heard, understand impact, and agree steps toward repair.
- Following any suspension, a **structured reintegration meeting** led by the Year Head with the student, parents/guardians, Deputy Principal, and / or Guidance Counsellor (where appropriate) supports a positive return to school.
- Where ongoing support is needed, we work collaboratively with students to develop a support plan that reflects their voice and commits all parties to shared goals, rather than imposing a purely disciplinary response. Sanctions remain part of our framework when necessary, but our priority is always to help students learn from mistakes, rebuild trust, and re-engage with the school community.
- When behavioural concerns arise, the school will adopt a graduated response in line with the NEPS BESD Continuum, beginning with universal supports for all students, progressing to targeted interventions where required, and implementing intensive, individualised supports for persistent or complex difficulties. Restorative



conversations and practices will seek to identify and address the underlying needs, triggers, and functions of behaviour. Where difficulties persist, a functional assessment of behaviour may be undertaken to inform appropriate supports, interventions, and restorative actions that promote accountability, relationship repair, and positive behavioural change.

12.9: Note:

The list of behaviours and sanctions above is not exhaustive, a behaviour/event not specified above may be dealt with as the Principal deems appropriate at the time. The sanctions for such behaviour are also at the discretion of the Principal. At each stage of these procedures a full report will be entered in the school records by the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head or teacher.

12.10: Right of Appeal

All suspensions may be appealed to the Board of Management. Suspensions in excess of twenty days or expulsion may be appealed under Section 29 of the Education Act.

If you have any questions on these procedures do not hesitate to contact the Principal.

12.11: Lateness

Students arriving late to class causes disruption for all students. The school must try to discourage lateness among students in order to help them develop their timekeeping skills as well as minimising disruption for the students who are in class on time.

- i. If a student arrives late to class, he may be awarded a -1 score for lateness on Compass by the class teacher. Teachers will clarify with their students after what time of arrival they will be marked late.
- ii. NOTE: Lateness Compass scores are dealt with separately from Referral scores.
- iii. If a student reaches a score of -3 over the course of a term, he will be placed on a Lunchtime Detention.
- iv. He will continue to be placed on Lunchtime Detention for each additional -1 late received during the remainder of that term.



- v. NOTE: Lateness scores will be reset to zero at the start of a new term.
- vi. A student will not be marked late only if a note that he is attending an appointment is submitted **prior** to his late arrival.

13: School Policies Dealing with Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment

St. Gerald's DLS College has an Anti-Bullying Policy that deals with the areas of bullying. Bullying, harassment or sexual harassment is not tolerated in the school and will be dealt with as serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour as deemed appropriate. Defamation or abuse of staff members or students on social networking sites or any internet site or other medium will be dealt with very seriously and sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion may be imposed.

14: When and Where Behaviour will be Subject to the Code of Behaviour

Normal school rules and code of behaviour will apply to:

- In-school classes and activities
- School tours
- Out-of-school activities
- School buses
- Students in town during normal school days/times
- Online activity that directly relates to school

Breaches of the school rules may result in sanctions as outlined in this document.

15: Policies and Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion

Policies regarding suspension and expulsion of students have been developed at St. Gerald's DLS College, these are available on request on our school website or from the school office.



16: Procedures for Notifying the School About Reasons for Absence from School

Attendance at school is directly linked with student achievement and progress in school. Attendance for all students regardless of year is mandatory.

The school has a very structured way of dealing with reporting of student absence.

- Should a student be absent from school, parents/guardians are required to inform the school via the Compass app. In the event of a student absence not being communicated to the school on the day of the absence it is a mandatory requirement for parents to send a note via the Compass app that evening, or the following day at the latest. Medical certificates may be forwarded to the Year-head should they be available.
- Students who have unexplained absences on their attendance record may be subject to sanctions such as Lunchtime Detention, Friday Detention or In-School Suspension.
- All appointments for dentists, physiotherapy, etc., should be scheduled outside of school time as this is a major disruption to the student's education experience. Time lost in this manner is time the student may find difficult to make up in the future and which may add unnecessary pressure on students in school, which is not desirable.
- If your son needs to leave school during the day for an appointment / personal reason, please note that a note must be entered on Compass, and a parent or guardian must come to Reception to collect the student. The school secretary will then formally record the student as having signed out. Students can only leave if a parent / guardian collects them from reception.
- **Important:** Phone calls to the Secretary's office will not be accepted for granting permission for students to sign out.
- Leaving school without the appropriate permission is mitching and will incur an immediate sanction of lunchtime detention. Students who repeatedly leave school grounds without permission on the Compass app / being accompanied by a parent / guardian may incur sanctions up to and including suspension.



- Students returning to school after an appointment must also sign back in at the Secretary's office or Deputy Principal's office.
- Students who do not complete their end of year examinations, or have been absent for more than 20 school days during the year, may not be permitted to proceed to the next year in the school, unless the absence has been agreed with the Principal.
- The Child & Family Agency (TUSLA) guidelines, advise that when a student reaches 20 whole days of absences, his parents should be advised of this fact. The school Compass app, which all parents are required to use, notifies them of all absences, along with whether the absence has been explained by them, is still unexplained, or is a school activity etc.
- Yearheads should always be cognisant of the fact that persistent absenteeism may indicate neglect / welfare concerns and this needs to be delicately approached.

NOTE: Parents must not give their son access to their Compass app parent account. All students are able to login to their own Compass app student account.

- In line with the Education Welfare Act, in the event of a student accumulating 20 or more days of absence, the school is required to submit a School Absence Report (SAR) to the Child & Family Agency (TUSLA).
- The Principal, Deputy Principal, or Year Head may also submit a referral to TUSLA which is a request for assistance by a school that is concerned about a student's attendance and is seeking the intervention of an Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of any referral submission.

17: Procedures for Raising a Concern or Bringing a Complaint About a Behaviour Matter

Behavioural matters may be raised by a number of groups: staff members, students, parents or members of the public.



17.1: Staff Members

- a. Staff members may bring matters to the attention of the Year Head of the student concerned where appropriate.
- b. The Year Head will assess the behaviour complaint (with the assistance of the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator where appropriate) and suggest how to resolve it or suggest further disciplinary procedure in accordance with the sanctions laid down in this document / Bi Cineálta Policy.

17.2: Students

- a. Students may bring matters to the attention of their Year Head / member of staff who they trust as appropriate.
- b. Students are encouraged to bring any infringements or breaking of the school rules to the attention of their Year Head.
- c. In relation to bullying / forms of harassment, this should be communicated to the Year Head as a matter of course.

17.3: Parents

- a. Parents may bring matters relating to student behaviour that concerns them to the Year Head of their son.
- b. They may make representations to the Principal/Deputy Principal should they believe the matter requires their attention.

17.4: Members of the public

- a. Members of the public who wish to report misbehaviour of a student may contact the school and relate the nature of the complaint.
- b. The complaint will be directed to a suitable person following this.

18: The Plan for Reviewing the Code

- The code of behaviour is a living school document and will be formally reviewed every two years but not limited to this. If amendments are required, they may be approved



in advance of the two-year formal review. This review will involve stakeholder consultation – Student Council, Parents Association, staff and feedback will shape the changes and will take place between March 2027 - June 2027.

19: Approval of the Code of Behaviour by the Board of Management

This code was approved by the Board of Management of St. Gerald's DLS College.

The implementation of this policy will be consistent with the whole school planning process.

Signed: 

Patricia Melvin

Chairperson of BOM

Signed: 

Shaun Burke

Secretary of BOM

Date: September 8th, 2026

Code to be fully reviewed: May 2027

