



MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL

INCHICORE

Code Of Positive Behaviour

This policy supports our mission to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment where every student can thrive.

POLICY Details

DATE CREATED

May 2026

LAST REVIEWED

May 2026

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June 2027

POLICY OWNER

Mercy Inchicore

APPROVED BY

Board of Management

DATE APPROVED

22/06/2026

OUR MERCY VALUES

BE READY

Be prepared. Be on time.

BE RESPECTFUL

Show respect. Use kind words.

BE RESPONSIBLE

Take ownership. Do your best.

BE KIND

Show compassion. Look out for one another.

We are a Mercy school community, living our values each day in all that we do.

Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore

Charity Number: 20145880



Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore

Code of Behaviour

2026 / 2027

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 T.Y. and L.C.A. 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, BÍ Cineálta Anti-Bullying policy, Mobile Phone and Device Acceptable Use 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, kindness 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. Our approach to positive behaviour is built on four pillars:

BE RESPECTFUL	BE READY	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE KIND
Treating all members of our community with dignity and courtesy.	Arriving on time, prepared and with all materials needed for learning.	Taking ownership of our actions, our learning and our environment.	Showing kindness, inclusion and support for all members of our community.

In Mercy Secondary, we promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour through:

- 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 reinforce 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 which is placed in the student file. It is accepted that Parents/Guardians are acknowledging agreement of the Code of Behaviour when their child is admitted to our school and that they will make every effort to ensure that their child complies with every aspect of the Code.

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

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 all materials and equipment they need to all relevant classes. Where the school provides devices for student use, students are expected to treat these with respect and care, ensuring they are handled appropriately and returned in good condition.
- 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.** Mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted for any student during the school day. This is a blanket ban applying to all year groups. Students will not use any device to record or photograph any person or activity related to school without prior permission from a member of staff. If a student is found using a device without permission, it will be confiscated and returned to their parent/guardian only. Transgressions may be dealt with under this Code of Behaviour and/or the Mobile Phone and Device Acceptable Use Policy.
- 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 requests for a student to leave early are submitted on TYRO before the beginning of the school day. Parents/Guardians may also ring the school, however we strongly prefer that early leave requests are submitted on TYRO in advance. A note may be given to the class teacher but this is not required where a TYRO request has been submitted.

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. Parents/Guardians are asked to submit an absence notification on TYRO before the beginning of the school day. This allows the school to manage attendance efficiently and ensures that students are accounted for promptly.

If a student needs to leave school early, an early leave request should be submitted on TYRO before the beginning of the school day. Parents/Guardians may also ring the school, but we strongly prefer TYRO requests as unannounced arrivals at the school can cause significant disruption — the school is not in a position to make announcements over the intercom requesting students to come to reception, as this interrupts classes in progress. Parents/Guardians who arrive unannounced may be required to wait until a member of the office staff is available to personally collect the student from class.

Students who feel unwell during the school day should inform their class teacher, who will refer them to the Year Head. Phone calls home for illness will normally only be made at small break or lunch break, unless the situation is of an emergency nature.

No student may absent themselves from class at any time without permission. The Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal will assess the situation and will authorise contact with a Parent/Guardian where appropriate.

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 inconvenience 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 move to the next class promptly. Materials needed for class should be gathered by students during break times.

Students arriving late in the morning or during the day must sign in at reception. The late arrival will be noted on TYRO by the office and a sign in stamp will be placed on the student's journal with the corresponding date.

Students who accumulate two or more late arrivals in a single school week (Monday to Friday) will receive a lates detention, which takes place after school on Fridays and lasts 30 minutes. This applies regardless of the reason for lateness unless a prior arrangement has been made with the school.

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 must be brought to all classes and kept on the student's desk at all times during class. It should be available to all members of staff at all times and 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 materials, should complete homework on time and be prepared and present for all tests and examinations. Where a student does not present homework on a given occasion, the teacher will use their professional judgement as to whether this is a one-off situation or a pattern. Where a pattern emerges, the matter will be treated initially as a student support issue and referred to the Student Support Team. Where evidence indicates that a student is repeatedly refusing to complete homework without reason, this may be escalated and treated as a behavioural concern.

