

Ballyhaunis Community School



Code of Behaviour

Ratified by the Board of Management on: _____

Signature: _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Commenced:	May 2026
Next review due:	September 2029

1. Introduction

Ballyhaunis Community School Mission Statement

“We in Ballyhaunis Community School are committed to fostering the holistic development of each individual.

We aim to promote equality for all and respect for one another and our environment and to give each person the opportunity to reach his/her potential.

While valuing our traditions we encourage innovative curricula to achieve these aims in a safe, caring and ordered manner in partnership within the school, with parents and with the broader community.”

Ballyhaunis Community School Motto

“Unity in Diversity”

This policy applies to students of the school at the following times:

- During school time, including before and after class and at breaktimes.
- While representing the school.
- While travelling to or from school using school transport.
- While on school trips, tours, exchanges, or fieldtrips.
- While supporting school teams or activities.
- On any occasion when accompanied by school personnel.

The Code may also apply to online or off-site behaviour outside school hours where there is a sufficiently clear connection with the school and the behaviour has a serious adverse impact on a member or members of the school community, student welfare, or the safe and effective operation of the school.

The Code of Behaviour is fundamental to our mission and motto, safeguarding the rights of all in the school community through a preventative, supportive and corrective approach.

2. Rationale for a Code of Behaviour

Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour for its students. The Act requires that the school Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by Tusla Education Support Services. The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school’s plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well. The Code of Behaviour assists the school community to promote the school ethos, positive relationships, policies, procedures, and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. This Code of Behaviour assists teachers, other members of staff, students, and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. To this end, the Code of Behaviour is seen as a working document, informing everyday school life, and reflecting the voices of our students, staff, parents, Board of Management, as well as the legislative requirements to which we are bound. By involving all our stakeholders in this document, we are inviting all members of our school community to take ownership of the atmosphere and environment in our school.

This Code is prepared and reviewed having regard to Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and Tusla Education Support Service, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for

Schools. In accordance with Section 23, the Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of students, the measures that may be taken where those standards are not met, the procedures to be followed before suspension or expulsion, the grounds for removing a suspension, and the procedures by which parents/guardians notify the school of a student's absence. The Board of Management will ensure that the Code is developed and reviewed through consultation with the Principal, teachers, parents/guardians of registered students and through meaningful student participation. The Code will be published and communicated to the school community.

The Code is implemented in a manner consistent with the school's obligations in relation to equality, inclusion, special educational needs and disability. In responding to behaviour, the school will consider the individual circumstances of the student, including identified additional needs or disability where relevant, the supports available, proportionality and fair procedures. Nothing in this Code displaces the school's statutory child-protection and safeguarding obligations.

This Code should be read alongside the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour, Child Safeguarding Statement and applicable Child Protection Procedures, Attendance Policy, Admissions Policy, Special Educational Needs/Inclusion policies, Acceptable Use Policy and other relevant school policies.

The Code is also informed by the Education Act 1998 (as amended), the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, the Equal Status Acts, the Children First Act 2015, applicable data-protection law and relevant Department of Education and Youth circulars and procedures, including Section 29 appeal procedures.

3. School Values

Respect: We treat everyone with dignity, kindness and consideration.

Responsibility: We take ownership of our actions and choices.

Integrity: We act honestly and ethically in all situations.

Inclusivity: We celebrate diversity and promote an inclusive community.

Excellence: We strive for personal and academic growth.

4. Aims of our Code of Behaviour

- To create a safe, secure teaching and learning environments for all by promoting a sense of mutual respect amongst all members of the school community.
- To ensure understanding (by the parents, students, staff, and management of Ballyhaunis Community School) of the Code, the reasons for it, as well as each person's responsibilities in relation to its implementation.
- To emphasise the promotion, acknowledgement, and support systems for positive behaviour in the school.
- To outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions and interventions that will be used in response to negative behaviour.
- To identify the procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

- To ensure that effective procedures are in place which will allow for the day to day running of the school whilst complying with all relevant legislation as well as Department of Education requirements.

