



## **Code of Behaviour**

**2025-26**

**Loreto Secondary School, Bray, Co. Wicklow**

**January 2026**

**Code of Behaviour 2025 - 2026**



## **Introduction**

The code of behaviour is the set of policies, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well. Our code of behaviour helps the school community to promote the Loreto ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. It helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

The code helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported. The code of behaviour is a key tool in enabling the school leadership and management to support the learning of every student in the school.

Our code of behaviour has been developed in partnership with staff, students and parents. Throughout the process of developing the code of behaviour staff, students and parents were consulted and invited to express their views on the development of the code. The code of behaviour is reviewed annually by the Board of Management.

Our code of behaviour will help staff, students and parents continue to work together for a happy, effective and safe school environment where teaching and learning are valued and respected and positive relationships are maintained.

## **Content**

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 sets out certain requirements that must be included in a code of behaviour. In order to comply with these requirements, our code of behaviour addresses:

- the standards of behaviour expected in the school
- the plan for promoting good behaviour
- the ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- the plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- school procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

## **Scope**

The Code of Behaviour applies to all students while enrolled in Loreto Secondary School, Bray. The Code of Behaviour applies to students while they are in school, while they are on or near the school premises, while they are representing the school, travelling to and/or attending any off-campus school activity or activity in which they are involved as a student of the school

including trips and tours, sporting or cultural events, work experience etc.

Students are expected to follow the same standards and expectations of behaviour online, on social media and through any other forms of communication as they would in person.

In some cases, inappropriate behaviour committed by a student in her own time on a non-school device may be beyond the scope of the school's code of behaviour in terms of sanction or intervention. The school will however listen to the concerns of parents and students and provide support where possible subject to limitations. All cases involving the inappropriate use of social media will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### **Relationship to our Values, Mission and Vision**

In 1615, Mary Ward (Foundress of Loreto) identified the foundational Gospel values which she saw as 'altogether needful for those who should well discharge the duties of the Institute'. These values are: Freedom, Joy, Justice, Sincerity and Truth.

Our Code of Behaviour is determined within the context of these values which are the foundation for the school's mission and vision and which have at their core the holistic development and care of the student. The code of behaviour is an integral part of our Loreto school ethos where we aim to form young people of faith, of truth, of sincerity, seeking justice and freedom, in joyful service for the greater glory of God.

### **Goals of the Code of Behaviour**

The goals of our code of behaviour are to:

- Create a climate that encourages and reinforces positive behaviour
- Assist in maintaining a positive, caring and safe environment conducive to effective teaching and learning
- Encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour • Help students to mature into responsible participating citizens
- Build 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.
- To provide for a just, incremental and learning-focused programme of merits, rewards, sanctions and interventions in managing behaviour
- Provide for the co-operation and involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) in supporting the code of behaviour.

## Promotion of Good Behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of our code of behaviour. In living our ethos, we actively foster relationships, policies, and practices that help to promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour.

The following is a list of some strategies that are included in our everyday practice to encourage and promote good behaviour:

- Emphasising positive everyday interactions between staff and students •  
Employing good class routines
- Having clear boundaries, standards and expectations of behaviour
- Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour • Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour e.g. verbal praise or positive written comments from staff
- Recognition and acknowledgement at assemblies and/or in school publications •  
Exploring with students how people should treat each other
- Involving students in the preparation and revision of the school's expectations of behaviour and the Classroom Code

A copy of the school's code of behaviour is printed in the student journal, published on the school website and available from the school general office. The code of behaviour is taught to students at the beginning of the year and reference made to it in classes such as CSPE, SPHE and through other aspects of the curriculum.

