

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

PREAMBLE

Loreto College, Crumlin Road, founded in 1930, is part of a worldwide network of schools. The early Directives, that date back to the seventeenth century –still valid today-emphasise the importance of:

- Respectful and caring relationships between the teachers and students
- Avoiding harshness, severity or a punitive approach to discipline
- Respecting the dignity of each person
- Focusing on each student as an individual, recognising different aptitudes and gifts
- Providing an appropriate learning environment
- Collaborating with parents in their child's education

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

The Code of Behaviour is drawn up in consultation with students, staff and parents and ratified by the Board of Management. Each of the partners in education has a role to play in implementing the Code of Behaviour and in ensuring that the General Regulations are upheld.

It is the responsibility of students to observe school standards, to engage with the learning process and to treat other students and teachers with respect and courtesy.

Staff will endeavour to implement the Code of Behaviour in a fair and consistent manner. Insofar as possible, teachers will address behavioural issues within the classroom setting. The approach of staff will embrace a pastoral dimension which seeks to guide the student towards full development of her potential and meaningful engagement in the life of the school.

Parents/guardians have a role in ensuring that their daughters come to school on time, have all necessary uniform, books and equipment and attend school in accordance with the terms of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

The Board of Management supports the operation of the Code of Behaviour by staff and Principal of the school. Parents/guardians and students over 18 have the right to appeal a decision to suspend or expel a student.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND REWARDS

Positive behaviour, engagement with the learning process and the development of good relationships with other members of the school community are actively encouraged in a variety of ways. It is our aim to develop the self esteem and self confidence of students, to encourage them to see the benefits of education and to reach their potential in terms of their academic, physical, social and spiritual development. Students are praised and rewarded in a number of ways which may include:

- Verbal praise
- A note on student's written work
- Daily and weekly announcements through the PA system
- School Newsletter
- Notice boards
- Attendance awards
- School reports
- Internal academic awards
- Year group and school assemblies
- Prize-giving at the end of each academic year
- Opportunities to participate in school and public competitions
- Opportunities to avail of scholarships and awards for further education

PASTORAL CARE

The school operates the Code of Behaviour for the benefit of the whole school community. The pastoral needs of the students are met by teachers, tutors, year heads and other staff members. The school has a Care Team which meets regularly. The team normally comprises Guidance Counsellor, HSCL teacher, English language teacher, a learning support teacher, Chaplain, Principal and/or Deputy Principal.

GENERAL STANDARDS

1. School Environment

It is our aim to create a learning environment where each person is valued and encouraged to reach her potential in a spirit of inclusiveness and respect for her abilities and talents. Students are expected to co-operate with staff to ensure that a positive learning environment and good order are maintained in the classroom and around the school and on school organised events which take place outside the school. It is expected that school staff will always be treated with respect and courtesy, that good manners will be shown to all members of the school community and that visitors to the school will be treated with courtesy and made to feel welcome.

2. Journal

Every student is required to have a school journal with them in class and to keep it clean and tidy. Journals which are defaced or torn must be replaced. Students must record homework when it is assigned by the teacher. Teachers may request to see the journal at any time. The journal facilitates communication between school and home and must be signed by parents/guardians each week. Forgery of signatures is a serious offence.

3. Punctuality

Students are expected to be in the classroom ready for work at 9.00 a.m. each morning and to be prepared and on time for each class of the day. A student who is late for school but who arrives during the first period of the day will go to the secretary's office to have her journal stamped. Her lateness will be registered by the class teacher also. Students who arrive in school after the second period has commenced must sign the late book at the secretary's office or risk being marked absent for the day. Any student who arrives late, for a legitimate reason, must have a late note in her journal from her parent or guardian.

4. Absence

When a student is absent from school she must return with an absence note in her journal. In accordance with the Education Act (2000), parents or guardians must give a reason for their daughter's absence. If a student has to leave school for an appointment during the school day, she must have a signed note in her journal. The note will be countersigned by the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. If a student becomes sick, she must report to the school office. Parents or guardians will be contacted from the office so that they can arrange for their daughter to go home. A student must sign out before going home. Students who return to school later in the day following a prearranged appointment, such as with a doctor or dentist, must sign in at the office. A register will be taken during the first class in the morning and the first class in the afternoon. Students who are officially absent must report to the school office on entering the school building.

5. Uniform and Appearance

The school uniform must be worn at all times when in school and when representing the school. Black or brown shoes must be worn in school and on the way to and from school. The school jacket is compulsory and non-uniform jackets may not be worn to or from school. The wearing of a scarf is optional but only plain scarves in the colors of the uniform, beige, green or black, may be worn. Hijabs must be beige, green, black or cream. Students are permitted to wear a watch, small earrings and one other small piece of jewellery. Piercing of the face or any other visible body piercing is strictly forbidden. Students who come to school with any visible facial piercing will be asked to go home until jewellery is removed. The wearing of make-up in school is strongly discouraged. Jewellery, hairstyle, hair colour and fingernails should be in keeping with the dress code deemed suitable for school by the school authorities.