5. Roles & Responsibilities of Members of the School Community

Scope of the Code

A Code of Behaviour has been put in place to ensure the school community fully honours the Mission Statement above. Ballyhaunis Community School acknowledges the contribution of all members of our school community to the promotion of positive behaviour. The school is committed to a policy of recognition, encouragement and reward of positive behaviour. All students enrolled in Ballyhaunis Community School agree to adhere to the high standards laid out in the Code. In accordance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, parents/guardians are asked to confirm that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code by their son/daughter. The Code of Behaviour applies to all students up to the completion of Senior Cycle education. Its scope extends from day-to-day school life to include school outings, travelling to and from school and any representation of the school outside of normal school activity including any activity in the school uniform.

The Board of Management

The Board of Management is the authority responsible for ensuring that a fair and effective Code of Behaviour is prepared, published, implemented and reviewed. In developing or reviewing the Code, the Board will ensure consultation with the Principal, teachers, parents/guardians of registered students together with meaningful participation by students. The Board will formally consider and ratify the Code and will monitor its operation, including the use of suspension and expulsion.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible to the Board of Management for implementation of the Code.

Year-Heads

The Year-Heads are responsible for the day-to-day matters relating to their student's overall well-being, performance, uniforms, attendance and discipline.

Teachers

Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his or her class while sharing a common responsibility for discipline within the school.

The Disciplinary Council

The Disciplinary Council, comprised of the Principal or Deputy Principal and the relevant Year-Heads for the particular year group, meet every week to review and discuss matters pertaining to the welfare and discipline of students.

Students

Ballyhaunis Community School expects that students will always do their utmost to uphold the Code of Behaviour of our school.

Parents

Ballyhaunis Community School acknowledges the pivotal role of parents and guardians in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour. It is an expectation that all parents and guardians support the Code and actively encourage their son/daughter to uphold it.

Staff

Ballyhaunis Community School acknowledges the contribution of all staff (teaching, administrative, SNAs, caretaking and cleaning) in the day to day running of the school. Each member of staff has a part to play in the successful operation of our Code of Behaviour. Staff members have a responsibility to respond to and/or report, as appropriate, incidents of either positive or negative behaviour that they witness.

Three interlinked approaches are used to facilitate the creation of an educational and caring environment in the school.

1. Rewards - Positive behaviour acknowledgements
2. Pastoral Care Structure
3. School Rules

6. Positive Behaviour - School Supports

Students are encouraged to understand, adhere to, and uphold the Code of Behaviour in numerous ways including the following:

- The Code is presented and explained to Parents/Guardians and all incoming students.
- The Code is available on the school website.
- The Code is re-introduced on the first day of term by the Year-Head's, included in the Student Journal and is constantly reinforced by all staff.
- The Code is revisited during timetabled SPHE (Junior Cycle) and by Year-Head's throughout the school year – formally and informally.
- Positive relationships amongst and between students and staff as well as between school and home are prioritised.
- The values of Restorative Practice (respect, empathy, safety, personal accountability, equality, community, trust) are promoted in addressing conflict resolution. This involves scaffolding dialogue between affected parties using questions that focus on what has happened and what steps are needed to move positively forward. Restorative Practice aims to consciously build relationships, respond to conflict in a healthy way, and connect us to our best selves and to one another. The values of this philosophy inform how each person thinks, engages, speaks, listens, and approaches situations, all day, every day.
- The caring ethos of our school is embodied in our daily practice and interactions with one another. In addition to day-to-day routines, it is evident in the provision and support of lunchtime, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, Learning Support, Pastoral Care time, and access to a prayer room for those of all faiths and none. Together, these provisions endeavour to foster a sense of belonging for all and encourage positive behaviour among students.
- The school strives to provide to its students an education that will be broad and challenging in nature. Students will be prepared for Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations, and a comprehensive Transition Year Programme is provided.