### Merits (I REACH)

Our Merit programme forms part of the overall school strategy to promote positive behaviour and can be part of a planned intervention to help an individual student to manage their own behaviour. Students can earn merits throughout the year for:

**I**-Improvement **R**-Responsibility **E**-Effort **A**-Attainment **C**-Courtesy **H**-Helpfulness

In addition, students are automatically awarded a merit every half term if they have had full attendance and have not received a Poor Behaviour Point during that term. The focus is on earning merits i.e. canvassing for merits is contrary to the spirit of the merit programme and is not allowed. As students accumulate merits, they achieve Bronze, Silver or Gold level as follows:

Merit Level	No of Merits	Reward
Bronze	5	A letter of commendation is sent home from the principal
Silver	15	The student is: Given a treat Awarded a Silver Certificate of Merit Entered into a Prize Draw
Gold	30	The student is: Awarded a Gold Certificate of Merit Presented with a trophy on Prize Giving Day

Merit award ceremonies will take place at regular intervals throughout the year where relevant awards will be made.

## Standards of Behaviour

The school lives out the Loreto philosophy of education by striving to ensure that the values of freedom, joy, justice, sincerity and truth find expression in all our daily interactions. In helping to achieve this, the following are the standards of behaviour that the school expects from students in relation to their own learning and to that of their peers:

- Respecting everyone in our school community
  - Attending school regularly
  - Arriving to school and class, in full uniform, prepared and on time
  - Always doing your best to achieve your potential
  - Taking responsibility for your learning and behaviour
  - Helping to maintain and support a safe, positive and eco-friendly learning and teaching environment
  - Supporting our Loreto school ethos and participating fully in school activities
- Being the best version of oneself

These standards also signal the kinds of behaviours that are not acceptable in the school:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination)
- Behaviour that interferes with learning and teaching
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property
- Theft

The school's Standards of Behaviour express the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for learning and teaching. The Expectations of Behaviour and the Classroom Code translate these standards into practical guidance about the behaviour expected of students. They provide clear boundaries. They describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible individuals.

## Expectations of Behaviour

Students are expected to:

1. Treat everyone (fellow students, staff and visitors) with courtesy and respect; 2. Attend school on time every day and not leave at any time without school permission; 3. Participate fully in school activities and all aspects of school life;
4. Always behave in a manner that does not disrupt the daily learning and teaching; 5. Be punctual and prepared for class by having all necessary books, materials and equipment etc.
6. Complete and submit all homework and assignments on time;
7. Respect all school property and equipment and the property and equipment of others and co-operate in maintaining a clean, tidy and safe environment;
8. Wear the full school uniform in a proud, appropriate and respectful manner and wear clothing that is appropriate to the event in any non-uniform school activities; 9. Support and

carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Classroom Code; 10. Observe all health and safety regulations in the school and on the premises; 11. Not smoke/vape or use e-cigarettes in school or on or near the school premises; 12. Not bring into school or have on their person or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances and not have in their possession chemicals/implements/weapons likely to cause injury or harm.

### Notes

- A. This list of Expectations of Behaviour is not exhaustive and must be read in conjunction with all other associated school policies. Students are expected to follow and uphold the specific requirements and responsibilities of these school policies.
- B. Additions and/or changes to the Expectations of Behaviour and to the Code of Behaviour in general may occur throughout the school year. Such changes will be communicated to students and parents. Students are bound by any such additions and/or changes.
- C. In all cases the school leadership & management are the arbiters of acceptable standards and expectations of behaviour.

### Classroom Code

This Classroom Code aims to promote and maintain a safe, co-operative and positive learning and teaching environment for all. The Classroom Code flows from the school's Standards and Expectations of Behaviour.

