



SHS Code of Conduct

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SHS Code of Conduct 2022-2023

Introduction

Our students conduct themselves in ways their families and our school can be proud of. Not surprisingly, in a school population of close on 700 issues arise from time to time, most of which can be dealt with informally. Occasionally, situations arise that require to be dealt with more formally.

The purpose of this 'code of conduct' is to describe the standards of conduct our students are expected to observe and how transgressions of all types are dealt with.

Our overall approach is based on conforming to current good practice based on natural justice, fair procedures, and due process.

I trust that observance of this Code of Conduct will contribute to realising the mission and vision of our school.

Pauline McKenna,

Principal

General Summary of the Principles of Good Behaviour for all our students in the Sacred Heart School Tullamore

- **The school uniform listed below must be always worn**

Jewellery	Must be in keeping with the school ethos and uniform
Facial Piercings	Are not allowed.
Hairstyles	Hair should not be dyed an unnatural colour. Students will be advised when this happens and are expected to conform to a request for a reasonable change of colour.
School uniform consists of:	School skirt or trousers School jumper is mandatory School specified maroon half zip hoodie-this is optional School crested jacket only- no other jackets allowed in cold weather
Shoes	Dark shoes. Boots or light-coloured boots/shoes cannot be worn
PE Uniform	Grey Taz sweatshirt Grey Taz polo shirt School regulation tracksuit with the SHS stitching available form DARU clothing and G & T Drapery. Leggings of any type are not allowed PE uniform on PE days only.
Mobile Phones	Students may not use mobile phones during the school day.

- Attendance at class must be punctual. Unauthorised absence from class is forbidden. A note to explain any absence must be provided on return to school.
- Bullying or harassment in any form including sexual harassment, will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with according to the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Only devices configured by Wriggle are allowed to be used in school. Mobile phone cannot be used from 8.45 a.m.-3.30 p.m. and during Evening Study
- Copying during tests or examinations or any form of plagiarism and cheating will be considered a serious offence and dealt with accordingly.
- Students must use the school phone to contact a parent and must not leave the school without permission from the school office. This is an important child safety consideration, and the school expects it to be observed

Under Health & Safety, facial piercings MAY NOT be worn for the duration of the school day.

This includes:

Our Mission Statement

To provide a holistic education in the Mercy tradition

Our Vision

“In keeping with the Mercy tradition, we seek to achieve the holistic development and the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. We strive to ensure that our students leave our school with a healthy self-image, enhanced by the life skills and abilities necessary to make a positive contribution to society.”

A Voluntary Secondary School

Ours is what is known as a Voluntary Secondary School for girls. It dates from 1836 when the Mercy Sisters started a school soon after they arrived in Tullamore and founded their second house here.

The school is now a member of CEIST (Catholic Education, An Irish Schools Trust) and is managed by a Board of Management.

A Catholic School

A Catholic school helps students to develop their understanding of their faith. Ours is a Catholic school, but it is not a school for Catholics only. Due to the universal, non-discriminatory nature of Catholicism and the value it places on ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, seeing God at work in all people, Catholic schools are open to the admission of pupils of all faiths and none.

Catholic education values tolerance and inclusiveness and sees the presence of children from other denominations as an enrichment of the educational experience and an opportunity for deeper understanding among people holding diverse convictions.

1. Definition

The Code of Conduct is the set of programmes, practices, and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave appropriately and to engage fully with the learning process.

The Code of Conduct 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 Conduct
- School procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion

2. Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to all students until the completion of their Senior Cycle education in the 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. work experience. It also applies to the use of social media and more generally to behaviour that may have the effect of bringing the school into disrepute.

This code was formulated following consultation with students, parents, teachers, and the Board of Management and takes cognisance of the Education Act 1998 Section 28 & 29, the Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 23, the Equal Status Act 2000, and the Guidelines for Schools on Developing a Code of Behaviour (NEWB: 2008).