- The broad and varied curriculum on offer in Ballyhaunis Community School offers substantial choice and seeks to accommodate student preferences.
- The school strives to provide a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in an attempt to enhance the social, personal, spiritual, sporting and aesthetic development of students in an engaging context.
- Various classroom management strategies, such as designated seating arrangements, are employed where necessary, to pre-empt and reduce/alleviate negative behaviour.
- Teachers prepare class materials well and lessons are differentiated to respond to students' abilities and interests.
- Formative Assessment procedures underpin approaches to teaching and learning in order to encourage students' ownership of their learning and a growth mind-set.
- Consistent use of the school journal as a means of communicating between home and school promotes consistent standards and open communication in relation to positive behaviour.
- VSware Semester reports are made available to parents/guardians three times in the academic year, to support student learning and progression.
- Various media such as our website, social media platforms as well as personal contact, are employed to enhance communication with students and home.
- Students of Ballyhaunis Community School are continually and consistently encouraged to behave in a positive, respectful, and responsible manner. This is achieved in no small part through adult modelling as well as the various programmes on offer in the school such as SPHE, CSPE, RE, etc. and through the intervention of specialist supports such as Tutors, Year-Heads, Guidance Counsellors, the Care Team, etc.
- Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism, Harassment, Violence, Substance misuse etc. are openly discussed with the students during their time in our school, through a variety of fora such as subject work, extra-curricular, projects, visiting speakers, drama, etc.
- Positive contributions to the school are also encouraged, acknowledged and rewarded in other ways such as through school representation and student leadership opportunities, e.g., the Student Council, formal recognition at Awards Ceremonies e.g., sports awards, display of student work, verbal and formal affirmation by Teachers, Year-Heads and Senior Management, participation in internal and external competitions, etc.
- Adult supervision at breaktimes and lunchtimes assists in detecting, sanctioning and reducing inappropriate behaviour. Equally, the presence of CCTV acts as a deterrent.
- Students are aware of the systems in place to deal with inappropriate behaviour e.g., ladder of referral, etc.

7. Rewards - Positive Behaviour Acknowledgements

Ballyhaunis Community School endeavours to reward good behaviour. Among the methods of rewarding good behaviour are:

Recognition by staff members of positive behaviour that supports our Code. Such behaviour might involve but is not limited to:

- Being inclusive
- Showing social responsibility
- Demonstrating positive leadership
- Having a positive attitude
- Making a positive contribution
- Showing an improvement in behaviour/in study application

- Showing an improvement in participation
 - Displaying consistent diligence
- An annual whole school prize-giving ceremony is held at the end of the school year where talents, achievements, and efforts of students, are acknowledged.
- Achievements are acknowledged and celebrated on the televisions in circulation areas, via PA system, on the school social media platforms and the yearbook.
- Notes are sent home in the school journal.
- Vouchers are given as rewards to students for use in the school canteen.
- Consistent positive behaviour can support applications/appointments to leadership roles e.g., Senior Mentors.
- Certificates of Commendation are issued for good behaviour/achievement by class teachers in response to appropriate behaviour by students.
- Student work is displayed throughout the building.
- Formal reports are made available to parents/guardians three times per academic year.
- References are provided for students upon request.

8. Pastoral Care Structure

Pastoral Care is holistic. It recognises and respects the young person who is on the road to becoming an adult. It is an integral part of life within the school.

- All class teachers and staff members have a central role to play in this.
- First year classes have two timetabled classes each week, second- and third-year classes have one class per week to help them in their Social, Personal and Health development.
- Our Guidance Counsellors and Chaplain are available to meet students and help them with their difficulties.
- Check and Connect initiative is in place for a targeted group of students, across all year groups. A group of volunteer teachers are assigned a number of students to check in with on a regular basis to ensure the students have someone on staff to talk to about any issues that may arise during the year and to encourage school attendance.

9. School Rules

Students have responsibilities and obligations to themselves and to their fellow students. The School Rules are intended to provide a framework which will ensure students show respect for themselves, for each other and to their environment. The School has the right to implement these rules in accordance with the Deed of Trust of the School.