The Classroom Code places responsibility on each student to:

- Arrive to class on time;
- Remove jackets at the beginning of class;
- Place their journal, books and equipment etc. needed for class on their desk;
- Participate to the best of their ability in the class;
- Respect that eating is not allowed, except during morning break or lunchtime and that chewing gum is not permitted at any time;
- Uphold the School Mobile Policy and other school policies;
- Keep the classroom in a tidy condition at all times and fulfill their duties on the Cleaning Rota;
- Use the bins provided for the correct disposal of litter and waste food etc.
- Only go to lockers at designated times;
- Respect the classroom facilities and equipment;
- Look after their own property and ensure that money or valuables are not left unattended in classrooms.
- Follow all additional rules/directions in specialist rooms/venues;
- At the end of the school day please:
  - Tidy up
  - Place chairs on desks
  - Close windows
  - Switch off lights



### **Attendance and Notification of a child's absence from school**

The School Attendance Policy and the Attendance Strategy set out the approaches that the school uses to promote high levels of attendance in the school, to prevent poor attendance, to intervene where attendance difficulties emerge and to provide support to students whose attendance is a cause for concern. Procedures for notification of a child's absence from school are also outlined.

The school is committed to ensuring that all students benefit fully from the education provided in the school. To achieve this, regular and punctual attendance and participation is essential. Put simply, absence from school means missed learning; without it, the learning process becomes fragmented and incomplete. Irregular attendance leads to students missing important lessons and school activities and therefore not fulfilling their true potential. The school maintains a culture of high expectations amongst all students, parents and staff for student full attendance, participation and learning.

### **The school's high expectations around attendance**

The school holds high expectations in relation to attendance and participation. • Each student is encouraged to take responsibility for her own learning and achieve her full potential through regular attendance and participation in class and school activities. • Throughout the curriculum, students are made aware of the incremental nature of learning and assessment and consequently, the implications for them of irregular attendance.

- The school's Attendance Reward system acknowledges excellent attendance and participation and recognises students who show significant improvements in attendance and participation.
- Reports to parents include a detailed breakdown of attendance for the period in question.
- A sense of belonging, connectedness and community in the school is developed through participation in school life and extra-curricular activities.
- Subject teachers and Form teachers continuously encourage students to strive for excellence in attendance and participation.

### **How Attendance is monitored**

#### ***Subject Class Registration***

Each subject teacher in each class throughout the day records the attendance and absence of students on the student database. The attendance data gathered daily by each subject teacher contributes to the subject teacher's academic record for each student and will be communicated to parents at Parent-Teacher meetings and in the student's journal or on the school app, if required. This attendance data will also be used by the subject teacher to alert the relevant Year Leader of attendance concerns in relation to individual students.

#### ***Daily Notification to parents of their child's absence***

Once attendance for the first class in the morning has been entered by the subject teacher, a text message is then sent to the parents of each absent student. The purpose of the text message is to alert parents that their child is absent from school.

### ***Written explanation for all absences***

Parents are responsible for providing a written explanation for all absences. It is school policy that reasons must be given in writing for any student absence on Compass.

If a parent/guardian telephones the school in advance to state the student will be absent, a note giving the reason for absence must still be provided on Compass.

In accordance with statutory obligations, the school will notify TUSLA if a student (under 16 years of age) is absent for 20 days or more **or** where the absence gives rise to concern.

The full Attendance Policy and Strategy is available on our website:  
[www.loreto-bray.com](http://www.loreto-bray.com)

### **Movement around school campus**

We are fortunate to have a large school campus and grounds. Consequently it is necessary to have bounds for students. Bounds are necessary confines within which the school can reasonably provide for the supervision of students.

#### **Out of Bounds areas**

The following areas are out of bounds for students during breaks. This means that students are not permitted in these areas:

#### **Indoors**

- The Apple Room corridor and both sets of stairs leading to that corridor •  
The cloisters behind St. Columba's
- The area at the emergency exit door between Rooms 10 and 11 (formally H block)

#### **Outdoors**

- The school gates at the front and back of the school
- Behind the Sports Hall
- Near the Open Door centre
- The outdoor area behind Rooms 10 and 11 (formally H block)
- The Basketball courts

### **Arrival to school in the morning**

Students are required to be in class, seated and ready for their first lesson at 8.45am each morning. Students should therefore arrive at school in plenty of time to go to lockers, organise books etc. before class begins. Buying snacks, lunches etc. must be done before the student arrives on the school premises. Students are not permitted to leave the school premises in the morning once they have arrived.

