

Goldenbridge, Inchicore, Dublin 8.  
Tele 4541265 Fax 4734530 email [ololns.ias@eircom.net](mailto:ololns.ias@eircom.net)  
Webpage: [www.ololns.ie](http://www.ololns.ie)

## **Our Lady of Lourdes National School**

### **Code of behaviour Policy**

#### **Introductory Statement**

Our Lady of Lourdes N.S. is a co-educational national school with pupils from Junior Infants to 6th class. A culture of care, concern, support, interest and friendliness has evolved over many years in Our Lady of Lourdes N.S. and permeates all aspects of the life and work here. We strive, in cooperation with the parents, to provide a caring and secure environment where each child is encouraged to achieve to the best of his/her ability.

#### **Aims**

The aims of the code of behaviour are:

- To approach relationships restoratively
- To create an atmosphere that encourages good behaviour
- To set high expectations for good behaviour
- To create a happy and safe place for teaching and learning
- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their behaviour
- To build positive relationships and respect among, students, parents and staff using restorative practices
- To ensure the standards are clear, consistent, widely known and understood by students, parents and staff ensuring restorative practices
- That pupils see the code works in a fair way

#### **Mission Statement**

Our Lady of Lourdes NS is a co-educational Catholic primary school, founded by the Sisters of Mercy. We are committed to the development of life-long learners and responsible citizens who contribute positively to society. At the heart of our learning community is the holistic development of each child to reach their full educational, physical, social, spiritual and emotional potential. Equality is a key value in our school. We are an inclusive school community and welcome pupils of different nationalities, religions, cultures, abilities and ethnicity. We strive in cooperation with the parents, staff, management and other stakeholders to provide to a caring and secure environment in order to realise our vision.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

##### ***Board of Management's Responsibilities***

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Ratify the Code.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the Code.

### ***Principal's Responsibilities***

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for review of the Code as required.

### ***School Staff Responsibilities***

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil and affirm good work.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### ***Expectations of the school from students***

- Do one's best in class.
- Attend school regularly and not miss days without good reason.
- Arrive on time.
- Do not leave during the day without permission.
- Respect all school property.
- Wear the school uniform.
- Have respect for yourself and others.
- Avoid swearing, fighting or name-calling.
- Listen to instructions given and do as required.
- Participate in school activities.
- Be willing to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Keep the school tidy and litter-free.

### ***Parents'/Guardians Responsibilities*** (possibilities)

Schools need the support of parents with regard to good behaviour and discipline.

Parents can help their children in the following ways:

- Parents should provide their children with positive models of behaviour
- Children need boundaries and rules about behaviour. Talk to your child about school rules. They help make the school a safe place where everyone can learn and nobody feels left out or threatened.
- Ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Be interested in, support and encourage your child's school work.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where your child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Ensure the school has up to date contact information for parents / guardians
- Ensure an ordered, structured day for your child with regular meal times and bed times.

- Check your child has all their needs for class i.e. books, copies pens, pencils, rubber, ruler, etc.
- Share information with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress / behaviour.
- Please send a *Handle with Care* text to Principal or Class Teacher if your child has had a bad morning or there is something going on for them

### ***Inclusion***

All children are required to comply with the Code Of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special educational needs may require support in understanding certain expectations. Class teachers, Support teachers and SNAs will communicate school expectations on a consistent basis.

As part of the school's continuum of support, a Behaviour Support Plan may be put in place in consultation with parents, the Class teacher, Support Teacher and the Principal. They will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given.

### ***Student Council***

Pupil voice is very important in Our Lady of Lourdes NS. We endeavour to create a climate of openness, consultation and participation, where pupil's views are sought, listened to and respected. Two representatives are elected by each class from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. Elected children are members of the Student Council. The council meet once a month to discuss relevant issues and contribute their feedback on policies and practices in the school.

### **School Expectations**

The school's standards of behaviour describe the behaviour expected of all members of the school, both staff and pupils. These values are put into practice through simple, clear and consistent school expectations expectations and routines which are built on: .

- Respect for yourself
- Respect for others
- Respect for your school

The school has four core **School Expectations**

1. I come to school every day, on time and prepared.
2. I have respect for people and for property.
3. I do my best in class and allow others to do the same.
4. I behave in a respectful manner around the school.