The Code should be read in conjunction with the Acceptable Users Policy (AUP), Substance Abuse policy, Anti Bullying policy, Mobile Phone policy and Pastoral Support practices. (Please see www.shstullamore.ie for details on these policies)

3. Relationship to our mission, values and aims

The Code of Conduct of the school is determined in the context of the school's Mission Statement, which has at its core the holistic development,

and care of each student. The code is an integral part of our culture and ethos where each student is encouraged and supported to be diligent, caring, and resilient with a desire to make a positive contribution to society.

4. Rationale

The Sacred Heart School promotes discipline in the classroom and in the school generally. Staff and management encourage a “can do” philosophy, where praise and encouragement are preferred to sanction and criticism. Therefore, relationships between staff and students are characterised by mutual respect, trust, caring and consideration for others in a learning environment that promotes excellence in teaching and learning. The Code of Conduct ensures that students naturally aspire to achieving their potential. The support of parents/guardians for the Code of behaviour is crucial, accordingly each parent who enrolls their daughter is deemed to have accepted the Code of Conduct.

5. Objectives of the Code of Conduct

- To establish a caring community of understanding and forgiveness in which the potential of each student can be developed
- To encourage the development of self-discipline and self-respect and foster an environment where there is respect for the rights, opinions, needs, and cultural background of others
- To promote an engaging and enjoyable learning environment
- To provide an environment which promotes academic and spiritual growth
- To have effective systems and procedures in place which allow for the effective day to day running of the school
- To enable the student to acquire and develop the necessary skills and attitudes to become responsible members of society

6. The Promotion of Good Behaviour

The school actively promotes good behaviour and does not tolerate inappropriate behaviour.

The quality of the teaching and learning experience in the school is of primary importance. Classes are well planned, students are encouraged, and feedback always focuses on the positive to enhance effort. Teachers recognise the importance of developing mutually respectful relationships that balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional

detachment, fairness, and consistency. Students are the subjects of the Code of Conduct and expected to be observant of it.

The Student Council, Staff and Parents Council were involved in the formulation of the Code of Conduct. A copy of the Code will be given to each student during Induction. Each parent /guardian is requested to sign the Confirmation of Acceptance of the Code of Conduct for incoming First Years, and this will be collected and filed by the relevant Year Head. (This will be distributed and collected by the Year Head). It is maintained by the Year Head for the duration of your daughter's stay in the school.

A copy of our Code has now been emailed to parents and it is also available on our website (www.shstullamore.ie) A copy of the Code will also be downloaded onto your daughter's device during Deployment in August.

Awareness of the Code of Conduct and Role of Parents and Guardians

The school will communicate with all parents at the start of each academic year, reminding them of key aspects of the Code. The Acceptable Usage Policy and Anti Bullying Policy are covered individually with each class group in an Induction and Orientation Programme with all first years and reviewed with each class annually at the beginning of the year.

The following are expectations of Parents/Guardians in relation to the Code:

- Provide the school with contact number where a responsible person designated by the parent/guardian may be contacted in case of illness or emergency
- Inform the school of any changes of address or phone numbers
- Inform the school of any trauma/difficulty/illness/medication which may affect your child's performance in school
- Inform the school if their daughter is ill or absent for any reason
- Inform the school if their daughter must take prescription medication during school hours
- Explain the Code of Conduct to their daughter
- Support the discipline structure of the school in order to maintain a good learning environment for all
- Ensure their daughter complies with sanctions or breaches of the school rules
- Ensure that deadlines for coursework and projects are met

- Check the school journal on a regular basis for correspondence and notes from teachers and results of tests
- Attend parent teacher meetings

At the start of each year, Form Teachers discuss and review the rules in the Code of Conduct with the students. School rules and the reasons for them are discussed as part of SPHE (Social, Personal, Health Education) and CSPE (Civic, Social, Political Education). The concepts of tolerance, self-control, fairness and the principles of natural justice are explored as part of the RE (Religious Education) programme. Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism and Substance Use are discussed with students in formal classes and /or with guest speakers.