### **Morning Break**

No student is permitted to leave the school premises during morning break.

## **Lunchtime**

Other than 6th year students\* no student is permitted to leave the school premises during lunchtime unless students have pre-approved permission from the Principal,

## **After last class but before Supervised Study**

Students attending Supervised Study are not permitted to leave the school premises during the interval between the end of the last class and the beginning of Supervised Study.

## **During specific occasions/events**

Throughout the school year, various events take place where the structure of the school day is changed and normal classes do not take place e.g. Sports Day, Exam week etc. Specific arrangements are put in place for student breaks and for supervision of students during those breaks. Students are not permitted to leave the school premises during these breaks.

## **Safety at the entrance and exit of the school premises**

Because of the volume of cars entering and exiting the premises and the volume of cars on the Vevay Road, students are reminded to be vigilant and take due care when entering and leaving the school premises on foot. This also means that students should not be distracted by their mobile phones at these times.

Similarly, students are not permitted to approach the school gates during morning break or at lunchtime or to arrange to meet anyone at the gates.

## **\*6<sup>th</sup> Year student Privilege**

A privilege granted to 6<sup>th</sup> year students is that of permission to leave the school premises to visit the local Tesco shopping centre on the Vevay Road during lunchtime. With this privilege comes the responsibility to:

- Return to school on time before the next class
- Accept that the code of behaviour applies even when they are off campus at this time and that this privilege could be revoked if they are found in breach of the schools code of behaviour
- Play their part in the promotion of a green school (through what they buy at lunchtime)

## **School Response to Inappropriate Behaviour**

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour can happen. Even minor breaches of the code of behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the student's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a threat to the safety of students and staff. Where a student's behaviour disrupts the learning and teaching of other students, school leadership & management have to weigh the needs of that student with the needs of other students and staff.

### **The role of the Classroom Teacher**

The classroom teacher is the front-line source of help for students. As a leader of learning, and someone with an established relationship of trust, the teacher will have a strong influence with students. The classroom teacher will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies, thus minimising the need for other interventions. These strategies may include:

- Talking to the student
- The student may be directed to work elsewhere in the classroom.
- The student may be directed to take a few minutes cool-off time to sit quietly in a quiet area of the classroom.
- The student may be asked to meet with the teacher and work out a solution
- Verbal warning

### **The Role of the Form Teacher**

In monitoring the student's journal, the Form Teacher may also discuss with the student instances of inappropriate behaviour. The Form Teacher may also refer the student to their Year Leader.

### **The Role of the Year Leader**

The Year Leader takes a lead role in managing the overall behavioural environment in their year group. Working closely with colleagues, the Year Leader promotes a positive, constructive and effective approach by all to behaviour. In dealing with student inappropriate behaviour, the Year Leader will make interventions and/or apply sanctions as necessary.

### **The Role of the Deputy Principals and Principal**

As part of their overall role, the Principal and Deputy Principals provide leadership in the upkeep of an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment in the school. Each Deputy Principal has responsibility for three separate year groups each along with the relevant Year Leader. As part of the school's response to inappropriate behaviour, a student may in some instances be referred to the Deputy Principal. This will normally happen in cases of persistent minor breaches of the code of behaviour or in an instance of serious misbehaviour. In consultation with the Year Leader, the Deputy Principal will make interventions and/or apply sanctions as necessary. In the most serious of situations the student may be referred to the Principal.

The Principal and Deputy Principals reserve the right to become involved in any behavioural matter (or to request the relevant Year Leader to deal with the matter) if it is deemed that such involvement is necessary in the particular instance.