9.1 General

- Students must be co-operative, well-mannered, and respectful to all members of staff, visitors to the school and to each other.
- Common courtesies must be always observed.
- Disruptive behaviour is prohibited, as it interferes with the rights of others.
- Violent or threatening behaviour is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- If a class is in progress students must knock on entry. When the bell rings at the end of a class, students should remain seated until dismissed by the teacher. The bell is a reminder to teachers only that class is over.
- Students must complete oral and written work assigned to them by teachers in a satisfactory manner. Failure to do so is a breach of this Code of Behaviour. Repeated

failure to do so is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour and of the Homework Agreement.

- All students must use a Journal to record homework to be checked by parents and teachers.

9.2 Attendance and Punctuality

- The school has a statutory duty, under the terms of the Education Act, to monitor and report student attendance. The school is obliged to report absences aggregating 20 days to the Educational Welfare Services of the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA). The Year-Head will contact parents/guardians when a concerning attendance pattern emerges.
- Unauthorised absence from school (truancy) is a serious breach of discipline.
- Students are expected to attend all of their classes, every day. A student may not absent him/herself from class without permission. The VSware attendance system is used by all class teachers to record attendance at each class period.
- No student may leave the school premises at lunch time, with the exception of students living in close proximity to the school, upon receipt of signed permission by the Year-Head from a parent/guardian.
- Students leaving the school premises on a field trip/school organised outing must have the appropriate permission form submitted by their parents/guardians to the relevant teacher.
- Students are required to be in attendance at the School on every school day. Parents/guardians must submit an explanation of reason for absence upon a student's return to school via VSware App. For persistent breaches of this rule students may not be admitted to class until contact is made with the parents/guardians of the individual.
- In the event of a student's unexplained absence, a notification will be sent via VSware App at 9.30 am following first roll call to parents/guardians.
- Late arrival is disruptive and unacceptable. Students arriving late must sign a 'late book' at the office. An explanation for lateness must be submitted by parents/guardians via VSware App.
- Where possible, any medical and dental appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours.
- Students may not leave the school without permission from their parents/guardians. Absence requests must be submitted by parents/guardians to the school via the VSware App for partial absence i.e. appointments, etc. Students must not sign out at the office until approval has been granted by the school and a parent/guardian will be required to collect the student at the main office and co-sign. To leave school without signing out at Reception is deemed to be a very serious breach of the Code of Behaviour. If he/she returns to school that day, he/she will be required to sign in again at Reception.
- In the case of illness parents/guardians will be contacted by the school office so that they can collect their son/daughter. Students are not permitted to contact home from their personal mobile phones during the school day but may do so through Reception.

The School Timetable is as follows:

- School commences at 9.00 a.m. sharp and finishes at 4.00 p.m. except for Friday when lessons cease @ 1.20p.m.
- Lunch break is from 1.20 to 2.00p.m. Monday – Thursday (1st, 3rd & 6th Year Students)
- Lunch break is from 12.40 to 1.20p.m. Monday – Thursday (2nd, TY & 5th Year Students)

- If a student arrives for class after the time at which that class is scheduled to start, the student will be regarded as late and must report to the office and sign in and be officially registered as being late.

Parents/guardians and students are asked to familiarise themselves with the school's Attendance Policy, which is available through the school and on the school website ballyhauniscs.ie

9.3 The School grounds

- Students are not permitted on the school grounds except when attending school or a school activity. Students otherwise on the school grounds are trespassers within the meaning of the Occupiers Liability Act 1995.
- Students may not leave the school grounds without permission submitted via VShare from their parents/guardians to do so, and subject to approval by the relevant Year-Head or Principal/Deputy Principal.
- Students consistently involved in incidents of indiscipline during breaktimes may be required to leave the school grounds during lunchtime. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of this.

9.4 School Uniform and Dress Code

Uniform

School uniform must be worn at all times. The School uniform is as follows:

Junior Boys:

Maroon jumper with crest, mid-grey trousers, grey shirt, and black shoes.