The school needs the support of parents to meet the expectations of the school, the body of students and parents as regards good behaviour. Parents play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour and high expectations in school. The contribution of parents is welcomed and acknowledged by the school.

The Principal and Deputy Principal meet with the parents of First, Second and Fifth year between September and October of each academic year. The dates for the 'Information Nights' are published on the school website and communicated to all parents in advance. A reminder text is sent to the relevant parent group before each meeting. At this meeting the values underlining the Code of Conduct are explained. Parents 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.

The school recognises the challenges faced by parents and supports the Parents Association in the organisation of seminars /talks on behavioural matters, nutrition matters and Career Guidance information.

The school community rewards good behaviour and dedication to curricular and extracurricular activities by:

- Acknowledgements at Senior and Junior Assembly
- A positive comment in the School Journal
- A letter of commendation from Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal
- Recognition in the School Newsletter
- Presentation of Awards at the SHS Awards Morning
- Presentation of the Lisa Basset Award

- Presentation of the CEIST Perpetual Award
- Presentation of subject and activities awards at the end of the year to Junior and Senior Students

7.1 Attendance at School

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

The Education Welfare Act (2000) requires that the school should be notified if a student is absent. The blue slip at the end of the journal should be completed by a parent/guardian if a student has been absent or has an appointment. **All blue slips should be left in the School Office or will be collected by the Class Prefect by 8.45 each morning and recorded. Parents/Guardians are asked to provide a note explaining the reason for the absence. Parents are asked to use this process rather than ringing the school office.** These notes are recorded on Sims. Unauthorised absence from school is a significant breach of school discipline and the attendance strategy.

A student may not absent herself from class at any time. Students may not text parents to collect them from school. If a student feels ill, they must go to the School Office and use the school phone to contact a parent following assessment by Year Head or Deputy Principal. This is an important child safety consideration, and the school expects it to be observed.

A parent/guardian who wishes to collect a student from school without any of the above must first meet with the Deputy Principal/Year Head.

The Sacred Heart School Attendance Strategy is reviewed and updated each year and it is available on our school website.

In accordance with Section 21 of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the school is obliged to notify the National Education Welfare Board/Education Officer, 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 coming inconveniences both teachers and students.

All students must be in class on time. Pupils should only go to their lockers at break times – not between classes.

Class begins at 8.45 and students are expected to be at assembly when required or in their classroom at 8.40 on Monday and Friday. Arrivals after this time will not be admitted to class until the start of the next period. They will be asked to remain in the Dem Room until the next period to avoid disruption to classes that begin at 8.45. Lates are recorded on Sims.

7.3 School Journal

Each student is provided with a School Journal at the start of the year. It is a vital means of communication between parent /guardian and school, and it also allows the parent/guardian to monitor their daughter's progress. Parents /guardians are requested to sign their daughter's journal once a week and to check records of exam results after House Exams (5th and 2nd) after mid-term in October of each year. A refusal to hand up a journal or misuse of a journal may result in immediate detention. One of the main purposes of the school journal is to record homework and student exam progress in school subjects.

7.3.1. The school administration system SIMS will be used to record student information.

7.4 School Journal and Disciplinary Procedures

The School Journal is monitored each month by the Year Heads. A record is kept of notes in the journal and in SIMS. Following an accumulation of three negative comments a parent/guardian is contacted and the student is given detention. Referrals to Student Support Team/Guidance Counsellor/Tracking Team may also be made at this time.

Where a student has five or more negative comments contact is made with the parent/guardian and the student will be required to attend 'Evening Detention' which is held 3.30- 4.30 on a designated day.

During this time the student will be monitored, and necessary supports will be put in place if required. Student may be advised to engage in a programme of agreed change with specific goals to be attained and supported by the Student Support Team.

If none of the above is successful a period of suspension may result.

7.5 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 for each class. Homework should be completed on time and the rules of the Homework Charter must be followed. Students should be present for all tests and examinations. If homework is not presented, a student is required to have a note from a parent/guardian.

