

COLÁISTE / GAELCHOLÁISTE CHOILM

BALLINCOLLIG

CO. CORK

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Code of Behaviour of Coláiste/Gaelcholáiste Choilm

Scope

This code applies to students of Coláiste/Gaelcholáiste Choilm and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. This policy was drawn up in consultation with all the school partners, including Board of Management, Staff, Parents and Students. This policy was reviewed in 2012/2013 in line with National Educational Welfare Board guidelines.

Relationship to schools mission, vision, aims.

This policy has been developed in line with the mission of our School which has at its core, the care of the student. The school strives to provide a safe secure learning environment for the development of our students. Our school Code of Behaviour is based on respect for oneself, for others and for our environment, so that a positive and cooperative school atmosphere prevails.

Rationale

Many people work together in our school each day and therefore a high level of courtesy and consideration for others is necessary. Behaviour which is ill mannered, annoying, dangerous or disruptive cannot be allowed. Our code is one that is based on the recognition of the student as an individual and yet creates an environment in which the welfare of all is protected.

Goals / Objectives

The aims of our Code of Behaviour are:

- To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning
- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- 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
- To help students mature into responsible and participating citizens
- To allow for the appropriate involvement of all school personnel
- To ensure understanding by the parents, students, staff and management of the Code of Behaviour and the reasons for it
- To outline the strategies to be used to prevent poor behaviour and the ways in which positive behaviour is acknowledged
- To outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions that will be used in response to negative behaviour
- To outline the interventions to be used when a student repeatedly misbehaves

Roles and Responsibilities

The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and the behaviour of everyone in the school. Our school acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour and a role in strengthening positive relationships of respect and trust.

Students

The school expects that students will at all times do their best to uphold the code of behaviour of our school.

Parents/Guardians

The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour and expects them to support the code and encourage their sons/daughters to uphold it.

Teachers

The quality of relationships between teachers and students is a powerful influence on behaviour in the school. The code fosters relationships of trust between students and teachers. The school acknowledges the role of teachers in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour. The school recognises that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management. That pivotal role forms a core element of this code. We have teachers assigned to each class and year group with special responsibilities for operating the code. Subject Teachers/Tutors/Year Heads/Guidance Counsellor, Home School Community Liaison, Learning Support Teachers, Psychological Services, Chaplain, Other Agencies, Deputy Principals and Principal all have specific roles to play in upholding the code.

Other Staff

The school acknowledges the contribution of ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful operation of our Code of Behaviour. In particular they have a responsibility to report incidents of misbehaviour and examples of positive behaviour they witness.

Board of Management

The Board of Management is the decision making body of the school, as outlined in the Model Agreement. (The Model Agreement is the agreement between Co. Cork VEC and the Diocese of Cork and Ross for the establishment, organisation and management of the School.) The school acknowledges its role in the development and operation of our Code of Behaviour. All policies are developed with the authority of the Board of Management and must be approved by its members before becoming official school policy. While members of the Board of Management are not involved in the day to day procedures, they are the body to whom parents and students over 18 may appeal in cases of suspension or expulsion.

The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for students.

Parents/Guardians are expected to model the standards that the students are asked to respect.

The ways in which parents and teachers interact provides students with a model of good working relationships.

SCHOOL RULES.

School Rules apply whenever you are wearing the school uniform, when representing the school or when engaged in any school activity.

School rules describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible adults They are there to safeguard students' right to learn and teachers' right to teach in a caring, safe and respectful environment. Therefore ...

We expect

1. That you come to school every day and arrive on time
2. That you come to school in full uniform, clean and tidy
3. That you have respect for people and property and that you report any accidental damage that you may cause or may have seen
4. That you do your best in class and at your homework
5. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects
6. That you act in an appropriate manner around the school

SCHOOL RULES EXPLAINED.

