abacas+
School for Autistic Children, Drogheda

Code of Behaviour Policy 2026- 2028

The school has a central role in children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviours. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Children need limits set for them in order to feel secure and develop the skills for co-operation. Parents can co-operate with the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, by visiting the school and by talking to the members of staff.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

Rationale- Why devise it?

- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23 (1).
- It is part of our developing School Plan.

Relationship to the School Mission and Spirit.

Drogheda ABACAS Special School is dedicated to providing the highest quality of learning, teaching, and care of pupils under our instruction. In partnership with the parents/guardians, families and/or residential personnel of our pupils, we seek to provide: individual, intellectual, emotional, social, physical and spiritual development.

The dignity of every child is maintained, and we believe that each child is entitled to an education provision, regardless of individual levels of attainment and functioning. While enabling each pupil to develop his/her potential to the full, we also want our pupils to be happy in school and to enjoy their time in it.

The Code of Behaviour Policy will help to foster harmonious relationships and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

Aims of the Code

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.

- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.
- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils to understand the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.

Implementation

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. There will be an emphasis on promoting and reinforcing positive behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to their individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

Before/After School

Parents are reminded that the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before the official opening time of 9.20am or after the official closing time of 3.00 pm. except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management.

Board of Management's Responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

Principals Responsibilities

- Promote a positive climate in the school.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

Classroom Staff Responsibilities

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair to both fellow staff and students.
- Refrain from using **mobile phones** during school hours outside of scheduled breaks. Personal telephone calls should not be conducted in the school corridors or classrooms during school hours, this also applies to text messaging and internet use
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with minor problem behaviour.
- Refrain from speaking about students in their presence, if you must communicate with a colleague about a student involve the student in the conversation.
- Refrain from discussing personal issues in the presence of the students.
- Keep a record of instances of serious challenging behaviour or repeated instances of problem behaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
- All staff will undertake training where necessary in the implementation of student behaviour plans.
- All staff will undertake training in de-escalation techniques.
- All staff will adhere to the positive Ethos of the school, in order to maintain a positive learning environment.
- Verbal reprimands and/or punishment will be kept to a minimum and should be communicated to the Class Teacher, Clinical Director and or Principal.
- Ensure consistency in implementing behaviour plans
- Ensure parents are informed of behaviour support strategies and learning goals to support their child; and provide training and support to parents where possible.
- Judgment and common sense should be exercised by all staff to maintain the Health and Safety of everyone.

Code of Behaviour for <u>All</u> Adults working in ABACAS

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all those in the school community.

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with the class staff in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for themselves and others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- Become familiar with the behaviour support strategies and learning goals necessary to support their child and ensure success and generalisation outside of the school environment.

Code of Behaviour for Parents

- Be courteous towards pupils and staff.
- Make an appointment to meet with a Teacher/ Clinical Director though the School office.
- Keep to scheduled appointment times.
- Protect the confidentiality of students and staff.
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same.

- Supervise their children on school premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school.
- Label pupils' property.
- Respect and enact the school's policies and procedures.
- In the event of a grievance with policy or procedure, the following process applies: follow schools 'Complaints Procedure'

Requirement for parents of new students to accept the terms of the Code of Behaviour

Parents who are applying for a place for their child in Drogheda ABACAS Special School, will be furnished with a copy of the Code of Behaviour prior to registering their child. As provided for in the Section 23 (4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, a Board of Management will require that the parents of pupil confirm that the school's Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them before the child is enrolled. The Board of Management of Drogheda ABACAS Special School, as a condition of registering their child in the school, require parents to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour (and its associated policies) is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by their child.

Procedure For Notification of A Child's Absence From School

Each parent must notify the school of their child's absence and the reason for this absence via Aladdin. Parents will be asked to indicate the reason for the absence and a record of this will be kept by the school. In the event of a pupil's absences exceeding 20 days, the school is legally obliged to report such absences to the National Education and Welfare Board (NEWB).

- Communications via approved school software platforms that may be used by the school, e.g. Aladdin.

Methods of Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to supporting our students. Parents will be informed of any serious change to behaviours of concern in a timely fashion. A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor

encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, student and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings and formal parent/teacher meetings
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Email via the school office
- Phone call
- SSP meetings in January/February
- End of year reports to parents at the end of the school year
- Consultation throughout the year
- Aladdin App
- Incident Report Forms
- Staff Accident/Incident Report Forms
- Through the parents' association (PA), parents are invited to discuss and contribute to the drafting and review of school policies pertinent to them. Decisions taken to change current policies and procedures or to introduce new ones will be made known to all parents in an email.

Recognition for Pupil Implementation of the Code of Behaviour

Part of the vision of ABACAS is to help children achieve their personal best. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at a different pace to one another and similarly children use a variety of approaches to communicate and solve problems. We work to recognise the effects and presentation of communication difficulties, and trauma in children. This is considered in all interactions with our students. Dysregulation that presents as concerning, are treated in the first instance as distressed behaviour, and all school staff are trained to recognise this and to be aware of behaviour as communication when working with our students. Behaviours that concern others can be an indication of emotional dysregulation or distress. Our positive behaviour management approaches place emphasis on separating the

behaviour from the person as it is essential for building a caring and empathetic relationship with the child.

