



Coláiste Chill na n-Iníon Firhouse Community College

FIRHOUSE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Part A



This policy reviewed and was adopted by the Board of Management

Ratification of Policy Review

Signed: *Mick Duff*

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 28/04/2026

Signed: *Senan Nolan*

Principal/ Secretary to the Board of
Management

Date: : 28/04/2026

Next Review Date: April 2027

1.College Ethos

Firhouse Community College was established in 1982 to meet the second-level educational needs of the local community.

As teachers, we commit ourselves to work to fulfil this purpose with dedication and professional expertise.

As set out in the Admissions Policy in our school, Firhouse Community College is a state, co-educational, multi-denominational school underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education
- Care
- Equality
- Community
- Respect

We believe in the principle of education for all. We value the uniqueness of each member of our school community. We are committed to equality in all aspects of school life.

As educators, we are mindful of, and sensitive to, the changing needs of students as they grow towards adulthood. We commit ourselves to care for our students and to provide for their wellbeing. We also commit ourselves to care for our colleagues.

We endeavour to carry out our work to the highest standards. We strive to create a positive, respectful atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning and the personal development of every member of the school community. For this reason, we expect our students to share and uphold the values of our school.

In working as a team, we aim to assist you, the student, to:

- discover and realise your own potential
- Achieve the highest of your abilities
- Lead a rewarding and fulfilling life
- Strive for excellence
- Develop personal discipline in your life
- Respect and care for your own well-being and the well-being of others
- Understand and appreciate the values and traditions of our society
- Become good citizens
- Understand, respect and actively contribute to the community in which you live.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Firhouse Community College Code of Positive Behaviour reflects the ethos of the school and Dublin Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board. The Code of Behaviour includes the indicators of Well Being – **Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware**- all of which fosters positive behaviour. The Guidelines can be [accessed here](#).

This Code of Positive Behaviour is underpinned by the principles of fairness and consistency and aims to create an environment conducive to quality teaching and learning. The rules and standards of behaviour expected in Firhouse Community College are outlined in the students' journal and are signed by parents/guardians at the start of the school year. Parents and students are thereby informed of the procedures which will be followed and the sanctions which will be applied when misbehaviour arises.ⁱ

The Code of Positive Behaviour promotes active participation, by all members of the school community, in the nurturing of the students' wellbeing.

3.AIMS OF THE CODE

- To promote good behaviour and to encourage self-awareness.
- To create a respectful, inclusive environment in which teaching and learning can take place.
- To ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone in the College.
- To promote the development of the necessary skills to enable students to become responsible citizens.
- To develop respect for school property, the property of others and the school environment.
- To foster positive relationships with friends, peers, teachers and the wider school community.

4. POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The Code recognises the importance of good manners, courtesy, co-operation and respect for others and for their property. Students should be able to enjoy both learning and leisure time in a safe environment. School should be regarded as a place where they can relate in a positive manner towards all members of the school community. Acknowledgement of positive behaviour may take the form of:

- A quiet word of acknowledgement for a student by a teacher.
- Verbal praise from a teacher, tutor or any member of staff – for any positive behaviour/progress/achievement.
- A positive note on VSWare
- Display of student work / achievement.
- Acknowledgement of positive behaviour in the school's reporting system, including the school journal.
- Recognition of students in College Newsletters, on Instagram and on the College Website.
- Recognition of students during daily announcements.
- Student Awards.
- Class / Year group treats.

The College Rules form the basis of the **Code of Behaviour** and are connected to the provision of a good teaching and learning environment. Active and responsible endorsement of the Code, by the whole school community, fosters the development of positive relationships within the college.

5. COLLEGE RULES

- Students attend punctually every day, in full school uniform.
- Students attend all classes with the necessary books, materials and equipment.
- Students are expected to be honest, courteous, respectful and helpful to each other and to all members of the school community.
- Abusive or foul language is not permitted.
- In the interest of health and safety the one- way system should be adhered to.
- Smoking, including vaping is forbidden at all times inside the building, within the school grounds and in the vicinity of the school. Smoking is also forbidden on school trips.
- The use or possession of illegal substances including alcohol is forbidden in school or on school related activities.
- Chewing gum and liquid tippex are not permitted in the college.
- Car parking for students is limited to those with a full driving license. Students must apply to the Principal for a Parking Permit, providing a copy of their insurance and driving license.

6. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and Learning are core aspects of the classroom environment. Each student has a responsibility for making the right choices regarding their personal behaviour and co-operation. The school environment should also be kept clean and pupils should feel safe at all times while on the school premises.

7. SPORT & OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Sport, extra-curricular and out of school activities are an essential part of the curriculum in Firhouse Community College. Students who represent the College should regard this as an honour and treat it accordingly. They should at all times show respect for teachers, coaches, referees, opponents and any other person they come into contact with. The Principal has the final decision on who takes part in such activities.

8. ATTENDANCE & TIMEKEEPING

Regular and punctual attendance enhances student learning and is valued by the College. Parents / Guardians should use the journal to explain any absences or lateness. Parents/Guardians should notify the College in advance of any planned absence. All unexplained absences will be notified by text to parent/guardian on the morning/afternoon of absence. Parents will receive a letter regarding their son/daughter's attendance if they are absent for 5 or more days per month. The NEWB will be informed if a student is absent for 20 days or more.

9. BULLYING

Firhouse Community College endeavours to provide a positive and safe environment for the entire College community. Bullying in any form is totally unacceptable. When reported it will be acted upon immediately. Anyone who becomes aware of, or suspects such activity on the part of any pupil or pupils should inform an appropriate person in authority. In dealing with such matters, the greatest care is shown in recognizing the need to protect and support all victims and also to address problems encountered by those who engage in bullying.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY

It is in everyone's interest that the school should be a safe and healthy place. Every member of the school community has a responsibility to take the greatest care in avoiding accidents or putting others at risk. Students should be aware of health and safety statements and procedures recognising that there are particular dangers present in areas such as the corridors, practical rooms, laboratories, the sports hall, the canteen etc. Any student who becomes aware of potential hazards should immediately bring them to the attention of the teachers.

11. SCHOOL UNIFORM

- The full school uniform should be worn at all times.
- The college sports uniform must only be worn for sports related activities. For safety reasons, jewellery must not be worn during P.E. or any sporting activity or in practical classes.
- Jewellery, in general, must be kept to a minimum.
- For health and safety reasons piercings should be kept to a minimum and any jewellery worn should be small and discreet. Students may be asked to remove jewellery which is deemed either dangerous or inappropriate for school.
- Extreme hairstyles/colours are not appropriate for school and in certain circumstances a student may be asked to modify their hairstyle if deemed inappropriate for school.
- Make up should be kept to a minimum.
- Long/artificial nails which may be dangerous or make it difficult for students to complete their school work are not permitted.

JOURNAL

Each student must have a college journal. The journal is used to record all homework and allows for effective home-school communication. The journal must be brought to all classes, be available to all members of staff on request and should be kept neat and free of graffiti. Journals should be signed weekly by parent/guardian. All notes should be signed by parents/guardians.

HOMEWORK

Homework and study are an integral part of school life in Firhouse Community College. They are essential to the student's educational development and wellbeing. Homework allows each student to be active and responsible in their learning. It gives parents an insight into the type of work done by their own son / daughter and allows them to monitor how their son/daughter is progressing. Homework can help students to remember, understand, apply, analyse, and evaluate their learning. **(Please see our Homework and Study Policy for more information).**

MOBILE PHONES

Firhouse Community College has decided to enforce a complete ban on the USE of Mobile Phones for students in the school building, including the sports hall. Thus, the college will offer students a respite from the constant general distraction caused by mobile phones. The ban on the use of phones will also prevent disruption to teaching and learning.

