

Our Lady's College Galway

Draft Code of Behaviour

Table of Contents

Code of Behaviour	3
Introduction	3
The Structure of the Code	3
The Aim of the Code	4
The Ethos of the Code	4
Roles and Responsibilities	4
The Rationale for the Code	5
The Consultation & Review Process	5
Implementation of the Code	5
School Rules & Procedures	6
Section 1:	
Expectations of Behaviour	10
Respectful Behaviour	10
Key Rules to Help me to be RESPECTFUL to Myself & Others	11
What's In What's Out	12
Section 2:	
Rewards for Good Behaviour	13
Section 3:	
Responses for Inappropriate Behaviour	14
Interventions, Sanctions & Supports	14
Ladder of Intervention	15
Suspension & Expulsion	21

Code of Behaviour

Our Lady's College, Galway Mission Statement

We in Our Lady's College Galway, in cooperation with parents/guardians, aim to foster and develop the unique potential of each student through the provision of a broad based educational experience in the Catholic tradition.

In welcoming all, our focus is on educational excellence delivered in a safe and caring environment. Mutual respect, responsibility and belonging permeate all that we do enabling the holistic development of our students.

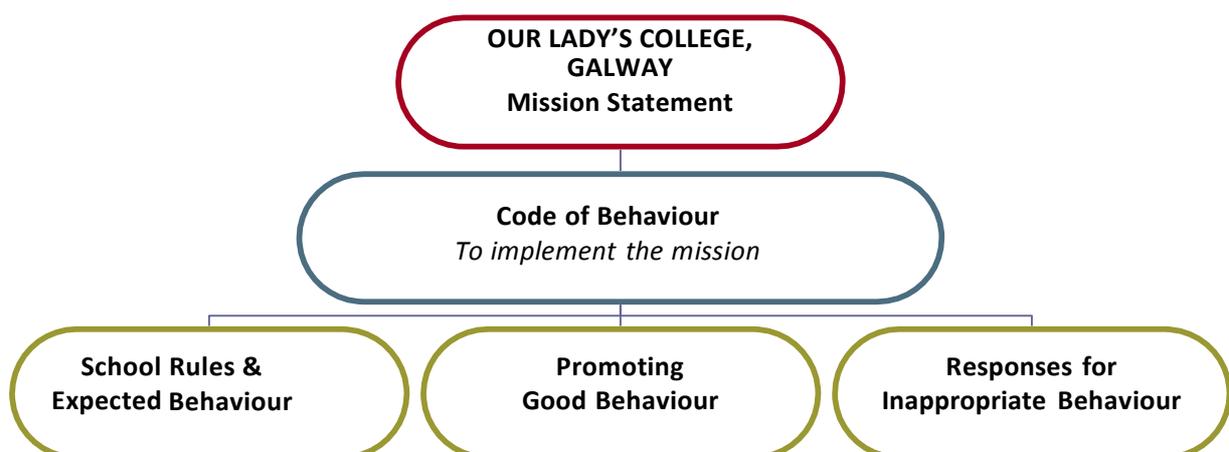
Introduction

As part of this mission, Our Lady's College, Galway has a Code of Behaviour which relates to all school activities. The Code is in keeping with the National Educational Welfare Board's "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" (2008).

The Structure of the Code

The Code outlines the following three core parts:

1. School Rules & Expected Behaviour
2. Promoting Good Behaviour
3. Responses for Inappropriate Behaviour



The Aim of the Code

In light of our Mission Statement the aim of the Code of Behaviour is to ensure that all the students attending Our Lady's College Galway are actively encouraged to make a positive impact on the school community through positive behaviour. In our School, positive behaviour is considered to be a form of training, which empowers students to make appropriate choices in a supportive environment. It aims also to provide an orderly and safe environment in the school where the dignity and value of each individual is cherished, supported and acknowledged in such a way as to enable all students to reach their full potential academically and otherwise. Praise and positive consequences are seen as important by teachers in maintaining a good relationship with students.