1. **That you come to school every day and arrive on time. This means:**
 - That you are in the school building at 8.55 for morning classes and 1.55 for afternoon classes
 - That you attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable. Mitching is regarded as being a particularly serious transgression of the rules
 - That if you miss school you bring a note in your dialann from your parent/guardian on your return to school and present to Year Head and Subject Teachers

- That if you are unavoidably late, you bring a note from your parent/guardian and sign the Late Book in the office
- That if you are sick during the school day and need to leave the school, a parent (or authorized adult) must collect you
- That if you must leave school during the day you must get the parental note signed by your Year Head or Deputy Principal prior to signing out at the office
- That you proceed to all classes without delay and arrive on time
- That you do not go to the toilets/lockers between or during classes without your teachers' permission
- That you behave yourself on your way to and from school
- Enter the school through the designated door
- That you behave on the school buses

Because

- Time missed is hard to make up
- The school is entitled to an explanation for your absences
- It is expected that a late arrival to school be explained out of courtesy
- Arriving late for class wastes your time, the teacher's time and class time
- Going to the toilets/lockers during or between classes disrupts class
- The school rules apply on your way to and from school and during lunch break

2. That you come to school in full uniform, clean and tidy. This means

- You wear the full school uniform in school at all times except, when otherwise directed by the school
- You are required to bring the appropriate sports gear for participation in timetabled P.E. classes
- You should have a neat, tidy and natural looking hairstyle. Hair stencils are not permitted
- Hats and scarves are to remain in your school bag for the duration of the school day. Coats, jackets and sweatshirts are not permitted in class. These should be hung in designated areas.
- Smoking is forbidden anytime you are wearing the school uniform, when representing the school or when engaged in any school activity
- No facial piercing allowed. Boys and girls are permitted to wear stud earrings only. Excessive additional jewellery is not allowed
- Make-up is allowed only if it is natural and subtle
- A t-shirt is optional under school shirt provided it is white

Because

- You should wear your uniform with pride, be dressed suitably for school activities and be good ambassador when representing the school
- Hair style/colour should be in keeping with a dress code suitable for school
- Wearing jewellery can be dangerous – it should be left at home
- Hats and scarves can be a distraction in class
- Smoking is unhealthy. Students should always be good ambassadors of their school

3. That you have respect for people and for property and that you report any accident that you may cause or may have seen. This means

- Being helpful and treating other students, all staff and visitors to the school with good manners and respect
- Respecting the instructions of your teachers and staff
- Any form of bullying is unacceptable
- That you should proceed in an orderly fashion around the corridors.
- That you don't use offensive or abusive language
- That you use the litter bins in classrooms, in social areas and in the school grounds
- That you respect the school property and the property of other people
- Reporting any accidental damage you may have caused or seen to the main office

Because

- Like you, they are entitled to good manners and respect.
- Teachers are entitled to your respect and co-operation
- Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery
- Rough behaviour can lead to accident or injury.
- Offensive or abusive language shows disrespect and can cause hurt
- Keeping the school environment pleasant and litter free is everyone's responsibility
- You would expect the same respect for your property
- The school authorities might have no other way of knowing if damage is caused to property or equipment

4. That you do your best in class and at your homework. This means

- That you listen in class to your teachers
- That you contribute to class and participate in class to the best of your ability
- That you do not interfere with teaching and learning
- That you don't disturb the class
- That you sit in an orderly manner at all times
- That you do your homework each night, written and oral and to an acceptable standard
- That you always have your dialann with you and take down your homework in it (Date, time and Question numbers)
- That you get it signed by your parent/guardian each week
- That if you need to leave your classroom, you must get permission from your teacher with a note of explanation in your dialann.
- If you are required by another teacher, that teacher must note this in your dialann and you must present this note to your timetabled teacher at the start of the class
- That you help keep your classrooms tidy

Because

- The teacher is trying to help you
- Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn
- It is dangerous to swing back on two legs of your chair
- Homework is a back-up to the work done in class
- Your dialann helps you remember what you have to do
- Getting your dialann signed lets your parents see how you are getting on
- Getting your dialann signed to leave the classroom helps keep a record of your time missed and lets other teachers know that you have permission to be out of class
- It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves

5. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects. This means

- That you have the proper pens, books, copies etc required for each class and that you bring in any special materials/equipment needed for class
- All bags, books and homework journal be kept in good condition and free of graffiti
- That you are responsible for your own property

Because

- It only wastes time if you haven't got your pens, books etc.

