



PARENT HANDBOOK  
FIRST YEARS 2024



# Contents

Welcome to Mercy Inchicore.....	3
Who's Who at Mercy Secondary School.....	4
Our School.....	5
A day at Mercy Secondary School.....	6
Requirements for first Year.....	7
Our Uniform.....	8
School Lunches.....	8
School Attendance.....	9
Every Child needs a Champion.....	10
Top tips to support your child on the move to Second Level.....	11
<a href="#">TYRO.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
Code of Behaviour.....	14
Behaviour expectations and Acceptance of Code of Behaviour.....	29
Parental permission for use of Photographs and digital images.....	30

# Welcome to Mercy Inchicore

We look forward to working with you over the coming years to support your son or daughter in achieving their educational and personal goals. This handbook has been designed to help you to understand the day to day routines and expectations of Mercy Secondary School.

## **At the start of the day**

- The doors to the school will open at 08:30 am each morning. Students will not be able to enter the building prior to this time. Students should not use the main doors at the office, but rather the doors at the old science lab (room 12). (See map p.5)
- If a student is not in their full school uniform and does not have a written note explaining why, they will be asked to return home to get their uniform.
- Students will use the next 10-15 mins at their locker, preparing for the day ahead.
- If a student is absent, we ask that parents log on to TYRO and mark their child as absent.
- If a student is likely to be late, a note from home explaining why is necessary. A detention every Friday for two or more lates in a week takes place for 15 minutes.

## **In Class**

- We set high expectations for our students and ask that parents support us in our work with their children.
- Positive behaviour will be recognised in class primarily through student-teacher interactions but will also be recorded on the schools TYRO admin software..
- Negative behaviour which affects student learning will be recorded on TYRO as either level 1 behaviour (smaller issues which have the potential to grow) or level 2 behaviours which are more serious breaches of the school's code of behaviour.
- Teachers will generally call home to discuss level 1 behaviours and level 2 behaviours will generally result in a call from the tutor or year head.

## **Communication**

The school will generally communicate with parents via the following:

- the school journal
- Phone calls
- Text messages,
- The TYRO app
- Push notifications from TYRO
- Email

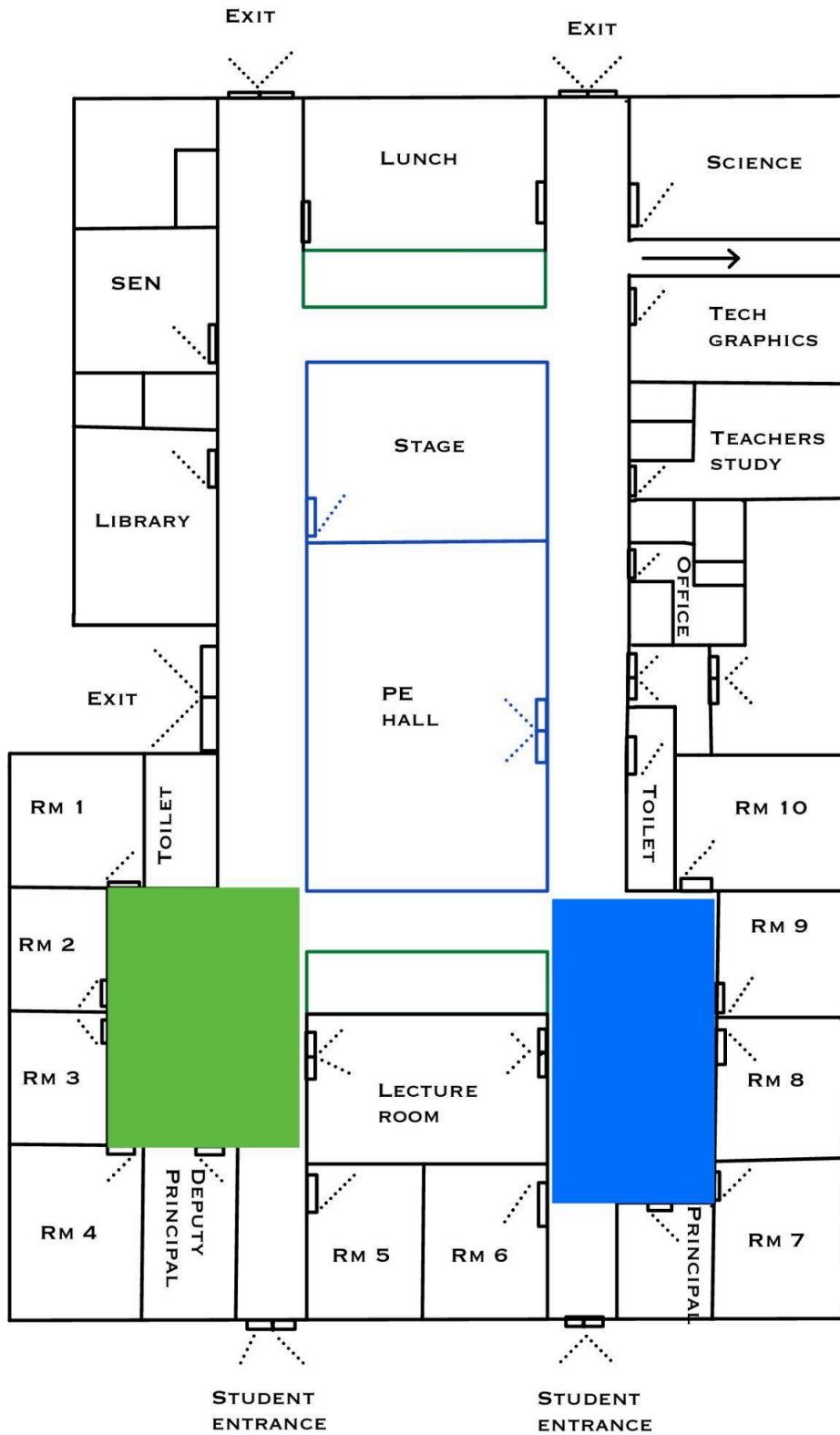
We ask that email addresses and phone numbers be kept updated with the office on (01) 4531262 or [info@mercyinchicore.ie](mailto:info@mercyinchicore.ie).