The Ethos of the Code

The principles underpinning the Code ensure that Our Lady's College:

- **Creates a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning which promotes positive relationships of mutual respect and support among students, parents and staff**
This is achieved through the school culture, policies, structures and support systems across the school
- **Creates an environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour**
This is achieved through a whole-school approach which promotes good behaviour inside and outside the classes and models good behaviour everyday
- **Ensures that the standard of behaviour expected is communicated to all involved so that everyone understands how to behave, has the skills to behave well and knows the impact of both good and inappropriate behaviour**
This is achieved through the regular teaching of the expected behaviour in curricular and co-curricular material and in the provision of a fair and consistent system of Rewards for Good Behaviour and Responses to Inappropriate Behaviour. Expectations of behaviour are communicated through the school journal, in class, during induction and are displayed throughout the school. All parents/guardians receive a copy of the Code which they are expected to read and sign on an annual basis. Adherence to the Admissions Policy and the Code of Behaviour is a condition of enrolment in Our Lady's College.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each member of the school community has a responsibility to promote good behaviour. In Our Lady's College Galway, students, parents, teachers, staff, school management and the Board of Management all have a role to ensure the Code is upheld.

The Rationale for the Code

The Code is cognisant of the international conventions, laws and constitutional provisions which all schools must abide by. These include the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. These legal implications along with the school's Admission Policy ensures that Our Lady's College provides for the fulfilment of every child's right to an education in a safe, respectful setting where their basic needs can be met.

The Consultation & Review Process

The Code will be reviewed after the initial 12 months to ensure it supports the school's mission. Any amendments needed will be made and if they are in keeping with the general Ethos of the Code, a new version will be distributed to staff, parents and students. If the amendments required are substantial, a full audit will be conducted. As a core part of the school's work, the Code of Behaviour should be reviewed every five years through a whole-school approach using the Audit Guidelines from the NEWB or other method as deemed appropriate by the Board of Management.

Implementation of the Code

Upon approval by the Board of Management;

- All staff members and parents/guardians of registered students will receive a copy of the Code of Behaviour. A whole-staff workshop on the implementation of the Code will be held at the beginning of the school year
- The code of behaviour and rules will appear in all school journals and parents/guardians and students must sign this each year
- The Code of Behaviour will be available on the school website and any parent/guardian or staff member may request a written copy

Our Lady's College Galway School Rules

The standard expected with regard to any issue not covered below is that which people would regard as decent, reasonable and respectful behaviour.

1. Behaviour

All students are required and expected to behave with courtesy and respect towards every member of staff, the student council members, their fellow students and visitors at all times. Any form of bullying, intimidation or discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, or ethnic group is regarded as a serious offence (Equal Status Act 2000).

2. Attendance

Students are required to attend school every day that the school is open for students, unless otherwise stated in the school calendar.

3. Punctuality

Students are expected to be in school and in class on time.

4. Uniform

Students are required to wear the full official school uniform in school and at designated school functions / outings **at all times**.

5. Homework

Students are required to record homework and learning in their School Journal and do all homework assigned to them.

6. Property

Students are expected to treat school property (including school books on loan) and the property of others with respect. As stealing is a criminal offence should a student be found stealing, sanctions will be imposed and the incident may be reported to the Gardai. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. The safety and security of mobile phones is wholly a matter for students/parents.

7. Application to Studies

All students are expected to apply themselves to their school work and are required to make every effort to progress at their studies.

8. Smoking

Smoking is forbidden on the school premises, in the school grounds, on all school activities and while wearing the school uniform.

9. Alcohol & Drugs

The use of alcohol and non-prescribed drugs is forbidden in school or at any school events.

10. Lockers

Students may go to lockers before first class, during morning break, lunchtime and after school only.

11. Classroom

Students are not allowed to leave the classroom during class, except with the teachers' permission and after having their journal signed. Students are not allowed to eat or drink during class.

12. Mobile Telephones/Mobile Devices

Students must ensure that mobile phones are SWITCHED OFF AT ALL TIMES WHILE ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS (i.e. inside the school gates). This includes the period of time each student is ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS before commencement of the first class, during the small break, during lunch and after the last class of the day.

While off the school grounds, but on school business (e.g. travelling to/from other school campus, games, tours, field trips etc.) mobile phones must be switched off.

Switched off does not include 'Silent', 'Meeting' or any other similar mode. The mobile phone must be POWERED OFF.

13. Facial Jewellery

Tasteful and discreet items of jewellery may be worn. For health and safety reasons, large hoop earrings, nose rings, tongue, lip, eyebrow or other body pierced ornaments are not allowed. Jewellery that contravenes the Health and Safety rules of the school will be confiscated and returned to the student on Friday evening.

14. Defamatory Remarks

Defamatory remarks about school and teachers that appear on any social media or other fora will invoke serious consequences.