- It is impossible to do the subject without the materials/equipment needed
- Having items not needed for class cause distractions and waste time
- Graffiti can offend. Neatness helps students stay organised
- You are old enough now to look after your own property

6. **That you act in an appropriate manner around the school. This means**

- You proceed quickly and quietly to each class, keeping to the right
- You wait quietly for your teacher while lining up outside the classroom
- You should avoid loitering in the toilets during break times or at any other times
- That eating and drinking is allowed within the school building only at specified times and areas
- Taking your break in the manner and area specified and obeying the instructions of the teacher on duty
- That you don't break, damage or deface school property
- That you must report to a teacher should you notice graffiti or damage to school property and especially if you notice graffiti on your own desk or chair
- That chewing gum is totally forbidden in the school building and grounds
- That you do not bring cigarettes, lighters or matches to school
- That there is an absolute ban on knives, lasers and any type of offensive weapons
- Mobile phones should be powered off from 9.00 to 11.40, 11.55 to 1.15 and 2.00 to 4.00
- That the production, display or circulation e.g. via facebook and internet, of written words, pictures or other materials which may intimidate, embarrass or erode the reputation of another person is totally unacceptable.
- Alcohol and illegal substances are totally forbidden
- You may not photograph or record in school without your teacher's permission

Because

- The one way system avoids confusion and accidents
- Lining up quietly is safer
- Loitering in toilets leads to congestion
- Specified times and places for eating/drinking helps to keep the school clean and pleasant
- Obeying break time rules and teachers instructions is safer and helps with supervision
- Others have to use the school property and repairs/replacements are expensive
- Everyone is responsible for helping to keep the school environment pleasant

- Chewing gum destroys flooring, school furniture, tarmac etc. It is a possible health hazard
- Smoking on the school premises is prohibited by law, and besides, it is unhealthy and dangerous
- The use of mobile phones is disruptive during school time
- Matches and lighters are dangerous. Also, this makes it easier not to be tempted to smoke
- Knives, lasers etc are banned for very obvious reasons
- Substance abuse is dangerous, unhealthy, addictive and illegal. It can cause misery and in the longer term may even destroy a young person's life

Preventative Measures

In our school, students will be encouraged in their endeavours to uphold the Code of Behaviour by use of the following measures:

- (a) The Code of Behaviour is published in the student dialann. Every September students and parents are asked to read it and to sign their agreement with the content. By doing so they acknowledge their support and co-operation with it. This is to ensure that parents and students understand what our rules are, why they must be adhered to and what procedures will be followed if the rules are not upheld. The Code of Behaviour is also available on the Coláiste Choilm website. Aspects of the code are explained at the information meeting held each year for parents of incoming First Years. Parents are encouraged to contact their son/daughter's tutor or year head if they wish to raise a concern about a behavioural matter. Parents are invited to get involved in the Parent Association or to avail themselves of the meetings/workshops organised by the association.
- (b) At the start of Term One each year, as part of our induction process, each class is brought through the Code of Behaviour and any amendments to it are highlighted. This is done so as to give students the opportunity to think and talk about behaviour, learning and rules so that they can understand what the Code of Behaviour means for them.
- (c) The Code of Behaviour is published in the Teachers' Diary. At the beginning of the school year Teachers are brought through the main aspects of the implementation of the code. This is done to promote consistency of practice. Specific rules and aspects of the code are highlighted in the weekly staff memo.
- (d) In our school we recognise that effective teaching and learning are closely linked to good behaviour. When students are engaged and motivated to learn, it is more likely that their behaviour will be positive. Teachers are encouraged to participate in continuous professional development. Within school, staff development includes exploring different teaching methods e.g. Assessment For Learning,

differentiation and Team Teaching. Regular Subject Department meetings address curriculum needs and promote collegiality among staff.