### **Promotion of the School Expectations**

All pupils are taught the School Expectations when they start and they are revised consistently throughout their remaining years in the school. Parents are given a copy of

the school expectations at registration and they are encouraged and expected to talk to their children about these rules and to encourage their children to follow them.

The School Expectations are promoted through the entire school community as follows: Each week a different school expectation will be highlighted and explicitly taught in class. This will be a part of class /school rewards. Class teachers will use an appropriate reward system in their class to promote a positive and respectful environment.

### **Parent Information Booklet**

All parents/guardians are provided with a copy of the school's code of behaviour before registration as required by Section 23 (4) of the Education (welfare) Act 2000.

Parents are expected at acceptance of school place to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance of the code by the child.

### **Strategies for promoting positive behaviour**

Our reward system acts as a positive reinforcement of good behaviour. School staff will focus on and praise good behaviour.

Rewards that acknowledge and affirm good behaviour can consist of:

- A smile, a thumbs-up signal, a quiet word of praise
- Stickers, smiley faces or stars
- Good note home
- Special responsibility or privilege
- Student of the Week
- Most Improved Student
- Praise in an assembly
- Names in newsletter
- Time on a favourite activity
- Golden time
- Trips/excursions/extra-curricular activities

### **Restorative Practice- Being Proactive**

Restorative Practice (RP) is both a philosophy and a set of skills rooted in respect for human beings and aims to build positive relationships between people. It is a proactive, skills-based approach that is centred on the understanding that relationships can be restored when they have been harmed by conflict or wrongdoing. It focuses on separating the behaviour from the person and appropriate responses to repair harm where necessary. Restorative approaches are underpinned by values of ***respect, equity, interconnectedness, understanding, empathy, belonging*** and ***fair process***.

We believe that "*fairness is not giving each child the same; fair is giving each child what he/she needs.*"

As a school we clearly define **fair process** as an approach which includes:

1. **Engagement:** *Involve* individuals affected by decisions where appropriate.
2. **Explanation:** *Clarify* how decisions are reached and why. *Explain* any contributing factors.
3. **Expectation Clarity:** Once a decision has been made fairly, those involved are *expected to follow through* with this agreement.

As a staff we endeavour to build and restore relationships and model positive interactions throughout the day. The key teaching words, as displayed in our school hall include:

### **SMILE, ASK, LISTEN, RESPECT, EMPATHY, FAIR**

As a staff we endeavour to build and restore relationships and model positive interactions throughout the day using restorative approaches.

Restorative practices include a set of These proactive approaches aim to build community/connection and a set of responses to challenging behaviour where harm has been caused. They These approaches range from the informal and proactive to more formal responses:

- **Restorative Circles:** To build empathy, understanding, speaking/listening skills and positive social relationships. Used for check-ins/outs, relationship-building, problem-solving, academic content, feedback, assessment, planning and discussion.
- **Restorative Conversations:** When minor conflict or challenging behaviour has occurred; conversations take place with one or more children to examine who has been affected and how to address the harm that has been caused.
- **Restorative Meetings:** Informal circles that take place with 2 or more people to respond to situations of more significant conflict/harm. Through using the RP questions (see below), children are encouraged to: 1. Examine who has been affected 2. Address the harm that has been caused and 3. Agree on solutions to make amends. (1.Past 2.Present 3.Future)
- **Restorative Conferences:** More formal restorative circles designed to support those affected by situations of conflict/harm to acknowledge responsibility, ensure accountability and agree on specific solutions to repair the harm that has been caused. As in Restorative Meetings, the RP questions are used in the Restorative Conference process to guide the solution focussed intervention.

## **RESPONSES**

- Support Stage 1: REMINDER
- Support Stage 2: CHOICE CARD

### **REMINDER**

The child is informed that he/ she is not meeting school expectations and must therefore receive a verbal REMINDER. Teachers remind the child of consequences for continuing behaviour as discussed.

### **CHOICE CARD**

The teacher places a CHOICE card on the child's desk. Children are reminded of consequences for continuing behaviour. They will be encouraged to make a good choice.

### ***Acceptance Of Code***

Before enrolling a child as a student in Our Lady of Lourdes NS, the Principal will provide the parents with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour.