PROCEDURES

Behaviour / Bullying

Any student who feels that she is being bullied or that any other student is being bullied should report the incident to a staff member or Student Council member. Refer to Anti Bullying Policy

Absence Protocol

- All absences from school must be explained by an official note from home, when students return to school. Official notes are found at the back of the journal. These notes must be handed in to the Office. This information is passed onto the National Educational Welfare Board. The school must be informed by parents/guardians of the reasons why any student has been, or is to be absent for three or more days.

- Absences are monitored on a daily and weekly basis.
- Parents are obliged to explain all absences to the school in writing (Education Welfare Act 2000). If a student is absent for more than three days and there has been no communication from home or, if the communication is unsatisfactory, the Parent/Guardian will be contacted. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, the Parents/ Guardians will be informed that in the case of a student who is under school leaving age, The Education Welfare Officer will be notified.
- The Deputy Principal is particularly vigilant for intermittent/ casual absences and in cases of doubt contact home. In imposing sanctions for unauthorised absences, account will be taken of the underlying causes and, except in exceptional circumstances, the sanctions will be school based (i.e., will not involve exclusion from school.)

Attendance

A roll call takes place at 9 a.m. in every class. Students not in attendance at first class will be marked absent and a text message will be sent home. If arriving late **it is the students' own responsibility to sign the Attendance Book at the office.**

Note:

- If a student arrives to school late and does not sign the Attendance Book, this will result in the student being marked absent for that day.
- If a student is late between classes because they were detained by a teacher, an explanation note will be given to the student to present to her teacher when she goes to her next class.
- If a student is late for any other reason, this is noted by class teacher and reported to Deputy Principal, if necessary.

Appointments

Written communication from home on official Appointment Slips must be provided before the student is granted permission to leave the school for any appointment. Official Appointment Slips are found at the back of the school journal. Parents may be contacted by telephone to confirm arrangements.

Lunchtime

Senior Cycle students may leave the school grounds during lunchtime unless otherwise indicated from home in writing. Third Year Students may leave the school grounds at lunchtime with a signed Consent Form from parents. First and Second Year students may NOT leave the school grounds during lunchtime.

*Note: Students are NOT allowed out of school premises at morning break-time

Illness

A student who is ill will be allowed to leave class. She must report to the Secretary's office. Parents/Guardian will be contacted. A student will not be allowed to go home unless contact can be made with Parents/Guardians. Any recurring illnesses must be notified to the school.

Accident / Emergency

In the case of any Accident/Emergency, First Aid will be administered. Parents/Guardians will be contacted immediately. If necessary, students will be brought to the Accident/Emergency Department of UCHG. In serious cases the Emergency Services will be contacted. Details of the incidents must be entered on an Accident Report Form. (Note: All students are automatically enrolled in a Schools Personal Accident Insurance Scheme which covers them at and on their way to and from school and during any school related activities taking place with the full knowledge and authority of the school. There is a small annual charge for this cover).

Uniform

Students must wear their FULL school uniform at all times unless otherwise indicated.

The school uniform consists of:

- Purple Crested Cotton V-necked Jumper
- A white shirt (Revered Blouse/ Crested Polo Shirt)
- Navy trousers or bespoke Tartan Skirt
- Crested Soft Shell Jacket
- Black tights/knee high socks may be worn with **black shoes with no markings or colour.**

In the unlikely event of students coming to school without their full school uniform, parents will be contacted to allow them the opportunity to bring in the correct uniform to school or to be informed that their daughter is being sent home to change. Students will not be allowed into class without the correct uniform.

Lockers

Students are provided with the use of a locker each year for a small fee. . Each student must use only the locker assigned to her. It is the responsibility of each student to provide a secure lock for the locker. The school cannot accept any responsibility for theft, loss or damage to property stored in a locker that is not secured with a lock. Money or other valuables, however, should not be left in lockers. They should be on the person or given to the School Secretary for safe keeping. A student may be required to open the locker under teacher supervision at any time for inspection. There should be at least two teachers present for such an inspection.

Jewellery

Jewellery that contravenes the Health and Safety rules of the school will be confiscated and returned to the student on Friday evening.

