



Code of Behaviour

**St. Nathy's College
Ballaghaderreen
Co. Roscommon**

Code of Behaviour

Introduction

As a Christian community, St. Nathy's College commits itself to the development of all its members in an environment of co-operation and mutual respect. The Code of Behaviour has been developed in accordance with the school's Mission Statement. The Code of Behaviour aims to promote and maintain a sense of order and behaviour, which creates a community within the school where each person is respected. Therefore, the **Respect Rule** is the key focus of the Code of Behaviour.

The Respect Rule

The respect rule applies to all members of the school community. Respect is the most essential requirement of daily life in St. Nathy's College.

This means each person must have:

- respect for oneself
- respect for one another
- respect for parents and teachers
- respect for school property and the environment

This requires:

- 1. Accepting another person's point of view.**
- 2. Making it as easy as possible for everyone to learn and for every teacher to teach.**
- 3. Having consideration for others.** (*Safety First and Safety Second*)
- 4. Speaking in a respectful manner at all times.** The use of foul and/or obscene language is never appropriate.
- 5. Listening to what others have to say.** (*Each person's contribution is important even if you do not agree with it.*)
- 6. Upholding the good name of the school.** (*Coming to and going from school, it is essential to remember that the school's reputation depends on the appropriate behaviour of each individual*)
- 7. Keeping the school clean and tidy** so that it is a place of welcome and of which we can all be proud.

Rationale

In St. Nathy's College, we strive to acknowledge, promote and affirm positive behaviour through our daily interactions and communication with students and their families. The Pastoral Care Policy, the curriculum, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities promote and support positive behaviour within the school community. This ethos permeates all activities and supports a positive environment which is open, inclusive, respectful and fair.

Scope

The Code of Behaviour applies to all students enrolled in St. Nathy's College and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. It applies both on and off site.

Aims

The aims of the Code of Behaviour are:

- to create an environment that promotes good behaviour
- to create a safe learning and teaching environment
- to encourage students to take responsibility for their own behaviour
- to enable students to become responsible citizens
- to promote mutual respect among students, staff and parents
- to foster an atmosphere which promotes the holistic development of each student

It should be noted that the vast majority of students and their families adhere to the Code of Behaviour and they experience the Code of Behaviour as a positive support for their learning. It is essential that all members of the school community understand the negative impact of inappropriate behaviour on learning and teaching.

Therefore, the Code of Behaviour addresses the following areas:

- attendance
- behaviour in class
- behaviour outside class
- bullying
- coming to and from school
- punctuality
- substance misuse
- student diary
- uniform
- use of personal devices
- use of technology
- rewards
- sanctions

Attendance

Students are expected to attend the College as outlined in the school calendar and to attend all classes. Attendance at school promotes a positive environment for learning and personal development and enhances each student's ability to achieve their full potential.

Students are expected to attend school Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 08:57 - 15:55 and Friday from 08.57 – 13.30.

When a student is absent, parents should inform the College using the school App. as soon as is possible but at least by 09:00 am on the morning of the absence. The expected length of the absence should be indicated.

In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, all absences must be explained by a note from parents/guardians indicating the dates and reason for the absence.

Students are not permitted to leave the school premises without the written permission of their parents/guardians.

Any student who needs to leave school early must present an explanation from a parent/guardian to the School Office using the School App giving permission to do so.

Before leaving the building, the student will be required to sign out at the School Office.

All students under eighteen years of age must be collected in person by a parent (or a nominated adult) at the School Office when the student is leaving. This is both a legal and an insurance requirement. Therefore, regardless of how a student travels to or from school, all requests to leave school unaccompanied during the course of the school day cannot be facilitated.

Behaviour in Class

The classroom is any location where students are timetabled for class. Students are expected to arrive at class on time, in full uniform and with the appropriate text books and materials.

Assigned homework should be completed on time and to the best of the student's ability. Written work should be presented neatly in accordance with each teacher's specific instructions. There should be no graffiti on any book.

Appropriate and respectful behaviour is essential at times. Students are expected to take direction and follow instructions from all staff members.

Learning and teaching must be the consistent focus of the classroom environment. Where a student's attitude or behaviour undermines this focus, sanctions will be imposed.