# Who's Who at Mercy Secondary School

Name	Role
<b>Michelle O'Kelly</b>	Principal
<b>James Hanrahan</b>	Deputy Principal, Science and Maths
<b>Bernie McCabe</b>	Irish and Business
<b>Fiona Healy</b>	Home School Community Liaison (HSCL), Programme Co-ordinator
<b>Sinead O' Sullivan</b>	English, History and Special Educational Needs Teacher. 3rd Year Head
<b>Frainc O' Broin</b>	Irish, ICT, Senior Year Head
<b>Donna Delaney</b>	Spanish, CSPE, SPHE
<b>Letitia Enright</b>	English, Geography, SPHE
<b>Danielle O'Leary</b>	Maths and SPHE
<b>Lisa Baker</b>	Music and Special Educational Needs Coord.
<b>Caroline McCorrison</b>	Guidance Counsellor
<b>Louise Smith</b>	English and Religion
<b>Lorcan Roddy</b>	English and SPHE
<b>Donal Byrne</b>	PE, Science, Biology,
<b>Thomas Nolan</b>	Geography and History
<b>Simon Creane</b>	Maths, Science and Physics with Chemistry. 2nd Year Head
<b>Paula McCarville</b>	Business, CSPE and SPHE
<b>Melissa McGee</b>	Home Economics
<b>Sorcha Hackett</b>	Irish
<b>Rachel Murphy</b>	Music
<b>Sarah McLoughlin</b>	English & Religion
<b>Rebecca Warren</b>	Art
<b>Luke Sheridan</b>	Science

<b>Alison Deegan</b>	Special Needs Assistant	<b>Anthony Coloe</b>	Special Needs Assistant
<b>Karen Kenny</b>	Special Needs Assistant	<b>Kathy Sheridan</b>	Administration Staff
<b>Eleanor Larkin</b>	Administration Staff	<b>Thomas Howel</b>	Environmental Staff
<b>Holly Doran</b>	Special Needs Assistant	<b>Deborah Mcauley</b>	Special Needs Assistant
<b>Lauren Judge</b>	Administration staff		

# Our School



# A Day in Mercy Secondary School



# Requirements for first Year

*Please do not purchase materials until your child has finished the 12 week subject taster period and fully decided on his/her subject choice.*

Subject	Material Required
<b>Business</b>	A4 Hardback
<b>Home Economics</b>	Hairnet/Bandana Small Weighing scales (for home measuring) Students supply their own ingredients for cooking Large airtight lunch box/container A4 Folder
<b>Science</b>	Hard-back Science copy
<b>Music</b>	Music Manuscript Earphones Pencils Zip folder or similar
<b>Maths</b>	Scientific calculator (Casio fx-83GT Plus) Maths Set Project Maths Copy
<b>Spanish</b>	Small Spanish Dictionary
<b>History</b>	A4 Hard-back Set of colouring pencils Folder
<b>Irish</b>	Small Irish Dictionary

## Stationary needed for all subjects:

- Copies
- Pens
- Pencils
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Highlighters

# Our Uniform

Our uniform and our PE tracksuit can be purchased at [www.schoolwearhouse.ie](http://www.schoolwearhouse.ie)

Please select [Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore](#) and you will find the link for our uniform and PE tracksuit on their website.

- School Jumper
- Skirt
- Trousers
- White Shirts (can be purchased anywhere)
- Black Shoes or black runners (large symbols or air bubbles not permitted)
- PE uniform - to be worn only on PE days.