Mobile Devices

- Students found with mobile devices switched on or in view in the school will have their phones and SIM cards confiscated. (Refer to Mobile Phone Policy). A Year Head Referral will be issued
- Any staff member has the right to confiscate a personal electronic device. A refusal to hand over the device will result in further sanctions being applied as per the Code of Behaviour being applied.
- Should a student be found to be using a phone/audio device during the course of the school day and refuses to hand up the phone/audio device, they will be brought immediately to the main office where Parent/Guardian will be contacted and asked to take the student off the school premises for the remainder of the school day. Students will only be allowed to return to school accompanied by their Parent/Guardian to meet with the Principal to discuss said breach of this policy.

In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians are asked not to arrange to contact students by mobile at any time during the school day. Urgent phone calls to or from a student will ALWAYS be facilitated through the office. **A student who wishes to go home during the school day must arrange to do so through reception and NOT independently by mobile phone.** This ensures that the correct procedures for leaving school are observed. Responsibility cannot be taken by the school authority for students who arrange independently to go home without following proper procedure. Any such arrangement is in breach of the code of behaviour. Contact with the school may be made through the office at 091 563495

School Journal

Students MUST have their school journal with them at all times. The student journal is an important means of communication between parents and teachers in relation to homework, progress and behaviour.

- Students will not be admitted to class without their journal.
- Students must put their journal on their desk at the beginning of each class.
- Students must have their journal signed by the class teacher before being permitted to leave the classroom.
- Students should record all homework, learning and study for each subject in their journal.
- Teachers may put notes or comments in a student's journal which parents are asked to sign.
- Parents/Guardians are advised to check their daughter's journal regularly. In checking the journal, parents are asked to look at both the main homework section and the behaviour record section towards the back.
- Parents /Guardians will write notes concerning absences, late arrivals and appointments in the relevant section at the back of the journal.
- Failure to have a school journal is considered a serious offence and may incur sanctions. If a student loses a journal, another journal must be purchased from the school office.

Section 1: Expectations of Behaviour in Our Lady's College

All members of the school community are expected to be **'RESPECTFUL'** as outlined in the list of expectations set out below. The **'Expected Behaviours'** are discussed with each class by Year Heads, Tutors and Class Teachers at the beginning of each year or when a student joins the school. They are displayed around the school, included in the school journal and are reinforced by the teachers and through the induction programme.

There are **'Key Rules which help us to be RESPECTFUL'** and these are presented with reasons for each rule.

'What's In/What's Out' is a **summary** of the school rules and is useful for highlighting acceptable and unacceptable behaviour

Respectful Behaviour in Our Lady's College.

In Our Lady's College, Galway, we are expected to:

- R**espect all school facilities both inside and outside the building
- E**nter and exit classes in order and line up quietly outside our next classroom
- S**afely and calmly walk on the right hand side of corridors with respect for people's space
- P**ractise safe behaviour on the school premises and grounds.

In class, we are expected to:

- E**ngage and participate in class to the best of our ability without distracting others
- C**ome on time and in uniform to class with books, homework, journal and other materials
- T**alk and communicate calmly and respectfully to all students and staff
- F**ulfil our rights and the rights of others to work in a safe learning space
- U**se the 'One voice, Hands up and Listen' method in class
- L**isten and cooperate at all times.

Senior students and Student Council members are expected to act as role models for good behaviour in school.

Key Rules to Help me to be RESPECTFUL to Myself & Others

1. Attend school regularly

This means:

- I attend school every day unless I have a valid reason
- I must bring in a note from my parents/guardians or a doctor's cert for each day I miss
- I don't leave school without permission
- I will wear my full school uniform



Because:

- I will learn more and be better prepared for exams
- It is the law to explain why I was absent and the school must record why I wasn't in
- My safety is important
- I am proud of my school

2. Be on time for each class

This means:

- I arrive to school on time in the morning, after lunch and for all classes
- If I am late I sign the register



Because:

- If I am late I disrupt the teacher and other students
- It is the law to record my attendance and the school needs to know where I am

3. Follow the classroom routine

This means:

- I sit in the seat assigned to me
- I take out my class materials
- I remove my coat/jacket in class and put my bag under the table



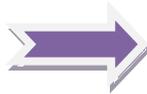
Because:

- Routine helps me to focus
- Being organised makes learning easier
- The classroom needs to be a safe place that doesn't distract me or others

4. Behave Well in Class

This means:

- I let others learn without distraction
- I use 'One voice, Hands up & Listen'



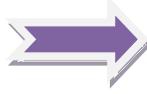
Because:

- Everyone has a right to learn
- It makes it easy to participate in class

5. Use my Journal properly

This means:

- I keep my journal neat and record my class work and homework in it
- I get it signed each week at home or when asked to
- I put the journal on my desk and give it to a teacher when asked



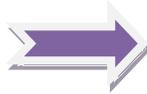
Because:

- It helps me to remember homework and helps with revision and study
- Parents/guardians can see how well I am doing and it has space for notes
- Rooting in my bag for it can be distracting and wastes time

6. Use of my mobile devices

This means:

- I keep my mobile phone and other devices switched off and out of sight at all times.