- (e) If a student is in breach of a rule, he/she may be asked to explain (orally or in writing) the rule he/she has breached, to describe what effect this breach has had on members of the school community, and how he/she could act differently in the future to avoid being in breach of the rule. This is done to develop the student's sensitivity and consideration for others and to assist them in upholding school rules in future. The principles of Restorative Justice are also applied where possible. Students are encouraged to speak to their tutor or year head if they wish to raise a concern about a behavioural matter.
- (f) School rules and the reason for them are discussed as part of the schools pastoral care programme or as part of SPHE. The notion of tolerance for others, self – control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are also discussed as part of the Religious Education programme in the school. Some of this work also takes place in CSPE class since it is the foundation of good citizenship.
- (g) Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism, Harassment, Violence, Substance Misuse etc are discussed with the students during their time in our school, using current legislation, current affairs and / or outside speakers. This is to help the students better understand these issues so that they can base their thinking, understanding and action on factual information and in the line with the values espoused in our school.
- (h) The school's Anti-Bullying policy, available in the student dialann and on the school website, sets out the actions taken in relation to alleged breaches of the policy. Each year in the school we have an Anti-Bullying week, which focuses the school community on promoting positive behaviour.

Students with Special Educational Needs:

Subject teachers, resource teachers and special needs assistants should check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with special educational needs can understand. This understanding needs to be checked from time to time especially where a student with special needs is acting in a way that would usually be seen as being in breach of the rules. Teachers may need support in understanding how best to help a student with special educational needs to conform to the behavioural standards and expectations of the school.

Rewards

In our school teachers use the following methods to reward students for upholding the code of conduct:

- Verbal praise of student by teacher privately

- Positive comment regarding the student to tutor or year head
- Verbal praise of student at assembly
- Leadership role given to students e.g. Team leader for special project or class rep
- Class outing related to the curriculum
- Brief, positive note or phone call to parents
- Highlight curricular/extra curricular achievements on notice board in classroom
- Display of student's work around the school
- Highlight curricular/extra curricular achievements in school/parent memo

Students with Special Educational Needs:

Rewards for students with special educational needs should take account of their particular learning styles. For all students and especially those with learning difficulties, a reward will have an impact when it is closely linked in time to the behaviour that is being rewarded.

Strategies and Sanctions

The purpose of these strategies and sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour. They help students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable and to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

The following strategies and sanctions are used so that our students understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences. They are scaled so as to take account of the nature of the incident, the situation leading up to the incident and are implemented by the staff of the school in accordance with our 'ladder of referral'(see pg 14).

- Student Dialann on the teacher's desk
- A reminder or caution to the student
- Interview or talk with the student outlining the expected behaviour
- Alter the seating arrangement or move the student seat
- Carrying out a useful task in school
- Extra appropriate work assignment
- Student to present to the teacher before school or at break with the work complete and/or an apology

- Note in Dialann
- A fine to cover the cost of repair or replacement
- Removal of privilege
- Detention – 24 hour notice
- Consultation with class tutor
- Phone call to parents
- Removal of student from scene of incident while still under supervision

Strategies and sanctions for *more serious* misdemeanors or for consistent breaches of our code of conduct include the following. These may be applied but not necessarily in the order listed

- Giving the student a piece of written work to do in which they have to outline in writing the rule/rules they breached, the effects this breach had on themselves and on other members of the school community and how they can avoid a repeat of this behaviour.
- Monitor sheet – issued by tutor¹
- Work Monitor Card
- Homework Card¹
- Behaviour Card¹
- Probation Card¹
- Refer student to Tutor / Year Head / Deputy Principal
- Removal of student from class and referral to Year Head / Deputy Principal
- Telephone call to parents by Tutor / Year Head / Deputy Principal
- Formal letter home from Tutor / Year Head / Deputy Principal
- Meeting with parents
- Suspension from School (see page 18)

¹ See Appendix for details on implementation.

SPECIFIC SANCTIONS

ISSUES AND SANCTIONS

Mobile Phone	Phone confiscated for 1 week
Lateness: (a) School (b) Class	(a) To be dealt with by the Deputy Principal. (b) To be dealt with by subject teacher.
Littering	Clean up duty.
Chewing gum	1 hour "formal detention".
Uniform	1 hour "formal detention".
Defacing School Property	Note in Dialann plus cost of repair or replacement. Detention Litter duty or similar civic minded activity
Smoking (in or out of school)	1 Day Suspension.
Inappropriate language / behaviour	Verbal reprimand, apology, note in Dialann
Abusive language or behaviour	Removal from class or area and referral to Year Head or Deputy. Suspension
No Dialann in class	Referral to Tutor and Dialann Replacement Sheet issued. Lunch time Detention
Mitching	Suspension

Referrals

The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour/breach of school rules are referred to as our ‘ladder of referral’.