- Mobile Phones should not be seen or heard in the school. Any student found in breach of this will be asked to surrender the phone. It is immaterial whether the phone is switched on or off.
- The phone will be stored in the office. It will be returned at 3.45pm that day. The incident will be recorded on VSWare. This record is for the parents' information.
- This will be noted in the phone record book in the office.
- For a third offence in a school term, parents/guardians will be required to collect the mobile phone from the office.
- Refusal to hand over a phone will be regarded as further disruption and may result in detention/suspension.
- Students who need to communicate with parents/guardians may continue to do so from the school office with the permission of Tutor /Year Head/Deputy/Principal.
- Students participating in school related activities (e.g. Study, Extra- Curricular Activities, School Trips, and Tours etc.) must abide by the rules governing these activities.
- The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost or misplaced.

If a student is found to be recording another member of the school community without permission, it will be dealt with according to the current legislation in line with Child Protection Guidelines. It will also lead to an automatic suspension from school.

Parents/Guardians who need to contact their children during the school day, should phone or call to the main office and messages will be relayed to the students, as necessary. Students who need to contact home may only do so through the school office.

LOCKERS

- Lockers are available to students on request for a small fee paid annually.
- Lockers are the property of the school and should be treated with respect.
- Students have access to lockers prior to morning registration, during lunch break and after school.
- Students do not have access to lockers during class as it causes disruption and interferes with teaching and learning.
- No student should interfere with the locker of another student.
- The school retains the right to check a student's locker if it is deemed necessary.
- Student lockers must be kept locked.
- Each locker must be vacated at the end of the school year and left unlocked for the holiday period.

Student Award System

In Firhouse Community College we recognise that the vast majority of our students engage in positive behaviour and we wish to reinforce and reward this through the Student Award System.

The system of **Student Awards** has been established to acknowledge and encourage our students. We believe that encouragement is vital to success and achievement in life and the Student Awards actively encourage students in a wide range of areas including: hard work, commitment, enthusiasm, leadership qualities, sporting skills, full attendance, artistic flair, musical talent. This list is not exhaustive.

The awards are presented bi-annually.

Children with Additional Educational Needs

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, Firhouse Community College recognises that students with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents, the tutor/yearhead and /or the SEN teacher. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

SEN students may be taught strategies to assist them adhere to rules. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

FIRHOUSE COMMUNITY

COLLEGE

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

PART B

Sanctions

*To be read in conjunction with part A:
'The Code of Positive Behaviour'*

THE SANCTIONS FOR DEALING WITH STUDENTS

Having defined the required behaviour, the Code outlines the sanctions when these standards are not met. In the majority of cases student behaviour is excellent.

JUNIOR CYCLE STUDENTS. (Appendix 1, Ladder of Referral)

- A note is put on VSWare by a teacher
- Extra work may be given by a teacher.
- Three behaviour notes on VSWare leads to detention.
- Detention is recorded in the journal and is signed by the parent/ guardian.
- Year heads will address students who miss detention.
- Generally if a student misses detention, they are given the opportunity to redo it, if missed on a second occasion it may lead to suspension.
- At the discretion of the Year head and Tutor, a student may be placed on a monitor sheet. In certain circumstances a student may be asked to follow a Contract of Behaviour.
- It is the responsibility of the student, when on a monitor sheet, to try to change the problematic behaviour and to focus on cooperation and adherence to the school rules.
- Parents must be aware that failure to improve problematic behaviour may result in further sanction up to and including suspension.
- Continued poor behaviour will result in meetings with Yearhead / Principal / Deputy Principal and parents/Guardians.
- If a student's behaviour continues to be problematic, having gone through some or all of the steps outlined above, the Board of Discipline may become involved.

SENIOR CYCLE STUDENTS

It is the responsibility of all Senior Cycle Students to engage positively and voluntarily in their learning

1. Persistent failure to comply with the Code of Behaviour of the College will result in the implementations of the sanctions outlined above.
2. It is hoped that Senior Cycle students would have an understanding of their responsibility to behave in a respectful and courteous manner and an awareness that aggressive and abusive behaviour is not acceptable.