Because:

- It will help me focus and learn better

I agree to behave by the Code of Behaviour.

Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Student)

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

What's In & What's Out

What's In

- ✓ Being **RESPECTFUL**
- ✓ Wearing my full uniform
- ✓ Having my journal with me and recording my homework
- ✓ Asking questions politely if I don't understand
- ✓ Being organised and coming to school every day
- ✓ Being patient and having a positive attitude
- ✓ Sitting in the assigned seat in class
- ✓ Following instructions



What's Out

- X **Bullying, slugging**
- X **Fighting or messing**
- X **Using bad language**
- X **Vandalising, graffiti, stealing or littering**
- X **Leaving the school grounds without permission**
- X **Chewing gum, tippex**
- X **Smoking/drugs/alcohol on school grounds**
- X **Facial piercings or large jewellery**
- X **Mobile devices, cameras, recording devices**
- X **Food and fizzy drinks in class**



Section 2: Rewards for Good Behaviour

When expectations are realised and a standard of appropriate behaviour is shown by students, positive reinforcement is important. Good behaviour both inside and outside the classroom is acknowledged. In some cases, a quiet word is most appropriate and in other situations a reward or sending a positive note home is warranted.

Praise and positive consequences are seen as important by teachers in maintaining good relationships with students.

Informal:

This is done within classes by individual teachers and can include:

- Verbal praise for effort, progress and achievement
- A positive note in the journal
- Positive comment about the student(s) to Tutor or Year Head
- Complimenting good behaviour, initiative, courtesy, neat appearance, etc.
- "Noting" people doing something good or helping someone else

Formal:

- Students or classes may be acknowledged by the school community
- The names of students representing the school at events are announced with details of their achievements over the school intercom
- Positive reports of students' progress may be given via eportal, at parent-teacher meetings and in school reports after Christmas, Mocks and Summer Exams
- Parents may be contacted by phone or with a note to inform them of the student's progress or achievements.
- Attendance, punctuality, participation and academic achievement are acknowledged.
- Class/Year Group outings can be arranged as a reward for good behaviour.
- An annual awards ceremony celebrating students' achievements and successes.

Section 3: Responses for Inappropriate Behaviour

Despite students', staff and parents'/guardians' best intentions, inappropriate behaviour can happen and even minor incidents can be disruptive to teaching and learning. Most students behave appropriately with the help of consistent routines and clear rules in school. When a student's behaviour prevents teaching and learning taking place and interferes with the smooth running of the school, a balance must be found between meeting the needs of that student and the needs of the other students and staff.

Our Lady's College, Galway adopts a problem-solving approach when dealing with inappropriate behaviour and has a number of supports and initial interventions to help the student. The purpose of this approach is:

- To help students learn that their behaviour was unacceptable
- To help students learn the skills of good behaviour
- To help students recognise the effect of their actions
- To help students understand that they have choices about their behaviour and that all choices have consequences.

The quality of relationships between students and teachers is one of the most powerful influences on student behaviour and after inappropriate behaviour has been dealt with, one goal of this approach is to restore a positive relationship between the student and teacher. In some cases, it is necessary to apply sanctions. The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour which reinforces boundaries as set out in the Expectations and Rules. Sanctions are a consequence of certain behaviours and serve to ensure that everyone's safety and right to learn or work is protected.

Interventions, Sanctions & Supports

Our Lady's College has a consistent school-wide response to behaviour. The first intervention for inappropriate behaviour is reminding students of the Code of Behaviour.

When a student behaves inappropriately, the teacher tries to deal with the incident in a calm and firm manner which aims to help the student recognise the effect of her behaviour and the consequences of her choice of behaviour.