A member of staff may record details of unacceptable behaviour as a chronicle entry on Compass. Parents are advised to regularly check Compass to view teachers comments and chronicle entries. The Form teacher and Year leader will be notified regarding chronicle entries for your child also.

Inappropriate student behaviours vary widely in seriousness and as such, chronicle entries are weighted to reflect this:

Category of Behavioural Note	Types of behaviours*	Poor Behaviour Points (PBPs)
Serious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lateness to class;</li> <li>• Failure to do homework;</li> <li>• Low level disruption etc.</li> </ul>	1
More Serious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recurring no homework;</li> <li>• Leaving class without permission;</li> <li>• Recurring incorrect uniforms etc.</li> </ul>	2
Most Serious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious and persistent disruption of learning &amp; teaching;</li> <li>• Mitching;</li> <li>• Failure to complete a sanction etc.</li> </ul>	3
<p><b>* Note: <i>Types of behaviours are identified here for illustrative purposes. It is impossible to list and/or categorise all possible types of inappropriate behaviours that may occur. Each instance of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.</i></b></p>		

When a teacher gives a chronicle entry on Compass, the teacher will also indicate the level of seriousness of the behaviour by assigning the relevant PBP; 1, 2 or 3 (as above).

### **Ladder of Referral**

Learning and teaching are most effective in a safe and orderly environment. To that end, it is necessary to address inappropriate behaviour quickly, effectively and consistently.

Inappropriate student behaviours vary widely and as such, require different levels of intervention.

- If a student receives 3 PBPs it is her responsibility to report to her Year Leader. The Year Leader will then decide on an appropriate intervention and/or apply an appropriate sanction.
- Should a student receive a further 3 PBPs it is again her responsibility to report to the Year Leader who will again decide on an appropriate intervention and/or apply an appropriate sanction.
- If a student receives 9 PBPs she must again report to her Year Leader. At this point the Year Leader will refer the student to the relevant Deputy Principal for a formal meeting. Appropriate interventions and/or appropriate sanctions will also be applied.
- Should a student receive 12 PBPs, the student must report to her Year Leader who will again refer her to the relevant Deputy Principal. The parents of the student will be asked to attend a formal meeting to discuss the student's behaviour. Further appropriate interventions and/or appropriate sanctions will also be applied, including

reporting to the Deputy Principal on a daily basis.

- After this point, should the student continue to accumulate PBPs or show no significant improvement in behaviour, the student and parents may be required to attend a meeting with the Behaviour Review Committee\*, if appropriate.

The Behaviour Review Committee will implement appropriate interventions and/or appropriate sanctions and provide a formal report to the Principal.

- In the event of further breaches of the Code of Behaviour it may be necessary to suspend the student from school. (The School Suspension policy and Expulsion policy are detailed below.)
- Should breaches of the code of behaviour continue, further suspensions will ensue and/or involvement with the Board of Management. Expulsion may also be considered by the Board of Management. Expulsion of a student is a very grave step and one that is only taken in extreme cases of inappropriate behaviour.

### **\*Behaviour Review Committee**

The convening of the Behaviour Review Committee is one of the most serious interventions provided for by the code of behaviour. The Committee is convened by the Principal and comprises the relevant Deputy Principal, an Assistant Principal 1, the relevant Year Leader and a member of the Pastoral Care Team. The role of the committee is to meet with the student and her parents and review the behaviour of the student. The Behaviour Review Committee will implement appropriate interventions and/or appropriate sanctions and provide a formal report to the Principal.

### **Exceptionally Serious Breaches of the School's Code of Behaviour**

There are of course some exceptionally serious breaches of the School's Code of Behaviour which necessitate immediate action rather than progressing through the various stages of referral outlined above. In the event of an occurrence of an exceptionally serious breach of the School's Code of Behaviour, immediate action can be taken. Such action may include suspension or Board of Management expulsion.