Junior Girls:

Maroon jumper with crest, plaid skirt, cream blouse, Black/navy socks. (ankle/knee length) black shoes, USCO School Uniform Navy Trousers may be worn instead of a skirt. No other trousers except as specified here are acceptable.

Transition Year/LCA and Senior Boys:

Navy blue jumper with crest, mid-grey trousers, grey shirt, and black shoes.

Transition Year/LCA and Senior Girls:

Navy blue jumper with crest, plaid skirt, cream blouse, black tights or navy socks and black shoes. Navy trousers as specified above may be worn instead of a skirt. No trousers, other than what is outlined above, are acceptable.

- A white round-neck T-shirt, without a collar, may be worn inside the shirt or blouse.
- School Jackets are available, and the school recommends that all students wear this jacket.
- Students are not permitted to wear "Hoodies" to school.
- If students wish to wear a belt it must be plain black.
- Shoes must be plain black without any visible markings.

PE Uniform:

Students must bring a change of gear to school for PE class. It is expected that this gear will be kept clean to maintain personal hygiene standards and conducive to physical activity.

9.5 Dress code

- Students must be neat, tidy and respectable in appearance. This also applies if students are given permission not to wear school uniform (e.g., non-uniform days, school tours or

other extra-curricular activities connected with the school). Students should be aware that if they are in school uniform, they are representing the school.

- Permissible piercings include ear studs and discreet nose piercings, however strictly no nose rings or brow piercings. This is not only a Health and Safety measure but also to ensure students comply with the requirement to attend school in a respectable manner.
- Visible Tattoos are not permitted under any circumstances.
- Male students are expected to maintain any facial hair in a neat and tidy fashion with any beards being kept to an absolute minimum length.
- Hair colour must be within the range of natural human hair colours.
- If Muslim students, choose to wear the Hijab it must be plain black/navy in colour.

The School reserves the right to decide whether any aspect of a student's appearance is in compliance with this Dress Code. Where a student does not comply, the matter will be addressed under the school's normal behaviour procedures. Any response will be reasonable and proportionate and will have regard to the circumstances of the student and fair procedures.

9.6 Toilets

Students must use school toilet facilities respectfully and in a manner that protects the privacy, dignity, health and safety of all members of the school community.

- Only one student is permitted in a toilet cubicle at any one time. A breach of this rule will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures, having regard to the circumstances of the incident and fair procedures.
- Food must not be brought into or consumed in the toilet areas.

9.7 Property

- Each student is responsible for his or her own property. Student's property should be clearly marked with the student's name.
- All materials, books, journals etc. distributed to students through the schoolbook scheme must be kept in the best possible condition by students.
- Interference of any kind with another person's property including property belonging to the School is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. Interference includes but is not limited to theft.
- Where school property is damaged by students the parents/guardians of students responsible may be required by the School to pay for the repair or replacement of same as appropriate.
- The School does not accept responsibility for any property belonging to students which is lost or damaged. Students are advised not to bring valuable or irreplaceable items to school.
- Tippex and chewing gum are not allowed in the school and will be confiscated if they are brought to school, in addition to any other sanctions which the School feels appropriate.

9.8 Digital Technologies

Ballyhaunis Community School recognises that it is a student's entitlement, with parental consent, to have a mobile phone and we acknowledge the positive aspects of this. Nonetheless, this right cannot compromise or disrupt teaching and learning. Therefore,

students are encouraged to leave their mobile phone at home. If students must bring their mobile phone to school, it is to be powered off when on the school premises and placed in the student's locker. Urgent phone calls to or from a student will always be facilitated through the office. Parents/guardians are asked to cooperate with this policy by refraining from making calls/texts to their daughter's/sons' mobile phones during the school day. Parents/guardians and students are asked to familiarise themselves with the school's Mobile Phone Policy, which is available through the school and on the school website ballyhauniscs.ie

9.9 Microsoft Office Suite – Usage of TEAMS platform

All students have access to the schools Microsoft office suite, including TEAMS, OneNote, Outlook etc. Students are reminded that this is a professional platform, and it is not permitted for personal use or to create personal TEAMS etc. on our school platform. Students who are found to be in breach of this rule will be subject to the school's disciplinary process, the outcome of which will depend on the severity of the matter.