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.
- h)** Students must attend all timetabled classes and may not be in any part of the school building or grounds other than where they are scheduled to be without the permission of a member of staff. Where a student is found to be avoiding class or concealing themselves in parts of the building, the school will initially respond in a supportive manner to understand the reason behind the behaviour and to put appropriate supports in place. However, given that students concealing themselves in unsupervised areas of the building poses a significant risk to their health and safety and to the school's duty of care, persistent refusal to attend class without good reason will be treated as a serious matter and may result in suspension.

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 or defaced in any way. The Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head reserves the right to search a student's locker/storage box in the presence of that student. Where a criminal element is suspected, the locker may be searched in the company of An Garda Síochána.

7.7 Bullying:

(Please refer to our Bí Cineálta policy and procedures)

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 Bí Cineálta 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.

Where a student arrives without their full uniform, the school will endeavour to offer them a spare uniform to wear for the day. If a student declines to wear the spare uniform provided, a parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to bring the correct uniform to the school, or to arrange for the student to go home briefly to retrieve it.

- 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 is not permitted. Facial piercings are not permitted.
- f) Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times. Crocs, slippers or similar open/unsecured footwear are not permitted on health and safety grounds.
- g) The school tracksuit may be worn for P.E. A white school polo shirt may also be required. Students who do not have their PE gear must wear their full school uniform for the school day.

7.9 Smoking, Alcohol and Substance Use:

(Please refer to the Substance Use policy)

7.10 Mobile Phones and Devices:

Mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted for any student during the school day. This is a blanket ban that applies to all year groups without exception. Students may not use their devices at any time during the school day, including at break and lunch times.

Students may not use any device to record or photograph any person or activity related to school without prior permission from a member of staff. If a student is found using a device without permission, it will be confiscated and returned to their parent/guardian only.

Transgressions of this policy may be dealt with under this Code of Behaviour and/or the Mobile Phone and Device Acceptable Use Policy. Please refer to the Mobile Phone and Device Acceptable Use Policy for full details.

7.11 Cars, Bicycles and Scooters:

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.

Students who cycle or use scooters must dismount at the school gate and walk their bicycle or scooter to the designated lockup area. The same applies when leaving — students must walk their bicycle or scooter from the lockup to the main gate before mounting.

Scooters that are illegal, or scooters being used by students under the age of 16, are not permitted on school grounds in accordance with the Road Traffic Acts. Students and Parents/Guardians are reminded of their obligations under the Road Traffic Acts in relation to the use of personal transport devices.

Students must secure their bicycle or scooter with their own lock. The school takes no responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of any bicycle, scooter or other vehicle left on school grounds.

7.12 Disciplinary Procedures:

The procedures for dealing with behaviour in Mercy Secondary School are guided by our "Behaviour Matters" framework: Our Actions. Our Community. Our Mercy. This framework is restorative in nature and is built on our four pillars of Be Respectful, Be Ready, Be Responsible and Be Kind.

The class teacher has primary responsibility for managing behaviour within their classroom. The principle underpinning our approach is that behaviour is managed at the lowest appropriate level, with the aim of restoring right relationships so that learning can resume. The higher up the referral structure an issue is dealt with, the more seriously it is viewed. Staff involved in reporting an incident are informed of outcomes.

Note: The Tutor fulfils a pastoral and administrative role. Behaviour referrals are directed to the Year Head, not the Tutor. Student support matters (including attendance concerns, SEN, and wellbeing) are referred to the Student Support Team.

Subject Teacher → Year Head → Deputy Principal → Principal

Behaviour Matters: Our Actions. Our Community. Our Mercy.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR RECOGNITION

We recognise and celebrate positive choices from our students. Positive behaviour is recorded and communicated to students and, where appropriate, to Parents/Guardians.

BEHAVIOUR RESPONSES

When students fall below our expectations, we follow a restorative process to restore relationships and re-engage with learning. Teachers manage behaviour in the classroom in the first instance.

IN LINE WITH EXPECTATIONS

Recognising students who consistently meet our everyday expectations. Noted by the subject teacher and communicated positively to the student.

BEING KIND

Recognising students who demonstrate kindness, inclusion and support for others — living our school value of Bí Cineálta.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Students who consistently demonstrate exemplary behaviour and a positive contribution to school life may be put forward for nomination to the Student Council or for other student representative opportunities within the school.

DISREGULATION

Behaviour that continues or escalates and disrupts the learning environment. The class teacher manages this in the classroom in the first instance using low-level responses. If behaviour persists, the teacher makes a note on TYRO and the Year Head is informed.