# School Lunches

Hot Lunches are provided by Fresh Today. Below is a sample menu



**fresh today.ie**

**MONDAY, 04/11**

- Breast of Chicken Curry with Rice (Halal)  
Contains: Celery, Mustard, Wheat
- Bangers and Mash with Onion Gravy  
Contains: Milk, Sodium Sulphite, Soya, Wheat
- Sweet Potato Curry with Rice (Vegan) ✓  
Contains: Celery, Mustard, Sodium Sulphite

**TUESDAY, 05/11**

- Chicken and Vegetable Stew (Halal)  
Contains: Milk, Soya
- Beef and Pork Meatballs with Gravy and Mashed Potato  
Contains: Egg, Milk, Soya, Wheat
- Pumpkin and Kale Dahl with Rice (Vegan) ✓  
Contains: Celery, Mustard

**WEDNESDAY, 06/11**

- Chicken Goujon Baguette (Halal)  
Contains: Milk, Wheat

**THURSDAY, 07/11**

- Chilli Con Carne with Rice  
Contains: Celery, Wheat
- Chicken and Broccoli Pasta Bake (Halal)  
Contains: Celery, Egg, Milk, Wheat
- Vegetable and Lentil Stew (Vegan) ✓  
Contains: Celery

**FRIDAY, 08/11**

- Turkey with Stuffing, Potatoes, and Vegetables (Halal)  
Contains: Milk, Soya, Wheat
- Beef and Vegetable Stew  
Contains: Celery, Milk, Soya
- Vegetable Chilli with Rice (Vegan) ✓  
Contains: Celery



# School Attendance

Breakfast Club begins at **8.15am** (optional)

Our first class starts at **08:45 am**. Students should be in the building and prepared by this time.

If your child is absent you should call the office before 8.45am to notify the school. This should be followed up with a note in the journal to explain the absence on his/her return day.

If your child is late you should call the office before 8.45 am to notify the school. This should be followed up with a note in the journal to explain the late arrival.

## ***“Every Day Counts”***

**1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem that much but...**

If your child misses	that equals...	which is...	and over 13 years of school that's...
1 day a fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 Years
3 days a week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

Please remember: There are 166 days in a Secondary School Year. This means there are 199 days left over for those all important holidays, appointments and so on.

# Every Child Needs a Champion



# Top Tips to Support Your Child on the Move to Second Level

When your child is preparing to move to secondary school, it is both an exciting and an anxious time for the young person and their family. Being positive and supportive will help your child remain calm and embrace the changes.

## Be Open and Positive

Discuss the changes openly and ensure that your questions are positively phrased, e.g. What are you most excited about? What are you looking forward to about your first day? Have you seen the fantastic trips that you can go on?

## Plan what will happen on the first day

Try to do things that will make the first day seem magical. Involve your child in decisions about what will happen, e.g. whether they are going with a friend, going alone or whether you are taking them. Find out if they want something special for a packed lunch or if they want a special meal when they come home. Ask whether they want to go somewhere after school, such as to a grandparent's to tell them about their first day. If they have siblings at their old primary school, they may want to help you collect them and tell their previous teacher how their first day went.

## Help them to make new friendships

Wherever possible, arrange for your child to meet other young people during the holidays who will be going to the same secondary school. You could organise a day out for other young people and their parents. You could exchange phone numbers, if you feel comfortable doing this. Manage any communication sensitively, ensuring your child feels happy and confident around the other young people.

## Involve them in buying new school supplies

Involve your child in choosing new school equipment, such as a new school bag in addition to their uniform. They will enjoy having the choice about some items and this will help them feel better prepared and more independent.

## Discuss possible scenarios that might happen at school

Talk about scenarios that relate to questions you have been asked, such as, 'What happens if I get lost and I am late for my class?'. Try and ask them what they think might happen first – a young person will often think of a sanction that will be far worse than what will actually happen. Explain that lots of people will get lost to start with but that there will be someone to ask and people they can walk to class with. Encourage using good manners if they arrive late for class.

## Practise the route to school

Take your child on a practice run a few times in the school holidays. Walk to the bus stop, catch the bus and walk the route they will take. Talk about any landmarks on

the way and consider the time the journey will take. Encourage your child to take the lead on the second practice so they feel in control. Once the real day arrives, they will be more confident.

## Speak to a young person who is already at the secondary school

Encourage your child to speak to someone who is already at the school and ask questions. They will be able to explain what it is like, dispel any negative myths and be positive about change. Choose the young person wisely and help your child prepare a list of questions beforehand.

### Be patient

As the first day approaches, the young person may start to feel increasingly anxious. They may change their behaviour and become quieter or they may ask more and more questions. Be patient and supportive. Most of us can remember our first day at school or when we started a new job. Even if you have already answered their questions, continue to do so – this could be their way of seeking further reassurance.

### Provide distractions

Try to provide distractions during the summer so that your child is not focussing solely on the move to the new school – they need respite from any anxious thoughts. Consider trying a new activity. This will encourage them to be brave, to meet new people and to find their way around a new venue. It will demonstrate that they can manage change and encourage resilience and positivity

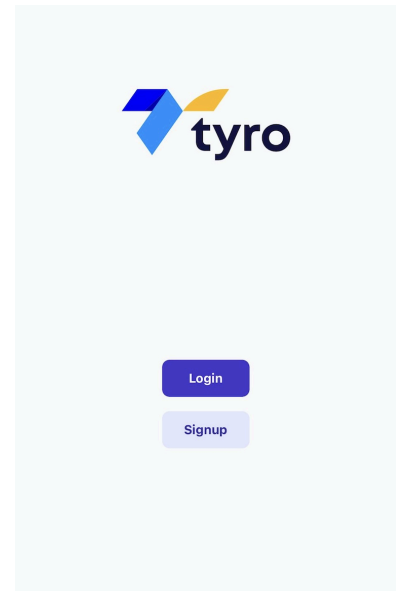
Remember that some young people will settle into a new school more quickly than others. This doesn't matter. What matters is that they feel comfortable to share their thoughts and feelings with you. Continue to ask questions and talk about times when you found starting a new school or a new job challenging. Share what helped you and let them know that you will help and support them.