9.10 Bullying Behaviour

For the purposes of this Code, bullying behaviour is addressed in accordance with the Department of Education and Youth *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the school's *Bí Cineálta Policy*. Bullying behaviour may occur online or offline and includes targeted behaviour that causes physical, social and/or emotional harm, where the behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power. The *Bí Cineálta Procedures* also address relevant forms of cyberbullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying, gender identity bullying and sexual harassment.

Bullying behaviour is unacceptable. Alleged bullying behaviour will be prevented, recorded and addressed under the school's *Bí Cineálta Policy* and the mandatory *Bí Cineálta Procedures*. Where conduct also constitutes a breach of this Code, any disciplinary response will be considered consistently with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures*, the *Code of Behaviour* and fair procedures. Parents/guardians and students are asked to familiarise themselves with the school's *Bí Cineálta Policy*, which is available through the school and on the school website ballyhauniscs.ie

9.11 Substance use

The School has a zero-tolerance approach to incidents of substance abuse. Possession, use or distribution of harmful or illegal substances including alcohol and tobacco will not be tolerated at any time under any circumstances and may lead to suspension or expulsion. This applies whether students are on school property and/or engaged in a school activity or not. The School has a comprehensive Substance Use Policy in place. Parents/guardians and students are asked to familiarise themselves with the school's Substance Use Policy, which is available through the school and on the school website ballyhauniscs.ie

9.12 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on school premises in accordance with the *Tobacco Smoking (Prohibition) Regulations 2003*. The school takes any violation of these regulations very seriously. To emphasise this, any student caught smoking or vaping for the first time will be required to attend after-school detention. Subsequent offences will result in a one-day suspension. The use of other devices, such as electronic cigarettes, will incur the same penalties.

9.13 Online Behaviour, Photography and Recording

- Students must use digital technology, social media and online platforms responsibly and in a manner consistent with this Code, the school's Acceptable Use Policy and the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Unauthorised photography, video recording or audio recording of students, staff or visitors is prohibited where it interferes with privacy, dignity, safety, teaching and learning, or the orderly operation of the school.
- Photography or recording in toilets, changing areas or any other location where a person has a heightened expectation of privacy is strictly prohibited and will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour. Any child-protection or safeguarding concern arising will be dealt with under the school's Child Protection Procedures.
- Online conduct outside school may be addressed under this Code where there is a sufficiently clear connection with the school and the conduct has a serious impact on a member or members of the school community or on the safe and effective operation of the school.

10. Procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Behaviour in contravention of the rules and principles in this Code constitutes a breach of discipline. The school's response is educational, preventative, supportive and corrective. The response in any case will have regard to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the circumstances in which it occurred, its impact on others, previous interventions where relevant, and the need for consistency, proportionality and fair procedures.

10.1 Range of Responses

- Reasoning and discussion
- Reprimand or correction
- Restorative approaches where appropriate
- Additional or corrective work where appropriate
- Notification to parents/guardians and/or a report
- Removal from class to an appropriate supervised area
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- Referral by a Teacher or Year-Head to members of the Pastoral Care Team for support and advice
- Other reasonable and proportionate interventions consistent with this Code

The inclusion of a response in this list does not mean that it will automatically be applied. The school will select a response appropriate to the circumstances of the individual case.

10.2 Fair Procedures

Where an alleged breach may result in a significant disciplinary sanction, the student will be informed of the concern or allegation in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding and will be given a fair opportunity to respond. Relevant information will be considered before a decision is made. Parents/guardians will be informed and involved where appropriate, particularly where the matter is serious or persistent.

Decisions will be made impartially and on the basis of the information reasonably available to the school. The seriousness of the procedures used will reflect the seriousness of the possible sanction. The school will observe the principles of natural justice, including the right to know the case being considered and the right to respond to it.