If the student is unwilling or unable to adapt their behaviour for any multiple of reasons, Our Lady's College has a strong support system to draw from such as the Staff, Tutors, Year Heads, Pastoral and Counselling services, the Behaviour Support Classroom, Deputy Principal, Principal and external services. Teachers and staff share resources and advice and act as a team which aims to support students to behave appropriately.

In response to inappropriate behaviour, teachers use a number of interventions and sanctions for students. Sanctions are imposed as consequences of inappropriate behaviour and Our Lady's College uses a Ladder of Intervention to offer consistency of responses to such behaviour.

Senior students are expected to have a greater understanding of the consequences of their behaviour.

Ladder of Intervention

Low level misbehaviour

Low level misbehaviour is attended to routinely and effectively through the skills of the teacher in the classroom or on the corridor. Teachers keep records of the behaviour, sanctions given and they follow up to ensure that a student has adapted her behaviour.

Actions available to the Teacher may include:

- Verbal warning stating that the behaviour is inappropriate and advising that the student make a sensible choice and return to task
- Additional homework including penalty exercises
- Moving student to a different place in classroom
- Note to parent/guardian in journal
- Classroom based detention
- Speak to student after class
- Verbal/non verbal behaviour cues

STAGE 1 Student continues to be in breach of class/school rules

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting

STAGE 2 Student continues to be in breach of class rules or more serious breach of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Year Head assigns Lunchtime Detention and notifies parents/guardians

STAGE 3 Failure to turn up for detention or Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Year Head assigns Lunchtime Detention
- Year Head puts student on a Report Card for 3 weeks, monitors behaviour and notifies parents/guardians.

To reward students for adapting their behaviour, at Stages 1, 2, & 3 students who receive no further Year Head Referrals for 3 consecutive full school weeks (15 school days) will be rewarded by having existing Referral Forms removed.

STAGE 4 Failure to turn up for detention *or* Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Student remains on Report Card for further 3 weeks, Year Head continues to monitor behaviour and notifies parents/guardians.
- Students to be referred to further supports e.g. Counselling services, Behaviour Support*, School Completion, External Agencies, Care Team etc.

If a student goes 3 consecutive school weeks without receiving further Year Head Referrals AND demonstrates a commitment to changing their behaviour, they are rewarded by having 1 existing Referral Form removed and moving back a stage on the ladder of referral.

STAGE 5 Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Year Head assigns after school detention and notifies parents/guardians.
- Student meets with Disciplinary Committee comprised of Year Head/Deputy Principal
- Student may continue on Report Card for further 3 weeks, Year Head continues to monitor behaviour and informs parents/guardians.

If a student goes 3 consecutive school weeks without receiving further Year Head Referrals AND demonstrates a commitment to changing their behaviour, they are rewarded by having 1 existing Referral Form removed and moving back a stage on the ladder of referral.

STAGE 6 Failure to turn up for detention *or* Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Year Head assigns after school detention and notifies parents/guardians.
- Review of referral to further supports
- Parents / Guardians and student required to attend a meeting with Principal and Contract of Behaviour signed.
- Student/Parents/Guardians informed that any further breach of Code of Behaviour will lead to suspension

If a student goes 3 consecutive school weeks without receiving further Year Head Referrals AND demonstrates a commitment to changing their behaviour, they are rewarded by having 1 existing Referral Form removed and moving back a stage on the ladder of referral.

STAGE 7 Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Student is suspended for one day

If a student exhibits any of the following behaviours during class, they may be removed from class and Stage 9 will be implemented e.g.

- (i) Aggression towards staff/student*
- (ii) Malicious damage to school property*
- (iii) Behaviour likely to endanger the safety of others*
- (iv) Substance Abuse*
- (v) Interfering with the fire alarm*
- (vi) Theft*
- (vii) Any incidents that may be deemed to put the health and safety of others in jeopardy*
- (viii) Any incident deemed to be of similar gravity as above*

STAGE 8 Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Student is suspended for two days. A report is brought to the Board of Management and a sub-committee of the Board of Management may meet with the student and parents/guardians.

STAGE 9 Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Student is suspended from school for three days
- Case conference/Section 24 type meeting involving all relevant and appropriate care and support agencies

STAGE 10 Further breaches of the Code of Behaviour

A Year Head Referral Form is completed and given to Year Head

Action:

- Year Head meets with student and records the meeting
- Student is suspended and a report is brought to the Board of Management

- Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. The expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that is only taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.
- Expulsion occurs only
 - After all disciplinary options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented.
 - All relevant support services within the school and community have been offered and involved.
 - The School Authorities have tried a series of interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.
- A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29).