SERIOUS DISREGULATION

More serious behaviour that cannot be managed at classroom level, or where a student's continued presence poses a risk. This requires immediate referral to the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. A restorative conversation will take place, a sanction will be applied and all relevant parties will be informed.

Student Support: A Distinct Category

Mercy Secondary School recognises that certain situations are best addressed through support rather than sanction. The following are treated in the first instance as student support matters and are referred to the Student Support Team:

- Arriving without their journal
- Arriving without the correct uniform
- Failing to complete homework on a given occasion
- Attendance concerns
- SEN and wellbeing matters

These issues will be followed up through a supportive conversation with the student and their family. However, where evidence emerges that a student is repeatedly and deliberately refusing to meet these expectations without good reason, the matter may be escalated and treated as a behavioural concern at the appropriate level of the referral structure.

The following three-stage framework applies to all year groups. At every stage, the dignity of both the student and the teacher will be respected and a restorative conversation will follow any sanction. The school believes in the certainty of a sanction rather than the severity of a sanction as the key to changing behaviour.

Stage 1 — Redirect

All students are expected to follow classroom routines and seating plans from the outset. Seating arrangements are clearly communicated in each classroom and are not open to individual negotiation during class time.

Where a teacher notices low-level behaviour such as talking out of turn, being off task, turning around or failing to follow the seating plan, the teacher will offer the student a quiet, private check-in to see if they have everything they need and to redirect them back to learning.

This stage is not recorded on TYRO. It is a supportive redirect.

Stage 2 — Disregulation

If low-level behaviour persists after a redirect, or if the following behaviours occur, the teacher will record the incident on TYRO as Disregulation:

- Repeat of low-level behaviour following a redirect
- Absent from class without permission
- Inappropriate or disrespectful language or comments to staff or peers
- Messing in corridors

The class teacher will assign an appropriate sanction. Sanctions at this stage may include:

- A brief conversation with the student at the end of class
- A conversation at the classroom door during class
- Additional written work
- Completion of a Behaviour Reflection Sheet
- A phone call home
- Detention

Stage 3 — Serious Disregulation

Where behaviour escalates to any of the following, it will be recorded on TYRO as Serious Disregulation and referred immediately to the Year Head:

- Strong and repetitive defiance
- Persistent refusal to attend class or concealing themselves in parts of the building (following initial supportive intervention)
- Throwing an object to inflict injury
- Theft
- Physical aggression
- Verbal aggression to staff or peers
- Recording or photographing any member of the school community without permission
- Having a mobile phone, recording equipment, camera or music player without permission
- Misuse of, or damage to, school devices, equipment or property

Sanctions at this stage are more significant and will be determined by the Year Head in consultation with the Deputy Principal or Principal as appropriate. They may include:

- Phone call home
- Wednesday detention
- Referral to the Deputy Principal or Principal
- Suspension

A restorative conversation will always follow a sanction at this stage. The aim is to repair relationships, understand the cause of the behaviour and put supports in place to prevent recurrence.

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 and the Deputy Principal/Principal for signature.
- e) Detention. Wednesday detentions are assigned by the Year Head. A letter is issued to the student on the Monday of that week and students are expected to bring this home to their parent/guardian. The detention is also recorded on TYRO, which generates an immediate notification to parents/guardians who have notifications enabled. The school also endeavours to send the detention letter to parents/guardians by text on the Tuesday prior to the detention. A Friday lates detention (30 minutes) is assigned by the Year Head to any student who accumulates two or more sign in stamps in a single school week. Parents/Guardians are asked to monitor their child's journal as sign in stamps serve as a record of late arrivals.
- 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.

Sanctions and Individual Needs:

In applying any sanction, the school will have regard to the individual needs of the student, including any special educational needs, relevant support plans or personal circumstances. Sanctions will always be proportionate and applied in a manner consistent with the dignity and wellbeing of the student. Where a student has an Individual Education Plan, a Student Support Plan or other relevant documentation, this will be taken into account before any sanction is imposed.

Records and Data Protection:

All behaviour records, including records of meetings, phone calls and significant interactions, are maintained on TYRO. Routine behaviour records are accessible to all teaching staff and to the parent or guardian of the student. Certain records, such as notes of meetings and phone call logs, are held in a section of TYRO that is not routinely visible to parents, but parents and guardians may request access to these records in accordance with their rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Acts. All records are managed and retained in accordance with the school Data Protection and Records Retention policy.