Students have a responsibility to care for the school environment and are expected to show respect for school property and equipment, their own property and that of others at all times.

Students must keep classrooms, study and recreational areas clean and tidy.

Behaviour outside the classroom

Students take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others at all times in College.

Students follow the instructions of the supervisors and teachers at all times.

To facilitate the ease of movement in the College, all members of the school community walk on the right hand of the corridors.

Students moving from one classroom to another will proceed without delay. Students must not run on the corridors or create excessive noise.

Courtesy and respect is shown at all times towards staff and other students. While waiting outside a classroom, students must be aware of others on the corridor and leave room for them to pass by.

In the canteen area, all students are expected to queue in an orderly manner. Tables and their surrounds should be left clean and tidy and students should ensure that any spillages are cleaned up.

The appropriate litter bins, including recycling bins, should be used for all waste. Students show respect for the environment by ensuring litter is placed in the appropriate bin.

Bullying

St. Nathy's College recognises the very serious nature of bullying behaviour and the negative impact that it has on the lives of students.

Therefore, St. Nathy's College implements an Anti-Bullying Policy in which bullying is defined as follows: 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.

All students are aware that they can approach teachers, Tutors, Year Heads, Deputy Principals, Principal, SNAs and other school personnel. It is essential that all students understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported. When students report incidents of bullying behaviour they know that they are behaving responsibly.

Bullying is the ultimate breach of respect and will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures outlined in St. Nathy's College Anti-Bullying Policy.

Coming to and from school

Students are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour while walking, cycling or travelling by bus or car to and from school.

St. Nathy's College students have a highly valued reputation and it is expected that students will uphold this reputation. Bad language, bullying behaviour, rudeness to adults or to peers and/or disrespect will be subject to sanctions.

Punctuality

Punctuality is essential throughout the school day. The school day commences at 08:57. All students are expected to be in class at this time in full uniform.

It is expected that parents/guardians will co-operate with the College to ensure that their child attends punctually and regularly. A written explanation must be provided for unavoidable absences or lateness. When lateness occurs without an adequate explanation sanctions will be imposed.

When students arrive after 08:57 they must report to the School Office before going to their tutor class. Parents will be notified if a student arrives late to school without an explanation. Persistent late arrivals to school and to class will be deemed to be a breach of the Code of Behaviour and will be subject to appropriate sanctions.

Punctuality is necessary for every class during the school day. Being late to class disrupts a student's own learning and that of their peers. Students should begin to move to their class as

soon as they hear the bell. Students must be ready to start their lesson by the time the second bell rings. Students should not loiter in corridors, toilets or at lockers in between classes.

Lockers should only be accessed before school, during break, at lunch-time and after school. Adhering to these times will assist students in arriving punctually for class. Late arrival for class is inconvenient for all members of the school community and will incur sanctions.

Smoking

Smoking on the school grounds, in the school building, in school uniform, on school trips and school related activities is forbidden and will incur sanctions.

St. Nathy's College also prohibits the use of vaping and e-cigarettes and the misuse of these will incur the same same sanctions as tobacco cigarettes.

Substance Misuse

The use, distribution or possession of drugs, solvents, substances intended to mimic the effects of illegal drugs, tobacco, e-cigarettes or alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden on the school premises, on school trips, on school transport, or during any school related activities.

Vaping and the use of e-cigarettes is also forbidden and incurs a minimum suspension of one day.

Students are strictly forbidden to attend the College, school activities and/or school events under the influence of any of the above-mentioned substances. (*refer to Substance Use Policy*)

Any of the above activities are regarded as serious misbehaviour which will result in suspension.

Where a student is found to be in possession of alcohol and/or illegal drugs they will be subject to immediate suspension from the College until further investigation is carried out. The Gardaí will also be informed.

Student Diary

Students are required to have their Student Diary with them at all times. The Student Diary is distributed by the class tutor at the beginning of each school year. The purpose of the Student Diary is to monitor academic progress in addition to ensuring good communication between the College and home and vice versa. Therefore, parents/guardians should sign the diary daily, Monday to Friday. The class tutor will regularly review the diary of each student. In addition, members of staff may record issues or concerns relating to the student's behaviour and/or academic progress. Defacement and/or loss of the Student Diary or persistent failure to have the diary signed will be considered a serious offence. Lost or mislaid diaries must be reported to the class tutor and be replaced immediately at a cost of €15.