6. Care of the Environment

- a. Students must eat in their assigned classrooms or in the Dining Hall at break and lunchtime. Each person is responsible for putting her own litter in the bins provided. Material for recycling should be put in the appropriate bins provided in each classroom. Clean-up duty is organised on a roster basis. Students are not permitted to eat on corridors or in locker rooms.
- b. Damage to school property, including graffiti, is a serious offence.
- c. Chewing gum is banned from all areas of the school and school grounds.
- d. Students may not use fire doors to come in and out of the school. The main entrance is the only door which students may use for coming into the school during the day. Inappropriate use of fire doors at any time is a serious offence and will incur sanctions.

Only authorised visitors are allowed to enter the school building. All visitors including parents/guardians must report to the school office on entry and be given a visitor pass which must be worn at all times and returned when leaving the building.

7. Mobile Phones and Music Systems

- a. Students are encouraged not to take mobile phones or music systems to school as the school authorities cannot accept responsibility for the security of these items. If mobile phones are brought to school, they must be switched off in the school building at all times except during break and lunch or before or after school hours. Students found using phones to receive or send calls or texts or for any other reason during class hours will have their phones confiscated for a period of time not exceeding five school days but not less than two school days. Parents will be required to collect phones which have been confiscated. Should a student wish to contact home, she must do so through the secretary's office. Likewise, parents/guardians are requested to contact their daughters through the office.
- b. Under no circumstances may a student take photographs of a person(s) without the permission of the person(s).
- c. It is strictly forbidden to use music systems during or between classes.

Mobile phones should not be used when moving around the school building in the interest of Health and Safety.

8. Care of Belongings

- a. Lockers belong to the school but are leased by each student for the duration of her time in the school. The school authorities have the right to inspect lockers if it is considered necessary.
- b. Each student is responsible for buying a padlock and key for her locker and for taking care of it. It is the responsibility of each student to keep her locker locked. All

belongings must be labelled. The school authorities cannot accept responsibility for the safe keeping of valuable items. Students are encouraged to leave valuable items at home.

c. Books rented from the school are the responsibility of the student and must be replaced if lost or damaged.

9. Smoking

Smoking while in school uniform is strictly forbidden at all times. Smoking on school grounds, in the school building, in uniform or on school related activities is strictly forbidden and will incur sanctions. In accordance with the Public Health Tobacco Act (2002) and the Public Health Tobacco Amendment Act (2004), smoking within the school boundaries is illegal.

10. Alcohol and Substance Use

It is our aim to provide a safe environment for all students and staff of the school. The possession and/or supply of illegal substances are very serious offences. Students face serious sanctions if they are found using, under the influence of or supplying alcohol or illegal substances.

Any student who is found in possession of illegal substances or legal substances, with intent to supply, on school property or on a school related activity faces serious sanctions which may include expulsion.

Any student who becomes aware that another student is under the influence of, in possession of or supplying illegal substances, must report it immediately to the Deputy Principal or Principal

11. Respect for Others

All students, staff and visitors to the school have a right to feel safe and secure in the school. Each student is responsible for ensuring that she does not behave in such a way as to make another student, staff member or visitor feel uncomfortable or threatened.

12. Disciplinary Interventions and Procedures

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

- helping students to learn that 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 wellbeing is 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

Students will be encouraged by their teachers to correct inappropriate behaviour, without recourse to formal sanctions. Teachers may use a variety of sanctions/interventions to address misbehaviour and lack of co-operation in their own classes. Loreto College engages in Restorative Practices which encourages students to engage in a positive, collaborative and solution focused manner in school. Mediation is offered when deemed appropriate.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Role of the Class Teacher

Disciplinary issues will be dealt with by the individual teacher within the classroom in the sequence outlined.

- Verbal reprimand and warning
- Move within class
- Note in the journal
- Move from class and note in discipline file
- Phone call to parents, if necessary

If a student continues to misbehave, her conduct will be noted by the teacher and recorded by him/her in the discipline file. Journal entries will be entered into the file by the tutors each week. Detention will be organised by the tutor who will liaise with the Year Head.

Role of the Tutor

The role of the tutor is to support the whole development of each student through consistent monitoring of progress and to liaise with subject teachers, support staff and Year Heads.

Tasks for the Tutor

- To participate in student induction
- To explain the Code of Behaviour regularly to class
- To build a relationship with students
- To deal with minor discipline issues and keep records of same
- To monitor the school journal and record all notes in the Tutor file
- To encourage students to participate in the life of the school and avail of opportunities offered to them
- To promote class spirit

Role of the Year Head

The Year Head is an important figure in the school community. He/She provides a critical link between Deputy Principal/Principal and tutors/class teachers. The role of the Year Head involves three areas of responsibility:

- Academic Progress
- Pastoral Care
- Discipline.