### **Possible interventions which may be applied in response to inappropriate behaviour**

*Note: This is not an incremental list nor is it exhaustive.*

- Individual meeting with student
- Note/Telephone call to parent/guardian
- Meeting with parent/guardian
- Restorative practice meeting and/or peer mediation
- Behaviour Contract
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Reduced Timetable (In exceptional circumstances and for a limited time only)
- Contact with parent/guardian to arrange for the immediate collection of the student (Only

applies in exceptional circumstances for the safety and welfare of the student or for the safety and welfare of other members of the school community)

- Referral to a member of the Care Team
- Referral to a mentor
- Behaviour Review Committee
- Referral to the Deputy Principal
- Referral to the Principal

### **Possible sanctions which may be applied in response to inappropriate behaviour**

*Note: This is not an incremental list nor is it exhaustive.*

- Student performs a *School Service* task (removal of graffiti/litter assignment/tidying up classrooms at end of school day etc.)
- Additional work
- Lunchtime/after school/pre-school detention\*
- Withdrawal of a privilege (games, 6<sup>th</sup> year lunchtime privilege, trips/tours\*\*, outings, etc.)
- Temporary confiscation e.g. Mobile Phone
- Financial penalty – In the case of damage to school property
- Student placed on Report – Comment from each subject teacher at the end of each class for a period of time
- Suspension
- Expulsion

#### **\*Detention**

Detention is a period of time that purposefully takes place during the student's own time e.g. before school Monday – Friday or after school Monday - Friday. Detention takes place for either 1 hour or 2 hours duration depending on the number of poor behaviour points received by the student and the nature of the poor behaviour.

Detention forms part of the overall behavioural plan for the student and in the spirit of the code of behaviour it should be a learning experience for the student. The use of detention attempts to address the behaviour for which it has been assigned.

A minimum of 24 hours' notice is given to the student and the parent of the date and time of detention. The detention date and time will be written into the relevant day section of the journal. A text message will also be sent to the parent/guardian (at least 24 hours in advance) again giving the date and time of the detention. Once a student has completed her detention, this will be clearly stamped in her journal.

Failure to complete a detention is a very serious matter and may lead to further sanction under the school's code of behaviour.

#### **\*\*Withdrawal of a privilege - trips/tours**

A school trip/tour can only take place if we are happy that the tour has the safety and welfare

of the students at its core. If for any reason a student's behaviour, during the course of the year or immediately before the school trip/tour, gives rise for concern about their ability to behave appropriately while on a school trip/tour, then their place on the trip/tour may be reviewed. Similarly, if a student's attire is not appropriate for the proposed trip/tour then their place on the trip/tour may be reviewed. A review such as this may result in the loss of the non-refundable deposit and subsequent monies paid.

### **Suspension and Expulsion: Legal and Procedural requirements**

A proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour. As a school, we are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international Conventions and case law

#### **Fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice**

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- the right to be heard
- the right to impartiality

The right to be heard means that a student and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter; and that they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before suspension or expulsion are imposed.

The principle of impartiality in decision-making means that, where possible, the Principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Principal. The Principal is then free to take a view about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation.

#### **Involving the Gardaí**

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

#### **Suspension**

Suspension is defined as:

*requiring the student to absent herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.*

During the period of a suspension, the student retains their place in the school.

#### **Authority to suspend**

The Board of Management has formally delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend a student. In implementing a decision to suspend, the Principal shall adhere to:

- (1) The procedures for suspension as set down in the Code of Behaviour of the school.

## *(2) Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB:2008)*

In the event of the absence of the Principal on approved leave or school business, the authority to suspend is delegated to the designated Deputy Principal/Person-in-charge subject to the provisions of (1) and (2) above.

### **The grounds for suspension**

The decision to suspend a student will be on serious grounds such as:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students;
- The student's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to safety; • An incident (or incidents) of an exceptionally serious nature or gross misbehaviour that is repugnant to the ethos and values of the school
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property;
- Repeated deliberate and sustained breaches of the Code of Behaviour with the student having proceeded through the various stages of the Ladder of Referral

The list of grounds listed above is not exhaustive.