ALL STUDENTS

While it will always be the aim of Firhouse Community College to resolve all behaviour issues working through the

various steps outlined, students must be aware that behaviour which:

- Breaches the college's Code of Positive Behaviour or
- Damages the reputation of another student or
- Damages the reputation of a staff member or
- Damages the reputation of the college

may lead to exclusion from the college.

SUSPENSION

Suspension will be given when the Principal or Deputy Principal is satisfied that the student has not responded to other forms of sanction for repeated misbehaviour. Contact is made with the parents/guardians to discuss the matter and to outline the conditions under which a return to school may be permitted.

In certain circumstances, a once off serious incident may also result in suspension and/or a referral to the BOM for exclusion at the discretion of the Principal/ Deputy Principal.

Prior notice is always given to the parent/ guardian before suspension and their right to appeal is also outlined.

THE BOARD OF DISCIPLINE

PURPOSE:

Convening the Board of Discipline is a later step in the disciplinary process of the College. The Board will sit to review the case of a student in persistent difficulty in school or to deal with a very serious breach of the Code of Discipline. The intention is that the Board will impress upon the student the gravity of his/her situation and offer guidance in how to positively change their behaviour. This may also act as a final warning before a student is referred to the Board of Management.

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD of DISCIPLINE

- Principal / Deputy Principal.
- A Year Head.
- Teacher representative.

(The Chairperson of the Board of Management may be invited to sit on the Board of Discipline, if available.)

The Principal or Deputy Principal will act as both chairperson and recording secretary.

REASONS FOR CONVENING THE BOARD OF DISCIPLINE

A Student may be called in front of the Board at the discretion of the Yearhead in consultation with the Principal /Deputy Principal. The student who comes before the Board will be accompanied by a parent/ guardian.

The Board of Discipline may recommend that a student attend before a Board of Management meeting.

EXCLUSION

When all steps of the disciplinary process have been exhausted, the Principal may then propose a Motion to Exclude to the Board of Management. The Board of Management will hear from both the school management and the student and parents/guardians before deciding whether to uphold or reject the motion to exclude. All decisions are open to appeal (under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998).