Students should submit academic work, which is their own and is not copied from other sources. Plagiarised work will be treated as a most serious offence and may result in suspension or may be referred to State Examinations Commission in the case of assessment work for examination purposes.

7.6 Behaviour in School and at School Functions

Good behaviour in class and around the school creates a safe environment conducive to learning. All behaviour must be appropriate to what set out in the Code of Conduct. The following are the guiding principles:

- All members of the school community have a right to be treated with dignity and courtesy.
- Students are required to behave both inside and outside of school in a manner appropriate to the ethos, tradition, and standards of the school.
- Unpunctuality, untidy dress, and use of inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- Students should follow the instructions given by their teachers and other members of staff.
- 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.
- Students are required to use the bins provided for litter and to treat all school property with care.
- Behaviour during liturgies, formal events and presentations must be appropriate to the occasion.
- The Sacred Heart School Trips and Tours policy is available and provides additional information on behaviour and expectations on school trips.

7.6.1 Supporting Student Behaviour through the Student Support Team

All students are supported by the SST to exhibit good behaviour and when this has been an issue, they are offered support and advice from the SST.

The Student Support Team is composed of the Senior Management Team, four Assistant Principals and three counsellors, whose objective it is to support and provide interventions for pupils who find challenges with social, personal, academic issues.

This can include helping the student to:

- develop new goals around behaviour
- to develop towards a behaviour change
- to organise the weekly check- in with a teacher mentor
- Be recognised for positive changes in behaviour

7.7 Lost Property and Lockers

The school cannot be held responsible for lost property. All property should be clearly labelled. Students must have locks on their lockers. Students may contact the school office for lost property.

Lockers are the property of the school and should not be damaged or defaced in any way. Lockers are allocated to students at the start of the year and students must place a lock on them that day. The fee for lockers must be paid by the date set out in the letter sent to parents each June. Otherwise, the school will reclaim the locker.

Students must not interfere with the lock of any another locker.

7.8 Anti-Bullying (Please refer to our Anti Bullying Policy)

The Sacred Heart School has a long and proud tradition in being proactive with bullying issues and promoting fair treatment in a transparent manner.

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

Our school does not tolerate bullying in any form and treats all complaints of bullying very seriously. We place a strong emphasis on supporting those who have been bullied and are committed to a series of supports to change the

behaviour of those who have bullied. We see this as part of their education. We support parents and teachers in enhancing the positive and inclusive culture of our school, which is strongly opposed to bullying of any kind.

Please see Anti Bullying Policy which has been emailed to all parents in August and is also available on [www.shstullamore.ie/Our School/School Policies](http://www.shstullamore.ie/Our%20School/School%20Policies).

{5 paragraphs on bullying have been taken out on P 12}

7.9 Uniform

The school uniform helps promote a sense of belonging to the school community and is a visual symbol of the Sacred Heart School and central to our identity, therefore we expect the full cooperation of parents on all uniform matters. 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.

Students are always required to wear the full school uniform during the school day and to be neat, tidy and well groomed. Personal hygiene is important and is the responsibility of each pupil.

Jewellery	Must be in keeping with the school ethos and uniform
Facial Piercings	Are not allowed. This includes nose lip and eye piercings
Hairstyles	Hair should not be dyed an unnatural colour. Students will be advised when this happens and are expected to conform to a request for a reasonable change of colour
School uniform consists of:	School skirt or trousers School jumper is mandatory School specified maroon half zip hoodie-this is optional School crested jacket only- no other jackets allowed to be worn in class during cold weather.
Shoes	Dark shoes. Boots or light- coloured boots/shoes cannot be worn
PE Uniform	Grey Tax sweatshirt Grey Taz polo shirt School regulation tracksuit with the SHS stitching available from DARU

	clothing and G & T Drapery. Leggings of any type are not allowed
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If students do not present wearing the correct uniform, they may be sent home and cannot return until they are wearing the correct uniform.