8. Suspension

8.1 Definition:

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent themselves 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. The following are examples of circumstances in which suspension may be considered; this list is not exhaustive:

- 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 child 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 five 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 (Education Act: Section 29) in particular circumstances

Where deemed necessary, a reintegration meeting will be arranged between the student, their Parents/Guardians and relevant school staff prior to or upon the student's return. The purpose of this meeting is to support the student's return to education, to address any underlying issues and to put in place any supports that may be required going forward.

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 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. 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 reintegrate into school.

8.12 Records and Reports:

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

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

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 them 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 considered in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as:

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

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

- 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 student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made. If the Parents/Guardians and student 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, 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 is being asked to consider expulsion; ensure that Parents/Guardians have records of the allegations, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds; provide the Board with the same comprehensive records as are given to Parents/Guardians; notify the Parents/Guardians of the date of the hearing and invite them to attend; advise the Parents/Guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board; and ensure that Parents/Guardians have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

3. Consideration by the Board of Management and the holding of a hearing

The Board will review the initial investigation and ensure that it was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. 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 is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its 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.

5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of the notification, the Educational Welfare Officer must consult with the Principal, Parents/Guardians and student, and 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.

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 and will be informed about the right to 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. 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 at the end of the 2026/2027 academic year.

Ratification by Board of Management

This policy was reviewed and agreed by the Board of Management at its meeting on 22nd June 2026.

Signed:

Signed:

Michelle O'Kelly, Secretary

Anthony Malone, Chairperson

Date: 22nd June 2026

Appendix A – Behaviour Matters Framework

The Behaviour Matters framework summarises our three-stage approach to behaviour: Redirect, Disregulation and Serious Disregulation, alongside our Positive Behaviour Recognition categories.



Appendix B – Behaviour Reflection Sheet

The Behaviour Reflection Sheet is used as part of the restorative process at the Disregulation stage. Students are asked to reflect on what happened, who was affected and what they could do differently.

BEHAVIOUR REFLECTION SHEET A MOMENT TO REFLECT. A CHANCE TO MAKE IT RIGHT.	
Student Name: _____ Class: _____ Teacher: _____ Date: _____	
1 WHAT HAPPENED? Briefly describe what happened from your point of view. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	2 WHICH SCHOOL EXPECTATION WAS AFFECTED? Be Ready Be Respectful Be Responsible Be Kind
	3 WHO WAS AFFECTED BY MY BEHAVIOUR? ☐ Myself ☐ My class ☐ Other students ☐ The wider school community ☐ My teacher ☐ Other: _____
4 WHAT WAS I THINKING AT THE TIME? _____ _____ _____ _____	5 LOOKING BACK, WHAT COULD I HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY? _____ _____ _____ _____
6 WHAT WILL I DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME? _____ _____ _____	7 RESTORING THE SITUATION Is there anything I can do to repair the situation or improve things? _____ _____ _____
8 AGREED NEXT STEPS ☐ Verbal reminder ☐ Apology ☐ Restorative conversation ☐ Contact home ☐ TYRO entry ☐ Referral to Year Head ☐ Other: _____	
 We all make mistakes. What matters is learning, reflecting and moving forward.	

Appendix C – Classroom Routines

Classroom routines are clearly displayed in all classrooms. Students are expected to follow these routines from the moment they enter the room.

IN CLASS EXPECTATIONS

ONE CLASS. ONE VOICE. ONE FOCUS.

	ONE VOICE One voice for all questions and discussions. Raise your hand if you want to ask a question or contribute.	
	TOILET USE Your teacher may ask you to wait a short time while an important topic is being covered or if there are only 10 minutes until break or home time.	
	JOURNALS ON DESK Place your journal, books and equipment on the desk, ready for the teacher.	
	JACKETS OFF. BAGS ON THE FLOOR. Remove your jacket and place your bag on the floor. Keep your area clear and ready to learn.	
	WATER BOTTLES Use break time to fill your bottle. Let's keep our lessons focused.	
	FEELING UNWELL? If you are sick, your Year Head will sign a letter for you to call home at small break or lunch only. Speak to them before class if you need to.	
	EXITING THE ROOM - Tidy your area. - Fix the table and chair. - Leave only when the teacher advises. - Only pack up when told to do so.	

Out be ready. Be respectful. Be responsible. Be kind.

BE READY

BE RESPECTFUL

BE RESPONSIBLE

BE KIND