As stated in the school's Admissions policy, as a condition of registering the child, the Principal will require his / her parents to confirm in writing:

1. The Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them.
2. They shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with the code.

### **Prevention Strategies**

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions. The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting

and behaving and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

It is important that we keep in mind that the behaviour expected in school may differ significantly from that accepted at home for some children. Recognising this, teachers will teach our pupils strategies that will enable them to meet the school's expectations.

Prevention strategies used in the school may include:

Circle time

Organised football, skipping and other activities at break-time

Carrying out useful tasks

Time out

Therapies

Support Team

### **Additional Supports**

Children with additional needs may require assistance in understanding and respecting certain rules. Additional inputs and interventions may also be required to help some pupils manage their behaviour and to prevent them failing educationally. Such interventions could include:

- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student.
- Individual Behaviour Support Plans may be devised in consultation with Parents, Class teacher, Support Teacher, Learning Support/Resource Teacher, H.S.C.L. Teacher as well as an S.N.A. Professional assessments, where available, inform and shape the plan.

### **Specialised Supports**

A small minority of students may show particularly challenging behaviour. The school, in cooperation with the student's parents, will seek to avail of any local services that may assist in responding to the needs of the student. These services could include the National Educational Psychological Services, Lucena Clinic, Londubh, relevant professional counselling services, etc.

### **Sanctions for Classroom Misbehaviour**

The school strives to solve issues at the lowest level possible. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve issues themselves. Most issues will be resolved at this point. Where sanctions are imposed they will be graded and reflect the seriousness of the behaviour.

*Examples of minor, serious and very serious misbehaviours are outlined in Appendix B.*

#### **Dealing with Minor Misbehaviour**

Where issues occur the class teacher may employ any of a number of strategies to respond to, or divert children's inappropriate behaviour in order to prevent it escalating into something more disruptive to learning and more difficult to manage. These strategies may include:

- Gesture/Look/Whisper
- Tactical ignoring
- Catch pupils being good
- Carrying out a useful task in the school
- Rule reminder
- Teaching rule to class or class recitation of the rule
- Expressing disappointment or disapproval
- Humour

If the teacher deems necessary the following steps will apply for managing disruptive minor misbehaviour:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Oral Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Oral Warning
- Time Out in class (3<sup>rd</sup> time)
- Sent to partner teacher (4<sup>th</sup> time)
- Sent to the Principal ( 5<sup>th</sup>time)
- ‘Time Out’ with Principal or other teacher at break time (6<sup>th</sup> time)

### **Dealing with serious misbehaviour in class**

Disruptive behaviours waste time and impinge on the good order and discipline in the school. When behaviour issues arise that require a sanction either because of the level of disruption, upset or hurt caused, or the persistence of the disruption the following sanctions will be used to show disapproval and to discourage such unacceptable behaviour.

- Time out in class (1<sup>st</sup> time)
- Partner teacher (2<sup>nd</sup> time)
- Teacher may contact parent to express concerns and discuss possible solutions

The following tables outline the steps to be taken for serious misbehaviours:

| Behaviour                               | Consequence                      | Further Steps that may be Taken   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| Persistent minor misbehaviours          | Time out in class                | Teacher sends pupil to partner teacher. May contact parents/guardians by note, phone or in person.  |
| Provoking children in class             | As above                         | As above  |
| Name calling in class                   | As above                         | As above  |
| Refusing to do or finish work           | As above                         | As above  |
| Rough play (in class time)              | As above                         | As above  |
| Lying                                   | As above                         | As above  |
| Writing notes                           | As above                         | As above  |
| Pushing on the stairs (to class/lesson) | As above                         | As above  |
| Phone on during school day              | Confiscation of phone by teacher | Teacher contacts parents/guardians by note, phone or in person. They must collect phone themselves. |



### Dealing with very serious misbehaviour in class

The following sanctions will be imposed to deal with those rare instances of behaviours deemed very serious.