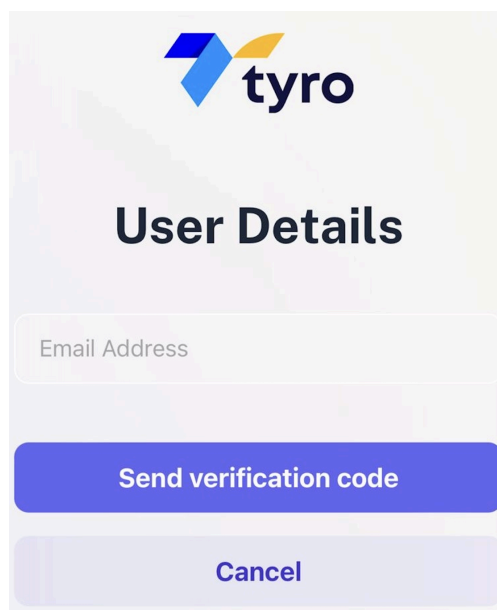
# TYRO

Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore uses software called TYRO to record attendance, punctuality and behaviour issues. All of our parents have access to their child's page on VSware and can monitor their son or daughter's progress. Your email is your username for your child and if your mobile phone details are up-to-date, the following steps can be taken to access your child's VSware page.

- ❖ Go to **tyro.school** or click the link on our school website. Alternatively you can download the app from the app store or play store.
- ❖ Select the option "Sign up".
- ❖ Enter the details requested and then create your account.



If any of the details on your son or daughter's page are inaccurate please let us know as soon as possible by calling the office on **01 4531262** or emailing [info@mercyinchicore.ie](mailto:info@mercyinchicore.ie)



# Code of Behaviour

## Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore

### Code of Behaviour

Mercy Secondary Inchicore is a co-educational Catholic school in the heart of Inchicore, Dublin 8. Just as our founder Catherine McAuley imagined and created a world, in which education empowered and provided opportunities for all; we continue that vision of realising all that our students and our learning community can become. At the heart of our mission is the belief that each and every member of our community is a valued and treasured child of God. We are committed to creating opportunities for our students. We hold the belief that we have a duty to dream big for each and every person within our learning community.

#### 1. Definition:

The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave and learn well.

The Code of Behaviour addresses the following:

- 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

#### 2. Scope:

The Code of Behaviour applies to all students until the completion of their Senior Cycle education in Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore and should be observed while in school, when in school uniform, while travelling to or from school and while attending any school activity including trips, sporting, cultural events and TY and LCA work experience. This code was formulated following consultation with students, Parents/Guardians, teachers and the Board of Management. It takes cognisance of the Education Act, the Education Welfare Act, Equal Status Act and the Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour (NEWB: 2008). The code should be read in conjunction with the

Internet Acceptable Use policy, Substance Use policy, Anti Bullying policy, Mobile Phone policy, Attendance policy and Student Support policy.

### **3. Relationship to our mission, vision and aims:**

The Code of Behaviour of Mercy Secondary School is determined in the context of the school's Mission Statement which has at its core, the holistic development and care of the student. The code is an integral part of a positive school ethos where learning and personal development can take place.

### **4. Rationale:**

Mercy Secondary promotes a positive approach to discipline in the classroom and in the school generally. This positive approach emphasises encouragement and praise. In such a climate, it is expected that the relationships between students and between students and staff are based on mutual respect, trust, caring and consideration for others resulting in a highly motivated learning environment. Our priority in Mercy Secondary School Inchicore is to ensure a safe, positive and supportive educational environment for all. Consequently, high expectations will be communicated to and required from all members of the school community. The foundations of our Code of Positive Behaviour are care, respect, positivity and personal responsibility. Restorative Practices are core to our practice. Restorative Practice holds at the core the aim of building strong relationships and transforming conflict in a simple and emotionally healthy manner. The word "restorative" comes from the word "restore". Being restorative means being able to easily and effectively restore broken relationships and, more importantly, it means being able to consciously prevent relationships breaking down in the first place.

### **5. Objectives of the Code of Behaviour:**

The objectives of our Code of Behaviour are:

- a) To foster an atmosphere in the school which promotes the holistic development of the student and which allows right relationships to flourish.
- b) To create a safe and secure learning environment for all students by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community.
- c) To nurture self discipline, reflection and self evaluation and encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.
- d) To have effective procedures in place which will allow for the day to day running of the school and which meet the demands of current legislation.
- e) To help young people develop into mature and responsible participating citizens.