The basic principle of this ladder of referral system is that the higher up the ladder an incident is dealt with, the more serious it is viewed.

The ladder of referral involves all staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour in a day-to-day and practical way. It gives an ownership of the policy to all staff and it is appropriate that they be involved because they are the on the ground practitioners who operate it on an on-going basis.

If a student has a problem which is contributing to their inability to uphold the Code of Behaviour then the following referrals may be made:

Referral to Tutor

Referral to Year Head

Referral to Deputy Principal/Principal

Referral to Guidance Counsellor

Referral to the School Chaplain

Referral to the schools psychologist for testing and / or help in behaviour modification.

Step1: The Subject Teacher

The subject teacher is the frontline source of help for students. As a leader of learning and someone with an established relationship of trust, the subject teacher will have a strong influence with students. Each teacher has the responsibility for managing behaviour in his/her own classroom and will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies. More serious offences should be dealt with under Step 2 of the ladder of referral.

Step2: The Class Tutor

Each class is assigned a teacher with special responsibility for them. He/she has a pastoral and disciplinary role to play with this class group. A serious offence or a number of minor offences will warrant reporting to the Year Head.

Step 3: The Year Head

Each Year Group is assigned a teacher with special responsibility for them. He/she has a pastoral and disciplinary role to play with the class groups that make up this year group.

Step 4: The Deputy Principal / Principal

Students whose behaviour has not been modified despite the school's best efforts will be referred by the Year Head to the Deputy Principal / Principal. If the Deputy Principal / Principal decide that a suspension is warranted the procedures in our policy on suspension and expulsion will be followed.

Student files are kept in the main office. Completed monitor sheets and cards are filed, as are copies of letters home relating to sanctions and interventions.

- **Implementation**

All registered students of the school have a copy of the Code of Behaviour in their student dialann. The Code of Behaviour is published on the school website and is also available from the school upon request. All staff have a copy of the code in their teacher diary.

At the start of Term One each year, as part of our induction process, each class is brought through the Code of Behaviour and any amendments to it are highlighted. This is done so as to give students the opportunity to think and talk about behaviour, learning and rules so that they can understand what the Code of Behaviour means for them.

At the beginning of the school year Teachers are brought through the main aspects of the implementation of the code. This is done to promote consistency of practice. Specific rules and aspects of the code are highlighted in the weekly staff memo.

Success Criteria/Monitoring

This Code of Behaviour was drawn up in consultation with the parents, students, staff and management of our school and was ratified by the Board of Management on March 14th 2013 and will be reviewed every five years.

The code will be monitored on a regular basis. Aspects of the code will be discussed formally at the fortnightly pastoral meeting, at year head/tutor meetings each term and informally at frequent meetings between members of staff. Teachers are encouraged to communicate concerns and suggestions to the pastoral team.

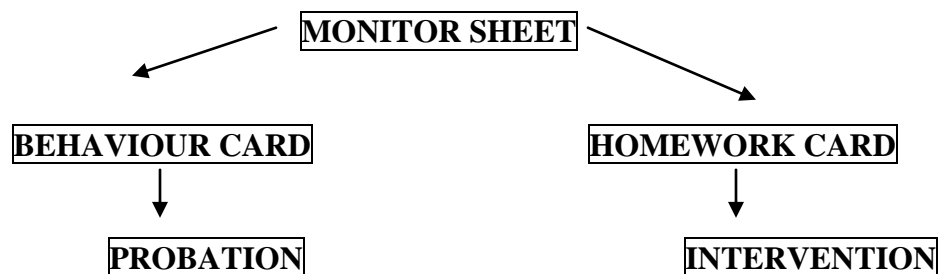
Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of our Code of Behaviour and will be communicated to the members of the school community in writing.

APPENDIX

Monitor Sheet and Card System, and its Implementation

Rationale: Uniformity of approach leads to more effective interventions. This ultimately benefits all concerned.