| Behaviour   | Consequence               | Further Action that may be Taken   |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| Persistent serious misbehaviour                             | Straight to the Principal | Principal/Deputy Principal informed.<br>Parents notified.<br>Suspension/Expulsion          |
| Stealing  | As above                  | As above   |
| Swearing/Bad language directed at staff, visitor or student | As above                  | As above   |
| Writing or passing of <b>offensive</b> notes                | As above                  | As above   |
| Refusing to enter classroom                                 | As above                  | Set time given to enter.<br>5,4,3,2,1 approach<br>Principal informed.<br>Parents notified. |
| Damage to school property or another's property             | .As above                 | Principal informed.<br>Parents notified.<br>Board of Management<br>Suspension/Expulsion.   |
| Leaving school grounds without permission                   | As above                  | As above   |
| Bullying (including cyberbullying)                          | As above                  | As above   |
| Name calling involving racist/sexist language               | As above                  | As above   |
| Angry/Threatening behaviour                                 | As above                  | As above   |
| Physical violence towards staff, visitor or student         | As above                  | As above   |

### Sanctions for Break Times

The school yard is always supervised during breaks and the teachers in charge deal with problems that arise during play. The teacher records yard incidents and action taken in the Yard Book which is checked by the Principal and appropriate sanctions decided.

The emphasis is on promoting good behaviour and to support the activities organised for all classes. The yard rules are taught to pupils at the start of each school year and pupils are constantly reminded of them.

***Yard routines and rules are set out in Appendix C***

**Dealing with minor issues in Yard**

For minor misbehaviour in the yard the following graded sanctions will apply

- Oral warning (1st time)
- Red box for 2,3 or more minutes to prevent a more serious issue(2nd time)

**Dealing with more serious misbehaviour in yard**

The following sanctions apply for more serious issues in yard.

- Sent to red box
- Brought to Principal’s Office
- Note in DOJO system

The following table indicates when further action may need to be taken

|                            |                 |  |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Spitting on the ground     | Sent to red box | Teacher may contact parents/guardians by note, phone or in person. |
| Provoking children in yard | As above        | As above   |
| Rough play (at break time) | As above        | As above   |

If the teacher on yard seems the behaviour to be very serious they may send the child straight to the Principals Office. Further classroom sanctions may apply. Yard detention is only used for inappropriate yard behaviour.

**Inappropriate Sanctions**

Inappropriate sanctions include:

- Physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment
- Ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a student’s confidence
- Public or private humiliation
- Applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small group wrong-doing
- Leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. corridor) while in the care of the school
- Persistent isolation of, or ignoring, a student in class
- Sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way

**Suspension**

Only in the most exceptional circumstances will suspension be considered. Having regard to the values of this school attempts will always be made to bring out the best in

pupils and to discriminate between disapproval of wrongful actions and the value of each individual in the school community.

***Procedures relating to Suspension are set out in Appendix D***

**Expulsion**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal. Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid the expulsion of a pupil.

***Procedures relating to Expulsion are set out in Appendix E***

**When the code of behaviour applies;**

The school's Code of Behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular classes or events, at swimming classes, at all fund raising and social events organised in the school hours or outside school hours, and on the school grounds.

**Bullying**

In dealing with incidences of bullying behaviour, teachers have regard to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Absences/Communication**

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 18, requires parents/guardians to notify the Principal of a school of the reasons for a child's absence.

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 21(4) requires a School Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer, in writing, if the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent from school during a school year is 20 days or more. Additionally, Section 21(4) authorises the School Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a child "is not attending school regularly".

**Contact**

Where any parent/guardian has a concern about any aspect of behaviour in the school the matter should be brought to the attention of the child's teacher or the principal, as appropriate, by phone, in writing or in person.

## **Appendix A**

### **Rules of the School Explained**

#### **1. I come to school every day, on time and prepared.**

##### **This means:**

- That you attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- That if you miss school you bring in a note in your journal.
- That if you must leave school during the day, you must have a note.
- That if you are unavoidably late, you bring in a note from your parent/guardian.
- That you behave yourself on your way to and from school.
- That you have the proper pens, pencils, books and copies required for class.
- That you will be careful with library books, your own books, pencils, markers, crayons, etc.

##### **Because:**

- Time missed is hard to make up.
- The school is entitled to an explanation for your absences.
- The school is responsible for you during the day.
- It is expected that a late arrival to school be explained out of courtesy.
- The school expects that all pupils can come to and go home from school safely.
- It wastes time if you have not got your pens, pencils, copies and books.
- Having items not needed for class causes distraction and wastes time.
- Most of our books are rented and will need to be passed on to another pupil at the end of the year. If we don't keep our belongings in good condition they won't last for the year.