Note:

1. The above procedures can be short circuited in the case of more serious offences.
2. The class teacher may consult with the Year Head, Deputy Principal/Principal and Care Team regarding the supports and interventions available for repeated misbehaviour. The aim of these interventions is to help the student develop the skills to enable them to return to the classroom without disturbing teaching and learning.
3. Records of interventions, sanctions and contact with home are kept by the school on eportal/in the student's file and feedback is provided to the class teacher and tutor. Parents/Guardians have a right to view the records on file for their daughter at any time.
4. Behaviour that is deemed by the Principal, Deputy Principal or Disciplinary Committee to be serious enough will be referred to the Board of Management, bypassing some or all of the above stages.
5. Parents will be informed by text when a student is referred for lunchtime/evening detention.
6. Failure to attend detention will be treated as a serious breach of school rules.
7. The Behaviour Support Programme involves a student being placed in a Behaviour Support classroom where appropriate behaviour modification training and curricular needs will be addressed.
8. In certain situations where deemed appropriate a student may be referred to the Behaviour Support Programme. Her parents/guardians will be informed.
9. The Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head, Home School and Community Liaison teacher, Guidance Counsellor. Behaviour Support Teacher and School Completion Co-ordinator meet once each week. Referrals from teachers are dealt with and appropriate steps are put in place to take remedial action.
10. New students to the school may be referred to the Behaviour Support Programme for an induction period, where deemed appropriate.

11. * Students who access support for their behaviour in the Behaviour Support Classroom can gain Positive Behaviour Cards for good behaviour. These Positive Behaviour Cards are given at the discretion of the Behaviour Support teacher and are then passed onto the Year Head. The purpose of the Positive Behaviour Card is to record positive behaviour and to cancel out a Year Head Referral Form.
12. A Section 24 Type Meeting is convened by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) under Section 24 of the Education Act 1998. This meeting will be attended by Parents/Guardians and Representatives from all outside Agencies and Bodies that deal with the student and will be chaired by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Suspension & Expulsion

Suspensions Policy and Procedures

In Our Lady's College the Board of Management formally delegates the authority to suspend a student to the Principal.

This policy and its procedures are approved by the Board of Management having been developed in consultation with all the educational partners i.e. parents, students, staff and the wider community. The policy has been developed in line with the NEWB Guidelines.

What does suspension mean in Our Lady's College:-

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

The grounds for suspension:-

In Our Lady's College, we recognise suspension as a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern.

Normally a range of other interventions will have been tried before a decision to suspend is made.

A decision to suspend requires serious grounds such as

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Any serious incident of misconduct

The reasons for suspension in Our Lady's College are clearly defined.

A suspension will give the student time to reflect on the link between their actions and its consequences. A period of suspension will also give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour. In Our Lady's College, suspension may form part of a Behaviour Management Plan, thus enabling the school to set goals with the student and their parents, allow staff an opportunity to plan other interventions and to impress on the student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

Forms of Suspensions in Our Lady's College.

Suspensions can be in one of two forms (1) a suspension which is imposed as an ultimate sanction after a series of interventions involving student, parents, and staff. (2) Immediate suspension as a result of a serious misbehaviour.

Procedures in Respect of Suspension.

(1) Immediate suspension: - A preliminary investigation must be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. Having due regard for our duty of care, once parents have been notified the student may be sent home from school.

Suspension can only take place after consultation with the Principal, Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal with responsibility for the specific year group

(2)While it is possible for the Principal or his/her representative to suspend immediately in some exceptional cases, normally suspension will be linked to the Our Lady's College Code of Behaviour. Copies of the Code of Behaviour are available to all students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) on enrolment.

Suspension normally occurs only after (a) all disciplinary options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented and (b) when all appropriate support services within the school have been either offered or involved. (c) when discussion with the parent(s)/guardian(s) relating to specific misbehaviours has taken place.

The following procedures will be followed.

Suspension will take place after consultation with and under the authority of the Principal, Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal with responsibility for the specific year group.

Parents/Guardians must be informed in writing of the reason for the suspension and the length of suspension must be made clear. Parents will be made aware of their right to appeal the suspension.

A record of all actions taken and correspondence must be kept.