Uniform

The school uniform promotes a sense of belonging to the school community and is a visual symbol of St. Nathy's College. It is essential that students maintain a high standard of personal appearance when wearing the school uniform. Students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the standards of the College at all times and especially when wearing the school uniform. Students are encouraged to take pride in the College, its traditions and values,

and proudly wearing the school uniform is an integral part of the ethos of St. Nathy's College. All students wear the school uniform during the school day, when participating in a school organised event inside or outside of school and during the State exams.

Hair style and jewellery should be appropriate. Hairstyles must conform to good grooming and must look neat and natural in style. When engaged in Art, Home Economics, Wood Technology/Construction, Engineering, Science, PE and any other practical/sporting activities, long hair must be tied back for health and safety reasons. Hair colour must be a natural shade. The wearing of earrings should be confined to studs only. No other piercings are permissible. Therefore, nose studs must be removed and replaced with a clear plastic retainer. The wearing of excessive make up is not permitted and neck chains must be worn inside the shirt for safety reasons.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child presents at school each day with the full College uniform. The uniform should be clean and in good repair. Appropriate protective clothing must be worn during Art, Home Economics and Science practical classes. Persistent disregard for the rules governing uniform and appearance will be deemed a breach of the Code of Behaviour.

Boys' Uniform: navy blue trousers, light grey shirt, blue crested jumper, fully black footwear with black laces, black/navy socks and navy crested jacket.

Girls' Uniform: knee length school kilt/navy blue trousers, blue crested jumper, light grey shirt, fully black footwear with black laces, black/navy socks and a navy crested jacket. Black tights must be worn with the school kilt.

Footwear

Appropriate footwear must be fully black with black laces. Sports shoes must only be worn during PE and/or sport activities.

Head Dress

Head dress is permissible where deemed appropriate. The hijab worn by students must be plain navy in colour and of shoulder length.

School Jacket

A crested College jacket is compulsory. No other jackets and/or hoodies are permitted to be worn inside the school building or on the school premises. During the winter months and in extremely cold weather students are encouraged to wear an extra base layer.

Clothing for PE

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing for PE and to bring this clothing with them to school in a suitable bag.

Use of Personal Devices

Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones and/or personal devices during school time, unless requested to do so by their teacher. Contact between students and their parents and vice versa must **only be via the School Office during the school day**. Therefore, mobile phones must be switched off on arrival at school and until the end of the school day unless instructed otherwise by a class teacher. Tutors may request students to switch off their phones

at the start of the school day. On such occasions tutors may ask students to demonstrate that their phone is turned off.

When a student leaves class to go to the bathroom, the student's mobile phone should be left in the designated basket on the teacher's desk. The student may collect the phone on their return.

Any student using their mobile phone or ignoring the instructions of the class teacher regarding the use of their mobile phone will be required to hand their phone to the teacher on request. The phone will be kept at the School Office and returned at the end of the school day. In situations where a student refuses to give their phone to the teacher the Deputy Principal will be informed. In such situations the student will be required to present their phone at the School Office each morning for a period of time determined by the Deputy Principal. A sanction of lunch time detention will be imposed each and every day the student fails to present their phone at the School Office as determined by the Deputy Principal.

In order to respect the privacy and integrity of all individuals in the school, the use of a camera or video facilities (on mobile phones or any device) and any recording without permission from the Principal/Deputy Principal on the school premises is strictly forbidden. Such use constitutes an invasion of privacy of students and staff, infringes their rights and contravenes data protection law and is a serious offence. Where this rule is ignored, the device will be confiscated until a parent arrives at school to discuss the incident and a sanction imposed. Sanctions include suspension, and, where the safety of a member of the school community has been breached, or where a phone has been used to bring the College into disrepute, sanctions may include expulsion. The Gardaí will be informed of such activity.

Incidents where students use a mobile phone by sending offensive messages, images, videos, calls and/or interfering with another student's phone will be investigated in accordance with the Anti-Bullying policy.

The College accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged phones or devices. The safety and security of same is the responsibility of each student.