#### **1. I have respect for people and for property.**

##### **This means:**

- That you will be helpful and treat other students and all staff with good manners and respect.
- That you will keep unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to yourself.
- That you will call others by their preferred names.

- That bad language, biting, bullying, kicking, punching, spitting, etc. is unacceptable behaviour.
- That you will respect the instructions of all the school staff.
- That you will not pick on or bully others.
- That you use the litter bins.
- That you respect school property and the property of other people.
- That you have respect for other cultures, religions and differences.

**Because:**

- Everyone is entitled to good manners and respect.
- Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery.
- 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.
- You would expect the same respect for your property.
- Everyone has the **right** to your respect.

**1. I do my best in class and allow others to do the same,**

**This means:**

- That you work to the best of your ability and allow others to do the same.
- That you listen to your teachers.
- That you do not disturb the class.
- That you sit with the four legs of your chair on the floor at all times.
- That you do your homework each night, written and oral.
- That you always have your journal with you and take down your homework in it.
- That your parent/guardian signs your journal/work each night.
- That you put your chair up on the desk at the end of the day and help tidy the room.

**Because:**

- Everybody has a right to learn in a caring, safe and respectful environment.
- The teacher is trying to help you.
- Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn.
- It is dangerous to swing back on the two legs of your chair.
- Homework is a back-up to the work done in class.
- Your journal helps you remember what you have to do and is a means of communication between school and home.
- Getting your journal signed lets your parents see how you are getting on.
- It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves.

**1. I act in a proper manner around the school**

**This means:**

- That you must obey promptly.
- That you walk in an orderly way around the school.
- You must line up properly and wait quietly for your teacher.
- That eating or drinking is allowed within the school building only at specified times and in specified areas.
- In the yard and on wet days in the school you should obey instructions of the teachers on duty.
- That you don't break, damage or deface school property.
- That chewing gum is totally forbidden in the school building and grounds.
- That mobile phones must remain switched off at all times.

**Because:**

- This keeps the school safe for everyone.
- Lining up quietly is safer.
- Specified times and areas for eating/drinking helps to keep the school clean and pleasant.
- Obeying break time rules and teachers' instruction is safer and helps with supervision.
- Others have to use school property and repairs/replacements are expensive.
- Chewing gum messes up school furniture and flooring.

## **Appendix B**

### **Examples of misbehaviours**

#### **Minor Misbehaviours include:**

- Chatting
- Inoffensive language – non intentional
- Homework not being done
- Punctuality
- Inattention
- Unwanted invasion of personal space
- Swinging on chairs
- Talking or making noises while others are talking/working.
- Fidgeting
- Avoiding work (toilet visits, washing hands etc)
- Being in wrong yard
- Not lining up on whistle
- Disturbing other classes at window etc
- Interfering in others games
- Talking in line
- Running on stairs
- Running to the yard

#### **Serious Misbehaviour include:**

- All minor behaviours on a persistent basis
- Spitting on the ground.
- Phone on during school day
- Provoking other children
- Deliberately being in wrong yard area?
- Name calling
- Refusing to do or finish work or follow instructions
- Rough play
- Lying

- Pushing on the stairs
- Writing notes

**Very Serious Misbehaviour:**

- All medium behaviours on a persistent basis
- Stealing
- Swearing/bad language directed at others or staff
- Writing of notes/passing notes (offensive)
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Name calling involving racist/sexist language
- Refusing to enter classroom
- Displays of angry or aggressive behaviour during any activity
- Physical fighting
- Damaging school property or property belonging to others
- Verbal or physical abuse of any stakeholder.
- Bullying (by text/internet – brought into school)
- Fighting on stairs



## **Appendix C**

### **Yard Rules and Routines**

1. Pupils must obey the teachers at all times when out in the yard.
2. Pupils must respect teachers, Special Needs Assistants(SNAs) and fellow pupils.
3. Pupils are not allowed to go into the school at yard time unless accompanied by a teacher or SNA or have been given permission to by a teacher.
4. In the morning pupils should congregate at their class lines.
5. No electronic devises are allowed on the yard.
6. No food is allowed on the yard.
7. Pupils must freeze at the first whistle and line up promptly on the second whistle.
8. Pupils must stay in their own yard area.
9. Pupils must walk to yard and to their lines.
10. Pupils must line up in a quiet and orderly fashion.