10.3 Individual Circumstances, Additional Educational Needs and Disability

In responding to behaviour, the school will consider relevant individual circumstances, including the student's age and stage of development, cognitive ability, additional educational needs or disability, communication needs, the context of the behaviour, supports and interventions already provided, the impact of the behaviour on others and the likely impact of the proposed response.

The school will seek to apply the Code consistently while recognising that equitable treatment does not always require identical responses. Reasonable supports and accommodations will be considered where appropriate, and sanctions will not be applied automatically where individual circumstances require consideration.

10.4 Behaviour Records

The school will keep appropriate records of significant behaviour incidents and the interventions or sanctions applied. Records relating to detention, suspension and expulsion will be maintained in accordance with school procedures, applicable Department/Tusla requirements and data-protection obligations. Records will be factual, proportionate and accessible only to those with an appropriate role or lawful basis.

10.5 Detention

- In-school Detention will be held every Tuesday 1.20 – 1.35 p.m. (1st, 3rd & 6th Years) and Thursday 12.40 – 1.05 p.m. (2nd, TY & 5th Years). It may be used for students presenting with persistent unacceptable behaviour. The decision to place a student on in-school detention is made by the Year-Head. Failure to attend may result in the detention being rescheduled and, for repeated non-attendance, may result in after-school detention.
- After-school Detention will be held once a month on a Friday afternoon or as the need arises. It may be used for persistent disruptive/unacceptable behaviour or a serious one-off breach of the Code. The decision to place a student on after-school detention will be made jointly by the Year-Head and the Principal/Deputy Principal. Students and parents/guardians will be given a minimum of one week's written notice. Failure to attend may result in a further proportionate disciplinary response, which may include suspension where warranted under the suspension procedures below, and the detention may be rescheduled.

10.6 Suspension

Suspension means requiring a student to absent themselves from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. Suspension will be considered and imposed only in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Tusla Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, the Education Act 1998 (as amended), applicable Department procedures, the

authority delegated by the Board of Management and the principles of natural justice and fair procedures.

Grounds for considering suspension may include serious misconduct, persistent misconduct where other interventions have not achieved the required change, or circumstances in which the student's continued presence poses a serious threat to the safety of students, staff or others. Suspension is not an automatic consequence of a particular breach unless required by law; each case will be considered on its individual facts.

Before suspension is imposed, the student and parents/guardians will ordinarily be informed of the complaint or concern and given an opportunity to respond. The matter will be investigated fairly. The decision-maker will consider the seriousness and context of the behaviour, its impact on others, the student's previous record where relevant, interventions and supports already used, individual circumstances and additional educational needs/disability where relevant, and whether suspension is proportionate.

The Principal may suspend a student for up to three school days where the Board of Management has delegated that authority. A longer suspension may be imposed only in accordance with the authority and procedures set out in the Tusla Guidelines and Board policy. Suspensions will be reported to the Board of Management and their use reviewed at appropriate intervals.

Where immediate suspension is considered necessary because the continued presence of the student would represent a serious threat to the safety of students, staff or others, or in another circumstance permitted by the Tusla Guidelines, a preliminary investigation will first be conducted to establish the case for immediate suspension. Fair procedures will continue thereafter.

Parents/guardians will be notified of a suspension in writing. The notification will normally include the reasons, duration, any programme of study or arrangements during the suspension, arrangements for return to school, any reasonable commitments or conditions, and the relevant appeal or review arrangements.

Following suspension, the school will support the student's reintegration. This may include a re-entry meeting, clarification of expectations, restorative work where appropriate, review of supports and reasonable arrangements intended to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

10.7 Expulsion

Expulsion is a very serious sanction and is a decision reserved to the Board of Management. It will normally be considered only where the school has taken significant steps to address the student's behaviour and to avoid expulsion. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where a student's behaviour is so serious that expulsion may be considered for a first or single serious offence.