7.10 Smoking, alcohol, and substance use

It is forbidden to smoke/vape in the school or its environs.

Students are not permitted to smoke/e-smoke on school related activities or when in school uniform.

The possession or consumption of alcohol and the possession or handling of illegal substances are strictly forbidden in school, during school related activities or while wearing school uniform.

7.11 Internet (Please refer to Acceptable Users Policy)

Students are expected to use computers, devices, and computer networks solely for education and academic research. Students must not tamper with or reconfigure any computer software without the permission of the teacher.

Students must not misuse electronic mail or have access to internet sites that violate any aspect of this Code of Conduct.

Any student using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for bullying a fellow student, insulting, or defaming a teacher or any other member of staff associated with the school and /or bringing the school into disrepute in any fashion will risk suspension, and the matter will be referred to the relevant statutory bodies.

Students must comply with the school's Social Media Policy at all times.

7.12 Device and eBooks Safety

Students are reminder of the following:

- Store the device safely. It must never be left unattended. It should be stored securely in your locker/school bag when not being used.
- It should be kept in its protective case. Keep it away from water, food etc.

- The device must be updated daily, turned off at night and charged fully overnight.
- The use of the device will be monitored. It is primarily for educational purposes.
- It may not be used for social networking. This includes, but is not limited to, apps and websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter, or any chatrooms or Internet forums.
- It may not be used to photograph another person (student or staff) without their knowledge and consent or unless directed by a teacher.

It must not be used to contact Parents /Guardians during the school day – by email or by other means. Report to the office if you need to contact home.

- You must not provide personal information to anyone over the internet.
- You must not share your passwords with anyone. On occasion, circumstances may arise where students will be asked to share passwords with members of the Student/Staff Digital Support Team to ensure tablets are fixed on-site.
- In general, you must not let anyone use your device other than parents /guardian and teachers for monitoring.
- You must always adhere to the school’s Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) for use of the Internet. This policy is emailed to all parents in August and is available on www.shstullamore/Our School/School Policies.
- Only devices purchased and configured by Wriggle may be used as a school device
- Communicating with anyone from outside of school or home is forbidden during school time.
- Students are expected to inform a teacher if they suspect or are aware of a breach of protocol during an online/class test.

7.13 Mobile Phones (Please refer to our Mobile Phone policy)

The following regulations for mobile phones are applicable for the duration of the school day (8.45 -3.30pm) and during Evening Study.

Students must not use their mobile phones during the above specified times.

Students found in contravention of the above will have their phone confiscated for the school day. It may be collected by a parent from the office at 3.30 that evening. If the same incident occurs again with the same student, the phone

will be confiscated for 48 hours and again, may only be collected from the school office at 3.30 that evening by a parent, or at 1.30 pm on Fridays.

The school and the classroom are protected spaces. Photographs and videos taken in these spaces will be considered a serious breach of the Code of Conduct. The privacy and dignity of staff and students must always be upheld.

Incidents where students use mobile phones to bully other students or to send offensive messages or calls will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying policy. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school will refer these matters to the relevant statutory bodies.

Students who contact parents on their mobile phones during the day to organise collections without going through the office will face suspension.

7.15 Cameras

No student can take a photograph /video of another person without the express permission of that person.

7.16 Cars

As parking space is limited, students may not park in the Staff Car Park. Students are reminded of the importance of adhering to the Road Traffic Legislation.

7.17 Disciplinary Procedures

Even minor breaches of the Code of Conduct can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent.