Use of Technology

Students are expected to behave with integrity when working with technological devices in the College. Students are prohibited from using school technology for accessing personal social media accounts and/or tampering with computer software in any way.

The use of information technology in bullying or defaming any member of the school community will incur sanctions, as will any misuse of technology that brings the College into disrepute.

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another using Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and many other social network services. While recognising the benefits of social networks for new and exciting forms of communication, the guiding principle for students is respect for themselves and consideration for others.

- Students must not use social media and the internet in any way to attack, insult, abuse or defame other students or any member of staff

- Students must not use social media in a way that brings disrespect to the College
- Photographs, videos or any image of students, staff or any member of the school community must not be published on a personal or public web space without prior permission.
- The possession of obscene and/or offensive material is a very serious matter and will be subject to a sanction.

The Promotion of Good Behaviour

The quality of relationships between teachers and students is one of the most powerful influences on student behaviour. At St. Nathy's College we aim to foster mutually respectful relationships, balancing warmth and empathy, objectivity and fairness. The quality of the daily interactions both inside and outside the classroom is central to our efforts to promote good behaviour.

Throughout each school year, students will discuss the Code of Behaviour during tutor time, SPHE/Wellbeing classes, Religion class, at assemblies and in daily interactions with members of the teaching staff. In addition, the College has a system to recognise good behaviour and mark achievements and effort across the full range of school activities. Positive points will be awarded at the end of each term when no negative points have been accumulated. In addition, positive points may also be awarded under a number of headings such as being kind and helpful, being polite and respectful, being honest, etc.

Other initiatives to support and promote peer led positive behaviour may be agreed by the Year Head and Tutors. This may include providing opportunities for students to engage in monitoring the behaviour of tutor classes within a Year Group in order to motivate the members of their tutor class to improve their behaviour and thus obtain a reward.

Rewards may include

- verbal praise by a teacher
- positive affirmation by teachers for effort, participation and/or achievement in class
- positive and encouraging comments in the student's diary
- assigning positive points on VShare
- positive comments on School Reports
- certificate to recognise excellent punctuality
- share successes in sport, music, dance, competitions and clubs in and out of school by the Year Head at assemblies
- special mention of an individual and/or a group on intercom announcements and items posted on the school website
- a winning tutor group in each Year Group every term (*Junior Cycle*)
- badges to mark special responsibility for prefects, mentors and members of Student Council

- presentation of certificates at the end of year to mark participation, effort and achievement
- awards and prizes for outstanding achievement and contribution to College life at the annual prize giving ceremony

Support System for Students

St. Nathy's College promotes a support system to enable students to achieve their full potential at school. The following structure forms part of the support system for students:

- Subject Teachers
- Class Tutors
- Year Heads
- Guidance Counsellors
- Pastoral Care Team
- Mentors/Prefects
- Homework Support Club
- Home School Community Liaison (HSCL)
- School Completion Programme
- Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)
- Deputy Principals
- Principal

Homework Support Club

Homework Support Club takes place each Friday:-

- First Year, Third Year and Fifth Year students from 11:05 - 11:30
- Second Year and Leaving Cert students 11:45 - 12:10

When a student is recorded for not completing homework on two occasions, during a week beginning Friday and ending the following Thursday, the student will be assigned to the Homework Support Club.

A Second Year or Third Year student who does not engage in completing a Classroom Based Assessment (*CBA*) will automatically be assigned to the Homework Support Club. Transition Year students will be in attendance at Homework Support Club to help students catch up on their work.

Students who have been assigned to the Homework Support Club will be informed by their Class Tutor or by a message using Microsoft Teams Chat.

Students may bring a lunch with them or alternatively may request a friend to purchase food for them at the school canteen and deliver it to them at the Homework Support Club.

Students who do not attend the Homework Support Club or provide an explanation for their absence will be assigned a lunch time detention period the following Monday.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

All students have a right to attend school in safety and to learn without disruption from others.

Parents/guardians are entitled to expect that their child will have the best possible learning experience and one that will allow them to fulfil their potential.

Teachers have a right to work in an environment that enables them to teach for the benefit of all students.