#### **6.1 The Promotion of Good Behaviour:**

In Mercy Secondary, we are proactive in promoting positive behaviour and preventing inappropriate behaviour.

a) Teachers set high expectations for student behaviour, have good class routines, give positive feedback about behaviour and model the behaviour that is expected from students. Teachers recognise the importance of developing mutually respectful relationships that balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, fairness and consistency.

b) Students are clear on the contents of the code and the standards expected of them. The Student Council was involved in the formulation of the Code of Behaviour. A full copy is to be found on the website. An edited version is given to each student in their journal.

c) Reference to the Code of Behaviour is made during the taught curriculum. School rules and the reasons for them are discussed as part of SPHE, CSPE, Tutor Class and Social Ed. The concepts of tolerance, self control, fairness and the principles of natural justice are explored also as part of the RE programme. Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism and Substance Use are discussed with the students in formal classes and/or with guest speakers.

(d) Positive behaviour signage is very visible throughout the school to re-enforce and remind students of the rules.

e) Parental cooperation is considered fundamental to the implementation of the school's code. An introductory meeting for Parents/Guardians of new students takes place prior to entry. At this meeting, the values underlying the Code of Behaviour are explained. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to meet a member of the Senior Management Team to share information on anything that might affect a student's learning/behaviour in school and then asked to sign the Code of Behaviour and it is placed in the student file. It is accepted that Parents/Guardians are acknowledging agreement of the Code of Behaviour when their daughter or son is admitted to our school and that they will make every effort to ensure that their daughter or son complies with every aspect of the Code.

Mercy Secondary recognises the challenges faced by Parents/Guardians in the organisation of seminars on behavioural matters and on aspects of child and adolescent development.

EXPECTATIONS	CLASSROOM
 <p><b>BE READY</b></p>	<p>Arrive on time</p> <p>Bring all materials and have homework done</p> <p>Correct uniform for all classes</p> <p>Have your thinking cap on</p>
 <p><b>BE RESPECTFUL</b></p>	<p>Listen to everyone</p> <p>One Voice</p> <p>Use positive language</p> <p>Treat others the way you would like to be treated</p>
 <p><b>BE RESPONSIBLE</b></p>	<p>Sit to assigned seats</p> <p>Take ownership of your own learning and do your BEST!</p> <p>Phones/devices away unless requested for class</p> <p>Keep classroom clean and tidy</p>

## 6.2 Behaviour Expectations

1. Students will treat themselves, all school staff, fellow students, visitors to the school and people with whom they visit with respect and will have consideration for the rights and feelings of others.
2. Students will cooperate with and follow the guidance of all staff members. Students will cooperate with and be kind to each other.



3. Students will attend school every day, remain for the full school day and if absent, the school will be notified of the reason for the absence. The school is legally obliged to keep a record of all absences and to inform the DES at the appropriate time.
4. Students will bring their Chromebooks, copies and all equipment that they need to all relevant classes. Chromebooks must be brought to school fully charged.
5. Students will do their homework and participate fully in class. They will listen to each other and their teachers and will not disrupt any class. Students will take responsibility for their learning and do their best at all times.
6. Junior students are not permitted to use mobile phones during the day without permission from a teacher. Senior students may use them in their tutor room at breaks only. They will not use their Chromebooks or mobile phone to record or photograph any person or activity related to school without prior permission. Students will not send messages, make phone calls or use any social media during the school day, unless instructed by a teacher. If students use their devices inappropriately or without permission the device will be confiscated and returned to their parent/guardian only.
7. Students will be on time for school and class.
8. Students will show respect for all property and equipment in the school and on the school premises. Students will not throw litter and will assist with keeping the school clean and tidy.
9. Students will dress in accordance with the school dress code.
10. As attendance is of key importance to our students' success, we ask that all appointments, when possible, are scheduled outside school time. Parents/Guardians may not ring the school requesting that a student leave early. A note from the parent/guardian is required. The student may give the note to their tutor at tutor time to be signed and presented at reception at the designated time.

## **7. The Terms of the Code of Behaviour**

### **7.1 Attendance:**

Attendance at school enables students to achieve their academic potential, to develop a sense of belonging to the school community and to benefit from all school activities.

The Education Welfare Act (2000) requires that the school should be notified if a student is absent. The pink slip at the end of the Student Journal explaining the absence should be completed by a parent/ guardian and returned to the Tutor when returning to school following an absence.

If a student has to leave school early, a note from the 'notes to and from' section at the end of the Student Journal must be completed by a parent/ guardian and presented to the Tutor. Phone Calls may not be made to request that students return home unless under exceptional circumstances. The slip will be countersigned by the Tutor and should be presented by the student to the secretary at the reception prior to departure. The student should then go to reception and be signed out. All dental and medical appointments should be scheduled for after school on a Wednesday where possible. Students are encouraged to return to school after dental or medical appointments when possible.

No student may absent herself from class at any time. Students feeling ill should report to whichever teacher they are with at the time and procedures will be followed. The Tutor/ Year Head, Deputy Principal /will then assess the situation and will authorise contact with a Parent/Guardian.

In accordance with section 21 of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the school is obliged to notify the National Educational Welfare Board when a student is absent for 20 days or more in any given academic year.