## **Appendix D**

### **Absconding by Pupils with Behavioural Issues**

If a child attempts to leave / leaves the school grounds without permission, the following steps apply:

- Teacher lets another teacher or an SNA know immediately
- Principal and / or Deputy Principal is notified immediately
- The child is reminded they are not permitted to leave the school grounds
- The child is monitored within the school grounds, while the parents are notified
- If the child leaves the school grounds they are not followed as this could lead to the pupils wandering further afield, acting impetuously or causing a traffic accident

If a child has left the grounds without permission, a list of contacts will be activated. The contact list is the parents / guardians, emergency contact and finally the Gardaí or HSE

The list is kept in the roll book and both in the Secretary's office and the Principal's office.

If possible the pupil who has absconded should be brought back to school the same day. The parent, child and Principal will then discuss the issues and any consequences. The Code of Behaviour Policy will be discussed and a report will be written, giving details of the incident and agreed actions.

It is important that following an incident the issues that arise are addressed and staff should:

- Input the incident on Aladdin
- Review the individual risk assessment for the student involved
- Keep all colleagues informed and discuss the incident in staff meetings and / or in supervision meetings.
- Inform the Board of Management every term about any incidents of absconding.

## **Appendix E**

### **Procedures for Suspension**

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. The authority delegated to the Principal in respect of suspension should state any limits on that authority, and specify how the Principal is accountable to the Board of Management for his or her use of that authority.

### **The grounds for suspension**

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms very serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension the Principal will:

- Inform the student and his/her parents about the complaint either by phone or in writing
- Give the pupil and the parents an opportunity to respond
- Place the pupil in detention until a determination is made about suspension

Parents will be given an opportunity to respond, to make their case for lessening the sanction and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the pupil's behaviour.

Suspension will result from very serious misbehaviour where 1 of the following criteria is satisfied:

- 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 this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

**Immediate suspension** In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person.

### **The period of suspension**

A student should 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 in order to achieve a particular objective.

### **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 may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

### **Implementing the suspension**

Written notification

The Principal should notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should 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 remove the suspension 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 should have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. This plan will help to avoid the possibility that suspension starts or amplifies a cycle of academic failure. Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work. A suspended student may feel angry or resentful about their suspension, and these feelings can trigger problems with reintegration which, in turn, may lead to further problem behaviour. Where possible, the school should arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

### **Clean slate**

When any sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

### **Records and reports**

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

Formal written records should 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 should report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

### **Report to NEWB**

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in accordance with NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 21(4)(a)*)

### **Review of the use of Suspension**

The Board of Management should review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies and to ensure that the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

## **Appendix F Expulsion Procedures**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal.

Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil including, as appropriate:

1. Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
2. Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, if it should persist.
3. Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried.
4. Seeking the assistance of support agencies, if appropriate

A proposal by the Board of Management to expel a student requires serious grounds, such that:

1. The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
2. The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
3. The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

### **Expulsion for a First offence**

The Board of Management reserves the right to expel pupils for a first offence for the following behaviours:

1. A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.
2. Actual violence or physical assault.
3. The supply of illegal drugs to other students in the school.
4. Sexual assault.

### **Expulsion**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the following procedural steps will apply:

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 an Education Welfare Officer of the National Educational Welfare Board
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal**

In investigating an allegation the principal will:

- Inform the student and parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could lead to expulsion.
- Give the parents and student every opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is made and a sanction imposed.

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation in order to have a permanent record of having let them know.

### **Step 2: A recommendation to the board by the Principal**

Where the principal forms the view, based on the investigation 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 the 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 and the holding of a hearing**

The Board will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. 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 a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing.

At the hearing:

- The Principal and the parents 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.
- Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board will facilitate this.
- 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**

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 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**

To ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education the Educational Welfare Officer will:

- 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).

Pending these consultations, 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)).

The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time.

Suspension will 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.

#### **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 and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

This Code of Behaviour was formally ratified by the Board of Management and signed by the Chairperson in September 2016.