These proposals are drafted and modified in consultation with Tutors and Year Heads. The Monitor Sheet and Card System is based on Subject Teachers' comments in the Dialann. Fundamental to its effectiveness is a consistency of approach by each individual Subject Teacher when writing notes in the Dialann. A note is written in the Dialann when there is an unsatisfactory pattern in a pupils behaviour: homework repeatedly undone, constantly late, repeated episodes of misbehaviour. A single serious episode of misbehaviour may also warrant a Dialann note. It is important that the Subject Teacher has employed strategies of encouragement and sanction prior to writing a Dialann note, and that this is recorded. This ensures that the Tutors have a solid basis on which to work when they are required to intervene on behalf of the Subject Teachers.



MONITOR SHEET:

Issued to monitor not to punish.

Issued by Tutor, and checked daily by Tutor.

Parents notified by Tutor. Tutor indicates the reason for the sheet.

Pupil monitored for 5 school days. The Tutor may decide to extend the number of days.

A card replacement sheet will be issued, and student will be placed on detention in the event of failure to present the card.

On satisfactory completion Pupil returns sheet to Tutor, who returns it to Year Head for filing. If unsatisfactory, Tutor refers to Year Head. Year Head issues a Homework Card or a Behaviour Card depending on the individual case. Parents will check Dialann nightly in the week following being placed on Monitor Sheet.

HOMEWORK CARD:

This is a sanction.

Year Head issues the card, in consultation with the Tutor.

Parents are notified.

Pupil reports to Year Head each day for 5 days.

Pupil completes two lunchtime detentions.

A card replacement sheet will be issued, and student will be placed on detention in the event of failure to present the card

On completion, Pupil gives Homework Card to Year Head for filing.

If unsatisfactory, Year Head notifies parents and the Homework Card is extended for a further 5 days.

If the pupil is unsatisfactory on the extended Homework Card, a Parent-Pupil-Year Head meeting is organised. The issues are discussed; School Rules and acceptable standards of work are reiterated. A second Homework card is issued.

BEHAVIOUR CARD:

This is a sanction.

Year Head issues the card, in consultation with the Tutor.

Parents are notified.

Pupil reports to Year Head each day.

Pupil completes 2 lunchtime detentions

A card replacement sheet will be issued, and student will be placed on detention in the event of failure to present the card.

On completion, Pupil gives Behaviour Card to Year Head for filing.

If unsatisfactory, Year Head notifies parents by standard letter, and the Behaviour Card is extended for a further 5 days.

If the Pupil is unsatisfactory on the extended Behaviour Card, a Parent-Pupil-Year Head meeting is organised. The issues are discussed; School Rules and acceptable standards of behaviour are reiterated.

Pupil takes ownership of their inappropriate behaviour and its effects on others and undertakes in a satisfactory manner to behave in accordance with School Rules.

A second Behaviour Card (or a Probation Card) is issued.

PROBATION:

Prior to Probation, Parents must always be met by the Year Head / Deputy Principal.

This applies regardless of a recent meeting in relation to the Behaviour Card. Probation is a serious sanction. This should be communicated to the Pupil and Parents. It is necessary that all involved understand that Probation, by definition, means that admission to class is conditional on appropriate behaviour, and nothing short of this is acceptable.

A card replacement sheet will be issued, and student will be placed on detention in the event of failure to present the card.

Pupil completes 2 lunchtime detentions.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

In Coláiste Choilm all students have the right to learn in an orderly and caring environment. Our Code of Behaviour sets out the expectations of student behaviour. All students, teachers and support staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination.

There will be cases of unacceptable behaviour where it will be in the best interests of the school community or the student involved, that student be removed from classes or the school for a period of time or completely. Suspension or expulsion are the options available to the Principal in these situations.

SUSPENSION POLICY:

- Suspension allows the student time to reflect on his/her behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour, which led to the suspension and to accept responsibility for changing his/her behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future. It also allows time for school personnel to plan appropriate support for the student to assist with successful re-entry.
- It is most effective when it highlights the parents'/guardians' responsibility for taking an active role, in partnership with the school, to work with their child to enable the child's behaviour to change. The school will work with parents/guardians with a view to assisting a suspended student to rejoin the community as quickly as possible.
- The following steps are taken as part of the suspension policy.