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 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 Conduct.
- Signal to the 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 positive sanctions are:

- Reasoning with the student.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
- Temporary, physical separation from the classroom
- A community task
- Loss of privileges
- Detention at lunchtime or after school
- Prescribed additional written work or homework
- Suspension by the Principal (in accordance with the school’s policy on Suspensions)
- Recommendation to the Board by the Principal for Expulsion (in accordance with the school’s policy on Expulsions)

7.18 Ladder of Referral

Classroom Teacher	Verbal warning Note in school journal Prescribe extra work Removal of a disruptive student to another location Referral to Form Teacher Referral to Year Head Referral to Principal Confiscate mobile phone
Year Head	Place student on Report Place student on Detention Exclusion from school events

	Referral to SST Referral to Principal Email/communication with parent Meeting with parent
Principal	Referral to the Board of Management Referral to EWB Referral to Tusla Meeting with parents Notice of suspension Notice of expulsion

8. Suspension & Expulsion

8.1 Definition

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

8.2 Authority to suspend

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

- The procedures for suspension as set down in the Code of Conduct of the school.
- Paragraph 11.6 of Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWN:2008)

In the event of the absence of the principal on leave or school business, the authority to suspend is delegated to the Acting Principal.

8.3 The grounds for suspension

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

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping students recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- Helping students (in a way appropriate to both age and development stage of student) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and all choices have consequences
- Where the students continued presence at the school constitutes a threat to safety
- Where the student is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of a serious misconduct may be grounds for a suspension

8.4 Factors considered 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 an appropriate 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 that 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:

- The student and her parents will be informed of the complaint, will be told how it will be investigated and will be informed that it could result in suspension.
- Parent and 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.
- In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them to collect their daughter from school. A formal investigation will then be invited with a meeting between all parties arranged for a later date. Parent and student will be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint before any decision is made and any further sanction imposed.

8.7 The period of suspension

In general, a suspension will not be longer than three days. If the Principal proposes a suspension longer than three days, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. In circumstances where a Board of Management meeting cannot be convened in the timeframe necessary, the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, may impose a suspension of up to 5 days.

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

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 or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Following a suspension and on return to school, a student is met by two members of the Student Support Team to assist with a change in behaviour and set down goals as regards the desired behaviour.

8.8 Appeals

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

Here the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year reaches 20 days, the parents, or the student aged over 18 years of age, may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

8.9 Implementing the suspension

The Principal will notify the parent and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter shall confirm the following:

- The period of 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 by the student and the parents
- The provision of an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act –Section 29) circumstances
- Grounds for removing a suspension

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

8.10 After the suspension ends

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

A member of the Student Support Team is assigned to meet with the student on her return to school to help her re-integrate into school.

8.11 Records and Reports

- Written record will be kept of:
- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision- making process

- The decision and rationale of the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

The principal shall 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.

8.12 Review

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension annually to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

9. Expulsion

9.1 Definition

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

9.2 Authority to Expel

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

9.3 The Grounds for Expulsion

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

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

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property
- There may be grounds for considering that a student be expelled for a first offence.

- The kind of behaviours that might result in a proposal to expel includes the following:
- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault
- Factors to consider before proposing expelling a student
- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion
- Procedures in respect of expulsion

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

- A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the principal. The principal will inform the student and her parents in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- A meeting will be arranged with the Principal to give the parents and student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and a sanction is imposed.
- If the parents and students fail to attend the meeting, the Principal will write explaining the gravity of the issue, the importance of attending the 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 and their response of the parents will be kept on file.

9.4 A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a

recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure that parents have records of the allegations against the student, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- Ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing

9.5 Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing

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

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

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

At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, 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 may wish to be accompanied to the hearing.

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

9.6 Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

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

Where the Board, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer receives the written notification.

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

9.7 Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

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

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

The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to remain in education. Pending these consultations about the future education of the student, the Board may consider it appropriate to suspend the student if there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

9.8. 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 will be notified that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents will be informed about the right to appeal and will be supplied with a form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be kept of the decision to expel the student.

9.9 Appeals

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

9.10 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

In the Sacred Heart School, we foster an openness to dialogue with parents. When concerns arise, parents are encouraged to contact the Principal with the intention of resolving the matter.

11. Monitoring and Review of the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct will be monitored by the Principal and Deputy Principal, the Student Support Team and the Assistant Principals on an annual basis and will be formally reviewed.

The Code of Conduct was adopted at a meeting of the Board on

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Date: _____