Examples of behaviour which may be sufficiently serious to warrant consideration of expulsion for a first or single offence may include, but are not limited to,

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
- actual violence or assault.
- supplying illegal drugs to another student.
- sexual assault.
- possession or use of a weapon.
- or other behaviour of comparable gravity which presents a serious risk to the safety, welfare or rights of members of the school community.

The inclusion of an example does not mean that expulsion will follow automatically. Each case will be considered on its individual circumstances.

Any proposal to expel will be considered by the Board of Management in accordance with Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Tusla Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, the Education Act 1998 (as amended), and the principles of natural justice and fair procedures. The student and parents/guardians will be informed of the concerns, given an opportunity to respond and, where the Board is considering expulsion, given an opportunity to make their case to the Board. In reaching its decision, the Board will consider the seriousness and context of the behaviour, its impact on others, the student's individual circumstances including additional educational needs or disability where relevant, supports and interventions already provided where applicable, and proportionality.

Where the Board forms the opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer will be notified in writing as required by Section 24. The student will not be expelled before the statutory period of 20 school days following receipt of that notification has elapsed and the statutory consultation process has taken place. If the Board subsequently confirms the decision to expel, the parents/guardians and the student, where aged 18 or over, will be notified in writing of the decision and of the right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended). Appropriate records of the process and decision will be retained.

10.8 Serious Breaches of Discipline

The following are examples of behaviour that may constitute a serious breach of discipline. The list is not exhaustive, and the appropriate response will depend on the circumstances and the procedures set out in this Code:

- Behaviour which seriously disrupts the learning of other students
- Acts of violence towards any person, whether occurring on school property or during a school activity
- Threatening, intimidating or seriously abusive behaviour towards any person
- Serious interference with another person's property or school property, including theft or deliberate damage.
- Serious breaches of the school's Substance Use Policy
- A breach of the rule permitting only one student in a toilet cubicle at any one time.
- Unauthorised photography or recording in toilets, changing areas or other locations where a person has a heightened expectation of privacy.
- Other conduct of comparable seriousness, including serious online conduct falling within the scope of this Code.

10.9 Section 29 Appeals

A decision to expel a student, or a suspension or suspensions totalling not less than 20 school days in a school year, may be appealed under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended). The school will provide parents/guardians, and the student where appropriate, with information on the applicable Department of Education and Youth appeal procedures and time limits.

10.10 Child Protection and Safeguarding

Where behaviour, an allegation or an incident gives rise to a child-protection or safeguarding concern, the school's Child Protection Procedures and statutory reporting obligations take precedence and will be followed. The school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment are available through the school and on the school website. The Board has adopted the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025 under Circular 0041/2025.

11. Complaints Procedure

The purpose of this complaints procedure is to provide a fair, consistent, and equitable mechanism for processing complaints by parents/guardians or students (who have reached the age of 18 years) in relation to the Code of Behaviour and its application. Complaints and queries must be conducted through the appropriate channels.

Parents should contact the school office in the event of a complaint/query to make an appointment with the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year-Head and/or relevant Teacher.

Students may speak with their Year-Head to raise a concern.

12. Modification Clause

The Board of Management may make operational amendments where necessary to respond to unforeseen circumstances, provided that any such amendment is lawful, proportionate and consistent with this Code. Any substantive amendment to the standards of behaviour, sanctions, suspension/expulsion procedures or other material provisions of the Code will be developed through appropriate consultation with the Principal, teachers, parents/guardians and students and will be formally considered and ratified by the Board of Management before implementation. The current ratified Code will be published and communicated to the school community.

13. Legislative and Procedural Framework

- Education (Welfare) Act 2000, in particular Sections 21, 23 and 24.
- Education Act 1998 (as amended), including Section 29 appeals procedures: Department Circular 0069/2020 and current Department Section 29 procedures.
- Tusla Education Support Service, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools.
- Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools and Circular 0055/2024.
- Children First Act 2015 and the Child Protection Procedures applicable to the school, including Circular 0041/2025 Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025.
- Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018; Equal Status Acts 2000–2018; Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, where applicable; Data Protection

Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); and other relevant equality, disability and data-protection obligations.