Suspension	
<i>Suspension of less than six days</i>	<i>Suspension of more than six days</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decision made by Deputy Principal ● Principal informed ● Tutor/Year Head informed ● Parents informed ● Appeal to Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decision made by Principal ● Deputy Principal/Year Head/ Tutor informed ● Parents informed ● Welfare Officer informed ● Appeal to Board of Management

- The names of any suspended students will be written on the whiteboard in the staffroom in order to inform staff

PRIOR TO SUSPENSION:

The Principal/Deputy Principal will:

- Ensure the student is given the opportunity to write a detailed account of the event/incident
- Ensure all discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
- Ensure all appropriate support personnel internal and external have been involved
- Ensure that discussion has occurred with the student and parent/guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to suspension
- Ensure that diagnostic assessments have been carried out where appropriate (i.e. NEPS), particularly where unacceptable behaviour is ongoing and consistent
- (except in cases of very serious misconduct) Ensure a formal written warning detailing these behaviours is provided, as well as clear expectations of what is required of the student in the future
- Ensure all action taken is recorded
- Ensure all correspondence is copied

Immediate suspension may occur in some circumstances e.g. violence, threats of violence, presence of weapons, illegal drugs, etc.

PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION:

1. Principal/Deputy Principal makes decision on the basis of the reasons set out in the Code of Behaviour.
2. The student is informed of the grounds which give rise to the suspension.
3. Parents/Guardians are informed by phone, with written follow up by post, and invited to come to the school for a meeting.
4. Student will never be sent home during a school day, unless collected by parent/guardian; otherwise they will be supervised until suspension takes effect.
5. If a student is suspended for a cumulative total of 20 days or more in one school year, the Principal must inform the Education Welfare Officer.
6. The formal letter of notification will include:
 - Notice of the suspension
 - Effective date of the suspension or detention in Student Referral Unit which ever the school management will deem appropriate giving due consideration to all circumstances
 - Duration of the suspension.
 - Reasons for the suspension.
 - Expectations of the student while on suspension (Study Programme may be attached)
 - Importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter

- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians while on suspension
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed (If the suspension is longer than 6 days, or the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date)
- Information on Appeal rights (internal school appeal /Section 29 Appeal).
- Requirements which need to be in place when student returns (e.g. written apology, completed assignments, etc.)
- If consideration is being given to proceeding to expulsion, then the letter must make this clear

7. Procedures for the formal re-introduction of the student into the school:

- Parents may be requested to attend with the student on the day of his/her return to school
- Undertakings of good behaviour may be requested in writing
- Agreed conditions (e.g. counselling, referral to NEPS, other pastoral supports) may be signed by parent and pupil

GROUND FOR REMOVING A SUSPENSION

- During a meeting with the parents, the Deputy Principal/Principal/Board may agree that another sanction be applied.
- Successful appeal to the Principal/Board of Management.
- New circumstances come to light.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

The Principals of Natural Justice demand that there should always be an appeal available to a higher authority. The practicalities of school life mean that having a formal appeal to the Board of Management on short suspensions (less than 6 days) may be inappropriate, very time consuming and render the suspension meaningless. In Coláiste Choilm, the following appeals system is in place.

(1) For a suspension less than 6 days:

In this case the parents/guardian can make an appeal to the Principal. The following steps can be taken:

- Parents contact school to notify of their intention to appeal the suspension.
- Deputy Principal supplies Principal with
 - (a) A record of all the action taken.
 - (b) A copy of all correspondence.
- Principal meets with parents to discuss the above
- Principal makes a decision

Such an appeal may take a number of days. During this time the student remains at home. In the event of a successful appeal, the student returns to school immediately and the suspension is removed from the student's record.

(2) For a 6 day or greater suspension:

In this case the parents/guardians can make an appeal to the Board of Management. The following steps can be taken:

- Parents/Guardians contact school to notify of their intention to appeal the suspension
- A sub-committee of the Board are then informed of the appeal
- The Principal supplies the sub-committee of the Board with
 - (a) A record of all the action taken.
 - (b) A copy of all correspondence.
- The sub-committee of the Board meets with parents to discuss the above
- The sub-committee of the Board makes a decision

Such an appeal may take a number of days. During this time the student remains at home. In the event of a successful appeal, the student returns to school immediately and the suspension is removed from the student's record.