### **Factors that will be considered before suspending a student**

The factors that will be considered before suspending a student will include:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date (where relevant)
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension.

### **Suspension as part of a behaviour support plan**

Suspension can be part of a plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension can:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and the parents;
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions;
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

### **Suspension during a State examination**

Should it be necessary to suspend a student from school during a State examination, the suspension will be approved by the Board of Management and will be used where there is:

- a threat to the safety of other students and personnel

- a threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- a threat to the rights of other students to do their examination in a calm atmosphere • an exceptionally serious breach of the code of behaviour.

## Procedures in respect of Suspension

Fair procedures will be followed if proposing to suspend a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will

- A. inform the student and their parents about the complaint (Parents may be informed by phone or in writing)
- B. give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.

### The period of Suspension

In general, a student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed because of the seriousness of the behaviour or in order to achieve a particular objective.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed, the Board of Management has authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student is suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more.

These provisions enable school leadership & management to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures.

### Appeals

The decision of the Principal to suspend a student may be appealed to the Board of Management.

### Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. At the time when parents are being formally

notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and will be given information about how to appeal.

## **Implementing the suspension**

### **Written notification**

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. This will confirm:

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998, section 29).

### **Grounds for removing a suspension**

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### **After the suspension ends**

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

### **Re-integrating the student**

The school will have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. The Year Leader or a designated member of staff will also provide support to the student during the reintegration process.

## **Records and Reports**

### ***Records of investigation and decision-making***

Formal written records will be kept of:

- the investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- the decision-making process
- the decision and the rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

### ***Report to the Board of Management***

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

## **Report to TUSLA**

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a)).

## **Expulsion**

### **Introduction**

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

A student is expelled from a school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

### **Grounds for Expulsion**

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Repeated deliberate and sustained breaches of the Code of Behaviour with the student having proceeded through the various stages of the Ladder of Referral and where the school's other interventions and sanctions have failed

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a one-off offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code of behaviour could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student, member of staff or visitor
- Actual violence or physical assault against another student, member of staff or visitor
- supplying illegal drugs to others in the school
- Malicious and/or Criminal online behaviour
- An incident (or incidents) of an exceptionally serious nature or gross misbehaviour that is so repugnant to the ethos and values of the school, that expulsion is judged the proportionate response.

This list is not exhaustive.

### **Factors that will be considered before proposing to expel a student**

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

### **Procedures in respect of Expulsion**

The School will follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

**Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal** In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures:

- The Principal will inform the student and their parents in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- A meeting will be arranged with the Principal to give the parents and student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and a sanction is imposed.
- If the parents and students fail to attend the meeting, the Principal will write explaining the gravity of the issue, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting, and failing that, the duty of the Board of Management to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour.
- A record of the invitation issued and the response of the parents will be kept on file. **Step**

### **2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal**

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure that parents have records of the allegations against the student, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion

- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

### **Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing**

The Board of Management will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, will put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board will take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

**Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing** Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction. Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)). The student will not be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24 (1)).

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

### **Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer**

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance

- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned will be invited to come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24 (5)). A Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

#### **Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel**

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

#### **Appeals**

A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

#### **The Appeals Process**

An appeal may be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills in respect of a decision by a board of management to:

- permanently exclude a student from the school, or
- suspend a student from the school for a cumulative period of 20 school days in any one school year

Circular letter M48/01 *Appeal Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998* applies.

Section 29 Appeals Application Forms and further details are available on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

### Review of use of Expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

**Ratified by Board of Management:** 20th January 2026

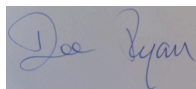
**Review Date:** June 2027

**Signed:** For and behalf of the Board of Management



*Michael Denny*

*Chairperson of Board of Management*



Dee Ryan

*Principal*