### **7.2 Punctuality:**

Being on time for class encourages self-discipline and is an expected habit both in the workplace and in personal relationships. Late arrivals at school or class inconveniences both teachers and students.

All students must be in class on time. When moving from their base class to another room students are required to wear face coverings and follow the markings on the floor and corridors.

Students arriving late in the morning and during the day must inform the member of staff at reception on arrival. The late arrival will be noted on VShare by the office. A late stamp will be put on the students journal on the diary space with the corresponding date. The late arrival is then noted by the school. When a student has been late on more than one occasion during the week, they must sit detention on the following Wednesday. Each Monday, the students get a fresh start and are only judged on their punctuality for that week. For more information on this see the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

### **7.3 Journal:**

Each student is provided with a journal. The journal serves as a place to record all homework and allows for effective home-school communication. The journal should be brought to all classes, be available to all members of staff and should be kept neatly and free of graffiti.

### **7.4 Academic work:**

Good work habits enable the student to contribute to the class and to be successful.

Students are expected to be prepared for, and to work in, each class. They should have the necessary textbooks and class materials, should complete homework on time and be prepared and present for all tests and examinations. If homework is not presented, a student is required to have a note of explanation from a parent / guardian. When no homework is presented in class and no parental comment is given, the teacher will record this information on the Green Sheet.

Students should submit academic work which is their own and is not copied from other sources.

### **7.5 Behaviour in school and at school functions:**

Good behaviour in class and around the school creates a safe environment conducive to learning.

- a) All members of the school community have a right to be treated with dignity and courtesy.
- b) Students should follow the instructions given by their teachers and other members of staff.

- c) Students should not engage in actions where others may be adversely affected. This includes play fighting, running through public areas or engaging in conduct potentially harmful to themselves or others.
- d) Eating and drinking are strictly forbidden during class time without the permission of the teacher.
- e) The chewing of gum is forbidden in school.
- f) Students are required to use the bins provided for litter and to treat all school property with care.
- g) Behaviour during liturgies, formal events and presentations must be appropriate to the occasion.

#### **7.6 Lost Property:**

- a) The school cannot be held responsible for lost property. All property should be clearly labelled.
- b) Lockers are the property of the school and should not be damaged/defaced in any way. The Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head/Tutor reserves the right to search a student's locker/storage box in the presence of that student.
- c) Each student is supplied with a box under their table and must not interfere with the box of another student.

#### **7.7 Bullying:** (Please refer to our Anti-Bullying policy)

Conduct which is injurious to the mental and physical well being of others is not conducive to good school morale or to a secure learning environment.

Students should not engage in any activity that could be interpreted by others as harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Bullying is defined as repeated aggression conducted by an individual or a group against others – such aggressive behaviour may be verbal, psychological or physical. The term bullying encompasses harassment, i.e. any form of unwanted conduct in relation to any of the nine grounds named in equality legislation, i.e. gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, membership of the travelling community – that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim. Bullying includes sexual harassment, i.e. any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim.

All allegations of bullying will be investigated according to the procedures outlined in the Anti-Bullying policy and appropriate sanctions will be taken against those who bully.

#### **7.8 Uniform:**

The school uniform helps promote a sense of belonging to the school community and is a visual symbol of Mercy Secondary School. Students wearing our uniform should be conscious that they represent the entire school community and as such, their behaviour should reflect our ethos and code.

- a) Students should maintain a neat and tidy appearance.

- b) Full uniform must be worn when travelling to or from school unless specified.
- c) All items of uniform should be clearly labelled.
- d) Jewellery should be appropriate to daily school life. Jewellery that poses a health and safety risk are not permitted. Facial piercings are not permitted.
- f) Shoes should be completely black and flat. Logos on shoes should be black also.
- g) A white school polo shirt, dark tracksuit bottoms and runners are required for P.E.

**7.9 Smoking, Alcohol and Substance Use:** (Please refer to the Substance Use policy)

**7.10 Mobile Phones:**

(Please refer to the Mobile Phone and Device Acceptable Use policy)

**7.11 Cars and bicycle:**

A student who drives to school may not park their car in the car park. The car park is for the sole use of staff and visitors by arrangement only.

A student who cycles may lock their bike at the bike rack outside the reception area. The school takes no responsibility for damage caused.

**7.12 Disciplinary Procedures:**

The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour and behaviour expectations are referred to as our 'system of referral'. The premise of the system of referral is to de-escalate behaviour issues and to encourage positive behaviours. The basic principle is that the higher up the system an incident is dealt with, the more seriously it is viewed. The staff involved in reporting an incident are informed of outcomes.



**For Junior Cycle Year Groups**

- The class teacher has primary responsibility for discipline in his/her classroom and deals with minor infringements of the Code as they arise.
- The teacher makes note of these minor infringements on VsWare.
- Once three low behaviours have been noted during a term, the Tutor is informed and the subject teacher will contact the parent/guardian of the student to inform them. The student begins each term with a clean slate and infringements from previous terms are no longer considered by the subject teacher.