Immediate Suspension:-A student may be suspended immediately in some circumstances: fighting or aggressive behaviour or threatening physical or verbal behaviour towards any member of staff, student or visitor to the school.

Reasons for the suspension of a pupil must be linked with the Code of Behaviour. In accordance with the National Educational Welfare Board, a student will not normally be suspended for poor academic performance, poor attendance or lateness and minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour.

The period of suspension:-A student may be suspended from school for a period of one, two or three days depending on the severity of the misbehaviour.

In exceptional circumstances the Principal may choose to extend the period of suspension to five days with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The Board of Management shall place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed. The Board of Management shall 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 year to twenty days or more.

After the suspension ends:-A period of suspension ends on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents. The student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start and adherence to the Code of Behaviour will be expected. Support should be offered to the student in the re-integration process.

Appeals

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 18 years, may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the NEWB on behalf of the student.

Review of suspension policy

To ensure that the Suspensions Policy in Our Lady's College is consistent with other school policies, natural justice and changes in education, this policy will be reviewed on a two yearly basis.

Expulsion Policy and Procedures

In Our Lady's College the ultimate sanction imposed by the school is expulsion and it is imposed by the Board of Management only.

This policy and its procedures are approved by the Board of Management having been developed in consultation with all the educational partners i.e. parents, students, staff and the wider community. The policy has been developed in line with the NEWB Guidelines.

What does expulsion mean in Our Lady's College?

A student is expelled from school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

In Our Lady's College, we recognise that expulsion of a student is a very serious step and will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

Normally a range of other interventions to address the misbehaviour will be tried before a decision to expel is made:-

- Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways to help the student to change her behaviour.
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of her behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensuring all other possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the support of outside agencies.

The grounds for expulsion:-

- A student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process and has reached Stage 13 on the ladder of intervention
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety of others
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension but the seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour are the key differences. All possibilities for changing the student's behaviour have been exhausted.

Forms of expulsion in Our Lady's College

Expulsion can be in one of two forms (1) automatic expulsion and (2) the ultimate sanction

Automatic expulsion:- a Board of Management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur automatic expulsion as a sanction. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:-

- 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

In the case of automatic expulsion, due process and fair procedures will be followed by the Board of Management.

Ultimate Sanction: - only applied when

- All disciplinary options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
- All appropriate services within the school and outside have either been offered or involved
- Discussions with parent/s or guardian/s relating to the serious misbehaviour has taken place

Procedures in Respect of Expulsions:-

Step 1: A detailed investigation will be carried out by the Principal

- Parents and students will be informed in writing about the details of the alleged serious misbehaviour and the proposed investigation.
- Parents and students will be given every opportunity, including meeting with the Principal, to respond to the complaint. If parents refuse to meet with the Principal, they will be invited to a rescheduled meeting and advised that the school authority has a duty to make a decision to respond to inappropriate behaviour.

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

When the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board to consider expulsion, the Principal will:

- Inform the parents and the students that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure that the 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 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 the hearing

- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management and also that they may be accompanied at the hearing
- Ensure that the parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing

Step 3: Considerations by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendations; and the holding of a hearing

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that the investigation is properly conducted. When the Board of Management decides to consider expulsion it will:

- Hold a hearing
- At the hearing the Principal, parents or a student over 18 years 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. The parents / student over 18 years can make a case for a lessening of the sanction. During the hearing, the Board must remain impartial. After both sides have been heard, the Board will ask the Principal and parents/student to leave during the Board's deliberations.

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

Having heard from all 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.

If the Board of Management decides to expel the student, it will

- Notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing of its decision, and the reasons for this decision.
- The student cannot be expelled for 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives written notification of the proposed expulsion.
- The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and that the EWO has been informed.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within 20 days of receipt of a notification from the Board of Management of its opinions that a student should be expelled. The Education Welfare Officer will

- Make all reasonable efforts to meet with the Principal, parents and the student, and other relevant bodies or individuals who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend. These consultation may result in an agreement that would avoid expulsion, or it may focus on alternative educational possibilities

Pending these consultations the Board may decide to suspend the student, if his presence poses a threat to the safety of other students or would interfere seriously with the learning and teaching of other students.

Step6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

When the 20 day period following notification to the EWO has elapsed, and where the Board of Management is still of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision.

- Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed
- Parents and students should be told of their right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.
- A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student

Appeals

A parent, or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 Section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the NEWB on behalf of the student