EXPULSION POLICY:

This is the ultimate sanction imposed by the school and is exercised by the Board of Management in extreme cases of indiscipline.

In advance of any hearing, which could result in an expulsion, the school will investigate the matter in accordance with the Principles of Natural Justice (see Appendix).

1. PRIOR TO EXPULSION

The Principal will:

- Ensure all discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
- Ensure all appropriate support personnel (internal and external) have been involved
- Ensure all other procedures, referrals, supports have been exhausted.
- Ensure that discussion has occurred with the student and parent / guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to expulsion
- Provide formal verbal and written warnings at appropriate times detailing these behaviours, as well as clear expectations of what was required of the

- student in the future.
- Record all action taken
- Copy all correspondence

2. PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION

Where the Principal recommends that the Board of Management should give consideration to expelling a student, the Principal will:

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

The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. The Board of Management will hold a hearing where the Principal and the parents put their case before the Board in each other's presence. In advance of the hearing the Board will:

- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board and invite them to that meeting
- Advise the parents that they can make a written submission to the Board
- Ensure that the parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the Board
- Ensure that the parents understand the purpose and process of the hearing

After both sides have been heard, the Board should ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

The Board may conclude that:

- The sanction of expulsion is not warranted
- Another sanction or intervention should be tried
- Expulsion is warranted

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions.

If the Board is of the opinion that the student should be expelled the following

procedure will be put in place:

- The parents will be told that the Board will inform the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) of its opinion and the parents will be advised to participate in the EWO consultation process
- The Board will notify the EWO in writing of its opinion to expel and the reasons for this opinion
- The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification
- The EWO will consult with the Principal, the parents and the student.
- The Board may consider it appropriate that a student should be suspended during this time

Following the EWO's consultations, the Board may decide, following a further Board meeting to proceed to expel the student. The decision to expel and the reasons for it will be notified to the parents and the student. The letter will include information about the right to appeal the decision to expel the student.

3. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Cork Education and Training Board.

In the event of an unsuccessful appeal to Cork ETB the parents/guardians may then appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

APPENDIX

PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE

PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All communities have a legitimate expectation that schools (Boards, Principals and teaching staffs) will follow these principles in all circumstances, particularly when dealing with suspensions and expulsions.

Procedural fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements.

1. The right to be heard which includes:

- The right to know why the action is happening
- The right to know the way in which the issues will be determined
- The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account
- The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations
- The right to an appeal.

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision which includes:

- The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker

As part of ensuring the right to be heard principals should establish if parents / guardians require an interpreter and, if so, make arrangements for one to be available.

Principals should also ensure that students and parents / guardians have access to policies and procedures under which action is being taken.

While it is generally preferable for the functions of investigating and deciding to be carried out by different people, in the school setting this may not always be possible.

If the Principal is conducting both the investigative and decision making stages, he or she must be reasonable and objective. Ultimately, the Principal must act justly and be seen to act justly. While it is difficult to combine the roles of investigator and adjudicator, given the nature of the Principal's responsibilities,

there may at times be no alternative to the Principal exercising both roles.

Nevertheless, it is preferable to have another appropriate officer, such as a deputy or assistant principal, carry out the investigation, if possible. The availability of a line of appeal to a more senior officer adds to the fairness of the process and offers a check in case there is a perception of a conflict of interest.

*To ensure the elements of procedural fairness are met, it is appropriate to provide student and their parents / guardians with details of all allegations relating to the incident. This usually will involve providing copies of any relevant statements. Should Principals be of the view that it is not appropriate to provide copies of statement, for example, because of a fear that witnesses may be intimidated, full details of the allegations outlined in the statements should be provided.

In matters where a long suspension or expulsion is contemplated, the gravity of the circumstances requires particular emphasis being given to procedural fairness. This includes the availability of a support person/observer at formal interviews, the key features of which should be taken down in writing.

Adapted from PROCEDURES FOR THE SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF SCHOOL STUDENTS , NSW Department of Education and Training 1998