Duties of the Year Head

- To monitor attendance and punctuality
- To monitor behaviour and implement the Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Police and other relevant policies
- To handle disciplinary, pastoral or progression issues referred by teachers and tutors
- To follow up on disciplinary issues recorded or reported on file
- To handle reports from teachers
- To hold regular assemblies
- To liaise with parents and keep records of contact and meetings
- To report at regular meetings with Deputy Principal/Principal
- To report concerns about students to the Learning Support Team, Care Team, Deputy Principal and/or Principal

Year Heads will receive support from the Principal and Deputy Principal to assist them in carrying out their role.

Detention

Detention may be used at the discretion of the Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. Detention of one hour will be given to students:

- After three minor incidents of misbehaviour
- One serious incident could merit detention

Parents are reminded that students who fail to attend for a re scheduled detention will be suspended automatically unless their absence is explained by illness.

In all cases of absence, parents are required to present a note as required by law. A telephone call is very welcome but must be followed up with a note.

The following lists of incidents are not exhaustive:

Serious Incidents

- Physical aggression including fighting
- Verbal aggression or abuse
- Bullying or bullying behaviour

- Truancy
- Smoking
- Use of portable electronic devices without permission in class
- Leaving school grounds without permission from school authorities
- Repeated failure to attend for detention
- Cheating at exams
- Disruption of exams
- Forging a signature
- Refusal to follow reasonable instructions from school staff
- Unauthorised use of fire doors
- Damage to school property
- Ongoing disruption of teaching and learning
- Defiance
- Theft of or damage to the property of another student or member of staff

Minor Incidents:

- Incorrect uniform
- Lateness
- Eating/drinking in class
- Books/equipment missing
- Failure to turn up to sweeping duty
- Interruption of class
- Littering
- Wearing Jewellery/Makeup/ Hairstyles which is deemed inappropriate.
- Chewing gum

Disciplinary Meetings

Where students who repeatedly and knowingly refuse to respect the Code of Behaviour a Disciplinary Meeting is called. In such cases, parents are telephoned and invited to come to the school. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and student, where appropriate meet with the Year Head(s) and Deputy Principal and/or Principal. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Communicate to the student and her/parent guardian the extent of the student's misbehaviour
- Reach agreement with the student, in the presence of her parent(s)/guardian(s), on ways in which she will improve her behaviour
- Offer pastoral supports to the student

Further meetings will be scheduled if the misbehaviour continues. Suspension/other sanctions may be recommended. Minutes of all meetings will be kept in the student file

Sanctions

Sanctions which are applied in one academic year are not carried forward to the following year. Sanctions are applied with a view to encouraging positive behaviour and engagement in all aspects of school life and students will have the opportunity to make a fresh start once relevant sanctions have been applied.

Student Records

Each student has a file which is kept in the Principal's office

Attendance

1. The duty of parents to send their children to school each day is outlined in Section 17 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000. Section 18 of the same Act places a duty on parents to notify the school of the reasons for a child's absence from school for part of a day, a day or more than a day.
2. A parent may telephone the school to say that a child will be absent for a period of time. However, the parent must also notify the school in writing stating exactly why the child was absent. Notes are provided in the school journal and when filled and signed by a parent must be given by the student to the Year Head as soon as the student returns to school. All information regarding absences will be passed on to the school office and entered into the computer records. Parents will be kept up to date about their child's attendance by means of school reports, written communication from Year Heads or the school office at regular intervals and also by means of daily texting.
3. The Education Welfare Officer will be informed if the attendance of a student is a cause for concern or if the student has missed 20 days or more. Regular returns to the National Education Welfare Board will be made as required by the Board.

Suspension Procedures

1. On the basis of the report from the Disciplinary Meeting, the Principal may decide that suspension of the student is appropriate.
2. Parents are informed of the decision to suspend. The reason for the suspension is relayed to parent/guardian. A formal letter follows.
3. The letter to parents outlines the reasons why suspension is being imposed and the duration of the suspension. Parents are informed of their right to appeal of suspension.
4. The Principal informs the Board of Management at its next meeting of the decision to suspend a student.
5. In certain circumstances, the Principal may suspend without following the procedures outlined above. In such cases immediate suspension is the result of behavior on the part of the student which warrants her immediate removal from class or from school. In such cases, parents will be contacted by phone and informed that their daughter is being sent home and will be asked to make arrangements for her collection or return home

Appeal Against Suspension

The decision to suspend a student may be revoked under the following circumstances:

- If new information comes to light which would alter the decision of the Principal/Board of Management to suspend a student
- If after discussion with parents, the Principal/Board of Management decides that it would be in the best interests of the student to apply an alternative sanction
- If a parent or student over 18 years successfully appeals the decision to the Board of Management
- If a parent or student over 18 years successfully appeals the decision to the Secretary General under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998

Expulsion

The permanent exclusion of a student is the ultimate sanction for indiscipline. The decision to exclude or expel a student can be made only by the Board of Management. The expulsion of a student will be considered only in the context of:

- The just and fair implementation of the Code of Behaviour
- The principles of natural justice
- The implementation of procedures as set out in the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000.

Appeal against Expulsion

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, the decision to permanently exclude a student from school may be appealed by a parent or by the student herself if she is over 18 years of age.

The Code of Behaviour was amended in May 2016 and will be reviewed annually.