The overwhelming majority of students in the College are self-disciplined, available and ready to learn. At St. Nathy's College, we understand that on occasion, students will fall short of what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour. Student behaviour is monitored closely, enabling patterns of unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour to be challenged. Where unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour occurs a system of sanctions is in place.

The aim of any sanction is, firstly, to bring about a change in behaviour. In addition, sanctions are in place to act as a guide to appropriate behaviour, as a deterrent against unacceptable behaviour and as a means of allowing students to reflect on their behaviour and its impact on others.

All sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently, proportionately and reasonably having due regard for the principles of fairness and natural justice and with consideration of the rights and responsibilities of all parties inherent in the Education Act 1998, Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and Equal Status Act 2000-2018.

Sanctions:

- Verbal reprimand
- A note in the Student Diary and/or VSware
- Sent to the School Office to rectify breaches of the school uniform
- Withdrawal of privileges such as permission to leave the grounds at lunch time (6th Year)
- Negative Points
- Students on Report
- Detention
- Withdrawal from class, morning break and/or lunch time
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Negative Points

Procedures regarding Negative Points

Negative points will be awarded as follows:

- **Minus 1:** negative behaviour Level 1

Examples:

interfering with teaching and learning, not following the instructions of the class teacher, lack of co-operation, talking out of turn, intentionally distracting students/teacher.

This list is not exhaustive

- **Minus 2:** negative behaviour Level 2

Examples:

repeated behaviour outlined at minus 1, unacceptable effort in class, deliberate damage of school property of that another person

This list is not exhaustive

- **Minus 3:** negative behaviour Level 3

Examples:

continued repeated behaviour at minus 1 and minus 2, in addition to behaviour which negatively impacts the health and safety of others.

This list is not exhaustive

Consequences for accumulating negative points

The accumulation of 5 negative points will incur one period of lunch time detention.

A student and their parent/guardians meet with the Year Head when a student accumulates 25 negative points to discuss the student's behaviour.

A student and their parent/guardians meet with the Deputy Principal/Principal when a student accumulates 30 negative points where further sanctions including suspension are discussed.

Students on Report

The Report Sheet is a student led intervention to enable the student to focus on their behaviour so as to bring about an improvement.

The aim of the report sheet is:

- to monitor the student's behaviour over a defined period of time
- to provide an opportunity for the student to reflect and improve their behaviour
- to promote student responsibility

1. Report Sheet A (White)

1. Report Sheet A is issued by a student's tutor when a student accumulates **10 negative points**. The tutor will identify a focus for Report Sheet A which will be explained to the student.
2. Each class teacher will monitor the student to determine the level of engagement with the focus of Report Sheet A.
3. Each class teacher will confirm this by stating satisfactory or unsatisfactory on Report Sheet A.

4. When a student achieves a satisfactory report after **one week** on Report Sheet A the student will receive **8 positive points**.
5. When a student does **not achieve a satisfactory report after one week on Report Sheet A**, the student's tutor will communicate by email with the student's parents to notify the parents that their child will be on report for a second week.
6. If a student receives a satisfactory report after **a second week on Report Sheet A**, the student will receive **3 positive points**.
7. If a student does not receive a satisfactory report after a second week on Report Sheet A, the student will incur **two periods of lunchtime detention**.
8. The accumulation of **15 negative points** will incur **three periods of lunch time detention**.

2. Report Sheet B (Green)

1. Report Sheet B is issued by a student's Year Head when a student accumulates 20 negative points. The Year Head will identify a focus for Report Sheet B which will be explained to the student.
2. Each class teacher will monitor the student to determine the level of engagement with the focus of Report Sheet B.
3. Each class teacher will confirm this by stating satisfactory or unsatisfactory on Report Sheet B.
4. When a student achieves a satisfactory report after one week on Report Sheet B the student will receive 8 positive points.
5. When a student does **not achieve a satisfactory report after one week on Report Sheet B**, the student's Year Head will communicate by telephone with the student's parents to inform and discuss that their child will be on report for a second week.
6. If a student receives a satisfactory report after a second week on Report Sheet B, the student will receive 3 positive points.
7. If a student does not receive a satisfactory report after a second week on Report Sheet B, the student will incur a **one day suspension from school**.