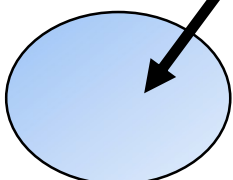
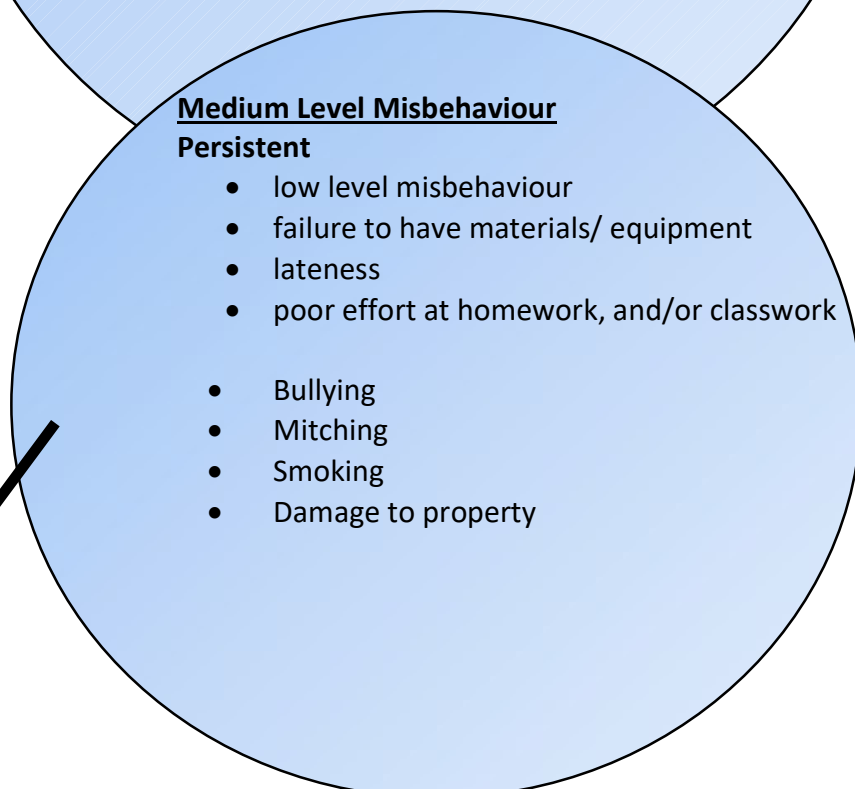
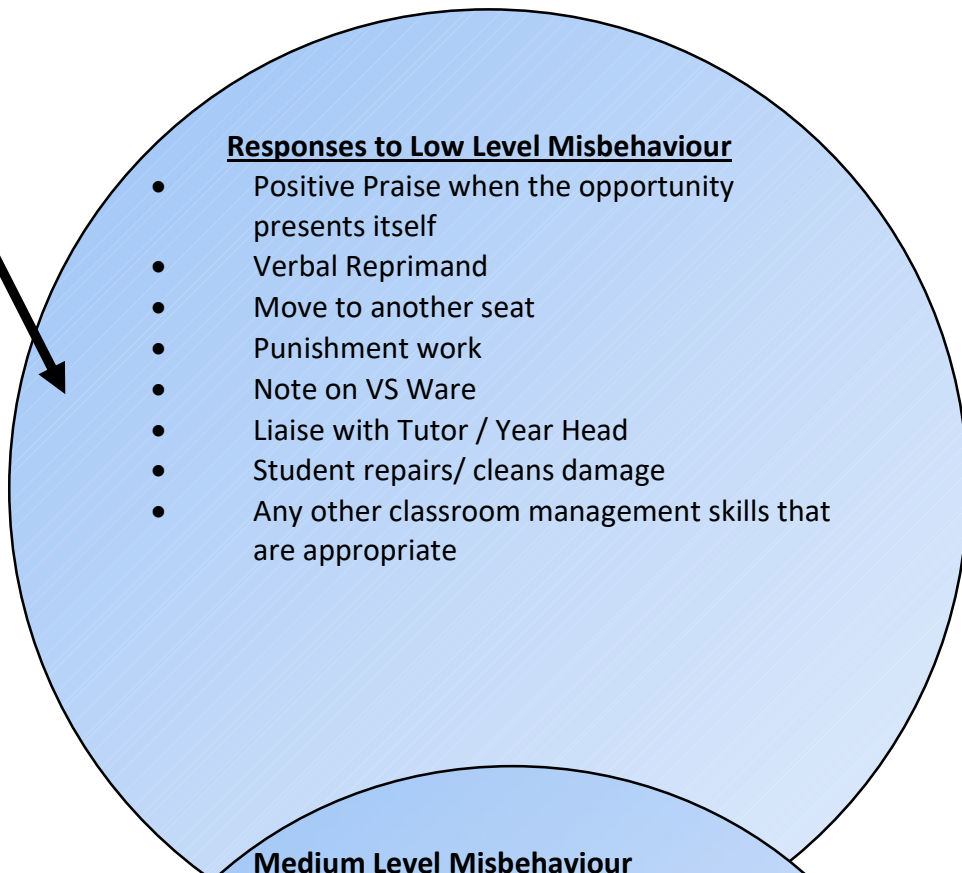
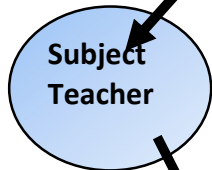
Appendix 1

LADDER OF REFERRAL

Low to Medium Level Misbehaviour

- Eating/ drinking/ chewing gum
- Disrupting or delaying Teaching and Learning
e.g. making noise, talking out of turn
- Slagging

- Throwing objects
- Ignoring or defying teacher
- Homework not done
- Poor effort at classwork
- Missing equipment/ Incomplete Materials
- Late for class
- Rudeness
- Bad language
- Interfering with property
- Poor corridor behaviour



Tutor