- If the misbehaviour persists **after the intervention from the tutor**, a referral on VsWare is completed by the tutor for the Junior Year Head and she meets with the student, discusses the behaviour in relation to the Code and applies a sanction keeping in mind the ultimate aim of restoring right relationships so as learning can resume. (see Appendix B)
- The sanction is noted on the referral form and the student is asked to sign the form. The form is filed in the students file.
- Parents/Guardians may be informed if sanctions are imposed or when the Year Head intervention commences.
- The Deputy Principal may consider various options including a more formal meeting with the Parents/Guardians.
- The Principal becomes involved when all other approaches have failed. All previous systems should be exhausted before this happens unless a major incident occurs.

#### **For Senior Cycle Year Groups**

- The class teacher has primary responsibility for discipline in his/her classroom and deals with minor infringements of the Code as they arise.
- Once three infringements have been noted during a term, the Tutor is informed and the subject teacher must ring the parent of the student to inform the parent of the student's behaviour. The student begins each term with a clean slate and infringements from previous terms are no longer considered by the subject teacher.
- If the misbehaviour persists, a referral form is completed by the tutor for the Senior Year Head with the student, discusses the behaviour in relation to the Code and applies a sanction keeping in mind the ultimate aim of restoring right relationships so as learning can resume.
- The sanction is noted on the referral form and the student is asked to sign the form. The form is filed.
- Parents/Guardians may be informed if sanctions are imposed.
- If the Senior Year Head is concerned about persistent misbehaviour, the student may be referred to the Student Support service within the school and/or may be referred to the Deputy Principal.
- The Deputy Principal may consider various options including a more formal meeting with the Parents/Guardians
- The Principal becomes involved when all other approaches have failed. All previous systems should be exhausted before this happens unless a major incident occurs.

#### **7.13 Disciplinary Sanctions:**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change of behaviour by:

- Helping students to learn their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour.
- Signal to other students and to staff that their well-being is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- Keep the student, or other students or adults safe.

Examples of possible sanctions are:

- a) Reasoning with the student by subject teacher/staff member and advice on how to improve.
- b) Prescribing additional work.
- c) Service to the school community (picking up litter, removing graffiti/chewing gum).
- d) Placing on report – uniform report, academic report, attendance report or behaviour report. This may be on a weekly or daily basis, depending on the offending behaviour and requires a comment from teachers. It is then shown to Parents/Guardians/Guardians/Guardians/Guardians/Guardians and the Deputy Principal/Principal for signature.
- e) Detention.
- f) Withdrawal from a particular class or from all classes for a period – the student will be adequately supervised elsewhere.
- g) Loss of privileges such as membership of the Prefects system, the right to go on trips, membership of school teams, attendance at evening activities run by the school.

## **8. Suspension:**

### **8.1 Definition:**

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

### **8.2 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) Paragraph 11.6 of 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 Acting Principal subject to the provisions of (1) and (2) above.

### **8.3 The grounds for suspension:**

Suspension is a serious sanction and should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. It may be considered in the following circumstances:

- the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- repeated deliberate breaches of the Code of Behaviour
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety to themselves and others.
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property

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

### **8.4 Factors to consider before suspending 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 suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension.

### **8.5 Forms of Suspension:**

**Immediate suspension:** 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.

**Suspension during a State examination:** This sanction must be approved by the Board of Management and should only be used where there is:

- a threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- a threat to the safety of other students and personnel
- a threat to the rights of other students to do their examination in a calm atmosphere

### **8.6 Procedures in respect of suspension:**

Fair procedures are followed when proposing to suspend a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the following procedures will be observed:

(a) The student and their Parents/Guardians will be informed of the complaint, will be told how it will be investigated and will be informed that it could result in suspension.

(b) Parents/Guardians and the student will be invited to meet the Principal and will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

(c) In the case of an immediate suspension, Parents/Guardians will be notified and arrangements made with them to collect their daughter from the school. Relevant information will be gathered and a meeting between all parties arranged for a later date. Parents/Guardians and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint before any decision is made and any further sanction imposed.

### **8.7 The period of suspension:**

(a) In general, a suspension should be no longer than three days. If a suspension longer than three days is proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. In circumstances where a Board of Management meeting cannot be convened in the time frame necessary, the Principal with the approval of the Chairperson may impose a suspension of up to 5 days.

(b) No student will be suspended for more than 10 school days on any one period of suspension.

(c) 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 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### **8.8 Appeals:**

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

(b) Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year reaches 20 days, the Parents/Guardians or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

### **8.9 Implementing the suspension:**

The Principal will notify the Parents/Guardians and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm the following:

- 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/Guardians
- the provision of an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act : Section 29) in particular circumstances.

### **8.10 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.



### **8.11 After the suspension ends:**

(a) A period of suspension ends on the date given in the letter of notification to the Parents/Guardians about the suspension. Students on return report to the office firstly before returning to class.

(b) A member of the Student Support team may be assigned to help the student re-integrate into school.

### **8.12 Records and Reports:**

(a) Written records will be kept of:

- All meetings in full
- the decision making process
- the decision and rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

(b) The Principal should report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

(c) The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines.

### **8.13 Review:**

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension annually 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 the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

## **9. Expulsion**

### **9.1 Definition:**

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

### **9.2 Authority to expel:**

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student.