DETENTION

A. Lunchtime Detention

Detention takes place Monday to Thursday from 13:30 - 13:50 subject to at least one day notice. Shorter notice may be possible subject to contact being made by the Year Head with the student's parents/guardians and their consent to the short notice being obtained.

Students may purchase food, if required in the canteen between **13:20 and 13:30**. Students may eat their lunch during the detention period. When a student is late or fails to attend the number of detention periods assigned is doubled. Furthermore, in the case of a serious offence, detention(s) may be assigned at the discretion of the Year Head, Deputy Principal(s) and/or Principal.

B. After School Detention (Monday - Thursday)

Afternoon detention is a further sanction on the ladder of intervention and can only be assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal following consultation with parents. After School detention Monday to Thursday takes place from **16:00 - 17:00**.

C. Friday Detention

Friday afternoon detention is a further sanction on the ladder of intervention and can only be assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal following consultation with parents. Friday afternoon detention period(s) assigned detention takes place from **13:30 - 15:00**.

Withdrawal from Class, Morning Break and/or Lunchtime

There may be a time when a Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal is of the opinion that it would be appropriate for a student to be withdrawn from timetabled class for a period of time. This is not normal practice but may be used in order to remove a student from a situation which may otherwise escalate, while a serious incident is being investigated or while the school is waiting to engage with parents. During this time, students will complete the work assigned.

Similarly, there may be a time when a Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal deems it appropriate to detain a student during break or lunch time. This may be to remove a student from a particular situation or to investigate an incident. During this time, students will have a right to eat but will not have a right to mix with their peers. In all such cases, parents will be informed by the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal.

SUSPENSION

The Board of Management has delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend a student for three days.

The Principal will inform the Board of Management at each meeting of the Board the number of suspensions since the previous meeting.

In St. Nathy's College, suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, and, normally deemed serious misbehaviour or serious misconduct.

The following factors are considered prior to suspension:

- the nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- the context of the behaviour
- the impact of the behaviour on others
- the effect on learning and teaching
- the interventions tried to date, including internal and external support

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

The Principal may consider an immediate suspension necessary where the continued presence of the student in the College at the time represents a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the College, or any other person, or where the behaviour is seen as a deliberate affront to the good order and/or the ethos of the College.

A student may be suspended from sitting State Examinations in St. Nathy's College, if there is a threat to good order in the conduct of the examination, a threat to the safety of other students and/or personnel or a threat to the right of other students to sit their examination in a calm atmosphere.

A suspension longer than three days imposed by the Principal requires the approval of the Board of Management, who may extend or reduce the suspension. The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed. The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more.

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

Except in the case of an immediate suspension, the Principal will normally speak with the parents to inform them that a suspension is likely. Where feasible, face-to-face meetings between parents, student and the Principal is desirable before a suspension is imposed.

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of a decision to suspend. The letter will confirm the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end, the reasons for the suspension, any study programme to be followed, the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and their parents, and the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

When a sanction, including suspension, is completed, a student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the College will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

EXPULSION

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

The school will generally have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meet with the parents/guardians and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- ensure that the student understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, if it should persist
- ensure that all other possible options have been considered
- seek the assistance of support agencies e.g. NEPS, NCSE, CAMHS, TUSLA, JIGSAW,

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

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the teaching and learning in the College
- the student's continued presence in the College is a real and significant threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, the College has utilised a series of other interventions, and is of the opinion that all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour have been exhausted.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be permanently excluded for a first offence.

Such breaches may include:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault or significant damage to school property
- carrying of a weapon or any item which could be perceived as a weapon
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- abuse of drugs or other substances
- sexual assault

This list is not exhaustive.

Any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or is considered to be of a dangerous nature may lead to expulsion.

Determining the appropriateness of permanently excluding a student

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction, the Board of Management will undertake a detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether or not to permanently exclude a student.

These factors will include:

- the nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- the context of the behaviour
- the impact of the behaviour
- the interventions implemented to date
- whether permanent exclusion is a proportionate response
- the possible impact of permanent exclusion

Procedure in Respect of Expulsion

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

1. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation will be made to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. The Board of Management will consider the recommendation and hold a hearing.
4. The Board of Management will make a decision to expel (or otherwise) following on the hearing.
5. Consultations may be arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel will be sent to the parents and student.

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal shall:

- inform the student and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- give parents and the student an opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed

Parents will be informed in writing of the alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour and the proposed investigation.

Parents and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed.

Where permanent exclusion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the student and their parents will be arranged so that parents and their child will have the opportunity to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of the serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts.

This meeting will also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the College to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour.

If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write to the parents advising them of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.

The College will record the invitation issued to parents and their response.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour, that permanent expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make such recommendation to the Board of Management.

The Principal shall:

- inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider permanent expulsion
- ensure that parents have records of the allegations against the student; the investigation; and have written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider permanent expulsion
- provide the Board of Management with the same records as are given to the 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

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of the hearing

The Board shall review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in accordance with fair procedures and natural justice.

The Board shall undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case.

The Board of Management will ensure that no party who has any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

Where a Board of Management decides to consider permanently excluding a student, a hearing will be held.

At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction.

Parents may wish to be accompanied at the hearing and the Board will facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Principal and the parents will leave the meeting while the Board of Management considers the issue.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management, 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. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

The Board of Management will adhere to the procedures in respect of permanent exclusion as outlined in Section 12.4 of NEWB Guidelines 2008 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

While the Board may be of the opinion that the student should be permanently excluded, the actual decision to permanently exclude the student cannot be taken before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives written notification of the Board's opinion that the student should be permanently excluded and the reasons for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

The Board of Management will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where permanent exclusion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will be informing the Education Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultation arranged by the Education Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion, the Principal may meet the Education Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education in the interests of the educational welfare of the student.

Pending these consultations regarding the student's continued education, the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of all students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time especially where there is 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.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to permanently exclude

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Education Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be permanently excluded the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to permanently exclude the student. The Board of Management may delegate this task to the Chairperson and the Principal.

Parents will be notified immediately that the permanent exclusion will now proceed. Parents/guardians and/or a student aged over eighteen years and the student will be informed of their right to appeal within 42 days and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.

A formal record should be made of the decision to permanently exclude the student.

APPEALS

A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education under Section 29 of Education Act 1998.

An appeal may also be brought by the Education Welfare Services (EWS) on behalf of a student.

For further details about the appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process is available at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/19941-appeals-against-expulsion-or-suspension-for-a-period-or-periods-totaling-not-less-than-20-school-days-in-a-school-year/>

Review of use of Suspension and Expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of permanent exclusion in the school at regular intervals 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 College, and to ensure that suspension and expulsion are used appropriately.

Reference to other Policies

The Code of Behaviour should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admission Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Strategy
- CCTV Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Confidentiality Policy
- Critical Incident Management Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Statement

- Internet and Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Uniform Policy
- School Trips Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Supervision Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

St. Nathy's College acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour.

The support and co-operation of parents/guardians are essential to the effective operation of the Code of Behaviour. Working together will enable issues to be resolved and situations de-escalated at the earliest opportunity.

Parents are invited to communicate with the College regarding their child's learning and progress by attending parent/teacher meetings, signing the Student Diary daily, checking study and homework, encouraging participation in extra-curricular activities and modelling good relationships with the College staff. Parents wishing to consult with members of staff should do so by means of a pre-arranged appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Success Criteria

The success of this policy is measured by:

- The College values evident in all areas of school life; the classroom, on the corridors, travelling to and from school, etc.
- Consistent approach to the management of student behaviour
- Students accepting responsibility for, and managing their behaviour, resulting in reduction of inappropriate behaviour incidents
- Positive relationships between teachers and students
- Increase in the promotion of achievement of students
- Improved achievement of the students

Implementation and Review

The Code of Behaviour takes account of the very important role of parents and depends on their co-operation in its implementation.

Confirmation of acceptance of the Code of Behaviour by each student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) is a requirement of enrolment. In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, parents must confirm acceptance of the Code of Behaviour.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on 28 September 2023.

The policy shall be reviewed every three years or earlier if legislative other factors recommend an earlier review.

Copies of the policy will be circulated and communicated to all members of the staff, students and parents/guardians. A copy will be printed annually in the Student Diary and will be available on the school website.

Signed: 

Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 28.09.2023

Review Date: October 2026