### **9.3 The grounds for expulsion:**

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour and should only be taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

- 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 to others.
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

There may be grounds for considering that a student be expelled for a first offence. The kind of behaviours that might result in a proposal to expel includes the following:

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

#### **9.4 Factors to consider 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

#### **9.5 Procedures in respect of expulsion:**

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

##### **1. A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal**

The Principal will inform the student and their Parents/Guardians 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/Guardians and students every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and a sanction is imposed.

If the Parents/Guardians 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 School Management to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour.

A record of the invitation issued and the response of the Parents/Guardians will be kept on file.

##### **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/Guardians and student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that Parents/Guardians 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/Guardians.

- notify the Parents/Guardians of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- advise the Parents/Guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- ensure that Parents/Guardians have enough notice to allow them prepare for the hearing.

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

The Board will review the initial investigation and ensure that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.

The Board will review all documentation and the circumstances of the case. No party who has had any involvement with the case will be part of the Board's deliberations.

If the Board decides to consider expelling a student, a hearing will be arranged.

At the hearing, the Principal and the Parents/Guardians or a student aged 18 years or over, will put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. Parents/Guardians may wish to be accompanied to the hearing.

After both sides have been heard, the Principal and Parents/Guardians will withdraw and the Board will deliberate in private.

### **4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board, 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. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives the written notification.

The Board will inform the Parents/Guardians in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Parents/Guardians will be informed that the Educational Welfare Officer will be notified of the decision.

### **5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer**

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

- Consult with the Principal, Parents/Guardians and student
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.

The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to remain in education. Pending these consultations about the future education of the student, the Board may consider it appropriate to suspend the student if 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.

## **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 Chairperson and the Principal will be delegated to formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents/Guardians will be notified that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents/Guardians will be informed about the right to appeal and will be supplied with a form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be kept of the decision to expel the student.

### **9.6 Appeals:**

A parent, or a student over 18 years, may appeal a decision to expel, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of the student.

### **9.7 Review:**

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school annually 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.

## **10. Bringing a concern about a behaviour matter:**

We foster an openness to dialogue with Parents/Guardians. When concerns arise, Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the School with the intention of resolving the matter.

### **11. Monitoring:**

The Code of Behaviour will be monitored by the Principal and Deputy Principal, the Student Support Group and the Assistant Principals on an annual basis and will be formally reviewed in 2023/2024.

# Behaviour expectations and Acceptance of the Code of Behaviour

1. Students will treat themselves, all school staff, fellow students, visitors to the school and people with whom they visit with respect and will have consideration for the rights and feelings of others.
2. Students will cooperate with and follow the guidance of all staff members. Students will cooperate with and be kind to each other.
3. Students will attend school every day, remain for the full school day and if absent, the school will be notified of the reason for the absence. The school is legally obliged to keep a record of all absences and to inform the DES at the appropriate time.
4. Students will bring their Chromebooks, copies and all equipment that they need to all relevant classes. Chromebooks must be brought to school fully charged.
5. Students will do their homework and participate fully in class. They will listen to each other and their teachers and will not disrupt any class. Students will take responsibility for their learning and do their best at all times.
6. Junior students are not permitted to use mobile phones during the day. Senior students may use them in their tutor room at breaks only. They will not use their Chromebooks or mobile phone to record or photograph any person or activity related to school without prior permission. Students will not send messages, make phone calls or use any social media during the school day, unless instructed by a teacher. If students use their devices inappropriately or without permission the device will be confiscated and returned to their parent/guardian only.
7. Students will be on time for school and class.
8. Students will show respect for all property and equipment in the school and on the school premises. Students will not throw litter and will assist with keeping the school clean and tidy.
9. Students will dress in accordance with the school dress code.
10. As attendance is of key importance to our students' success, we ask that all appointments, when possible, are scheduled outside school time. Parents/Guardians may not ring the school requesting that a student leave early. A note from the parent/guardian is required. The student may give the note to their tutor at tutor time to be signed and presented at reception at the designated time.

I/We agree that our child will abide by the school's code of behaviour and the expectations above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian signature

Parent of \_\_\_\_\_ in class/year \_\_\_\_\_

# Parental permission for use of Photographs and digital images.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The school maintains a database of photographs and digital images (including video) of school events held over the year. It has become customary to take photographs of students engaged in activities and events in the interest of creating a pictorial as well as historical record of life at the school. Photographs/digital images may be published on our school website or in brochures, yearbooks, newsletters, local and national newspapers and similar school- related productions. In the case of website photographs/digital images, student names will not appear on the website as a caption to the picture. If you or your child wish to have his/her photograph/digital image removed from the school website, brochure, yearbooks, newsletters etc. at any time, you should write to the Principal.

Consent - tick one

1. I am happy to have my child's photograph/digital image taken as part of school activities and included in all such records
  
2. I would prefer not to have my child's photograph/digital image taken and included in such records
  
3. I am happy for my child's photograph/digital image to be taken and included, as 1. above, but would prefer not to have images of my child appear on the school website, in school brochures, yearbooks, newsletters etc.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Class/ Year \_\_\_\_\_

# Notes