All children are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour; however, the school recognises that children with autism and/ or other needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules and that, indeed, breaches in the Code of Behaviour could be a result of/ related to difficulties across the dyad of impairments as they present in individuals with autism. Additionally, the school recognises that the pupil's language and/or cognitive development may similarly impact the way in which the pupil behaves. In this way, the pupils developmental, cognitive and language development will be taken into account at all times and professional advice from psychological and functional assessments (i.e., as part of the schools policy on Positive Behaviour Support) will be considered.

- Show respect for self all members of the school community.
- Follow school and class rules.
- To cooperate with school staff.
- To adhere to both, school and class rules
- Show respect for our own property and the property of others.
- Show respect to other students and their learning.
- Be kind and willing to help others.
- Show courtesy and good manners.
- Try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
- Do our best in class.
- Take responsibility for our own work.

The Code of Behaviour for Pupils can be summed up as 7 Golden Rules:

1. Show respect/ be nice
2. Do your best
3. Be tidy
4. Be safe
5. Walk
6. Listen

7. Be calm

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the Class Teacher will work together with the pupils, Clinical Director and Principal to draft a list of class rules, based closely on the "Golden Rules". Class rules will be kept to a minimum and devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be notified at an early stage.

Unacceptable Incidents /Behaviour

Our school will take into consideration each student's cognitive ability when considering any sanctions. In cases of serious incident or single occurrences of gross incident parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet with the Class Teacher, Clinical Director and/or Principal to discuss their child's behaviour

If more serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are being considered, the school principal will organise a meeting with the parents/guardians. Any relevant staff members or educational professionals may also be invited to attend this meeting. All incidents are to be recorded on a school Incident Report Form by staff members present during the event.

In Drogheda ABACAS Special School, three levels of incidents are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of minor incidents are addressed by the Class Teacher

Examples of **minor incident** include, but is not limited to:

- Not following the directions, where appropriate.
- Patterns of behaviour causing injury self, other student or staff.

Examples of **serious incident** include, but is not limited to:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including making contact with another student, bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation,).
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Repeated patterns of behaviour causing injury self, other student or staff.

- Threats to another person
- Physical hurt to another person.
- Damage to property.
- Theft.
- Leaving school/ school activities without permission.

Examples of **Gross** include, but is not limited to:

- Injury to other pupils or staff members.
- Serious theft.
- Serious damage to property.
- Serious bullying.

Bullying is repeated aggression (physical, verbal or emotional) conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

- Physical includes, but is not limited to, pushing, kicking, poking, tripping, grabbing or biting.
- Verbal includes, but is not limited to, name calling, insults or humiliates.
- Emotional includes, but is not limited to, threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas (i.e., appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture or disability) or isolating peers.

Drogheda ABACAS School takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of its pupils in a sensitive manner. Should a parent/ guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with the Class Teacher, Clinical Director or Principal, we are more than willing to facilitate a meeting arranged through the proper channels at a time that is suitable for all parties. The first person to be informed, however, should be the Class Teacher.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident. The school will follow is Bi Cinealta Policy.

Provision of Positive Behaviour Support

The schools provision of Positive Behaviour Support aims to support all pupils of ABACAS in implementing the Code of Behaviour in ways that are individually possible and fair.

In supporting our students during episodes of dysregulation of challenging behaviour, ABACAS has the responsibility to ensure that pupils are protected from exploitation, abuse, neglect, and unlawful and degrading treatment. All activities related to behaviour support will be supportive and respectful of the individual needs and goals of the pupil, as identified through the pupils Student Support File/ Plan, and based on a current and comprehensive assessment. ABACAS is, therefore, committed to a Positive Behaviour Support process that aims to understand and resolve challenging behaviour in the context of values and empirical research.

In addition, all services provided to the pupils of ABACAS must be in accordance with the standards and guidelines outlined in the following documents:

- Behaviour Analysis Certification Boards (i.e., BACB)- *Guidelines for Professional Conduct* http://www.bacb.com/index.php?page=100165#guidelines
- Psychological Society of Ireland (i.e., PSI) – Code of Professional Ethics. http://www.psihq.ie/DOCUMENTS/Code%20of%20Professional%20Ethics.PDF
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools 2017 www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Child-Protection/Information.html
- Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children. http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-guidance-and-legislation

ABACAS' approach to Behaviour Support acknowledges that the student's behavioural difficulties may be linked to the dyad of impairments, sensory sensitivities, and cognitive abilities of the individual. The school acknowledges that the students may have a dual diagnosis and the impact this may have on behaviour. Additionally, behavioural difficulties may be linked to ecological events or conditions (i.e., setting events) including, but not limited to: (1) a lack of sleep; (2) change in routine; (3) allergies; (4) illness. All of these

factors will be assessed and will inform the approach taken when providing behaviour support for individual students. The school is committed to working with parents to help reduce problematic behaviours; however, the complex needs of individual students will always inform the ultimate approach adopted.

The school ethos supports a functional approach to the management of challenging behaviour. Behaviour that may present a challenge to others is adaptive and functional for the student; that is to say that the behaviour exists in the student's repertoire because it has been learned and serves a function for the student (e.g. a student may engage in aggressive or destructive behaviour as a means of escaping a task that he/ she finds particularly demanding). The approach of school staff in ABACAS is to decrease challenging behaviour by teaching and reinforcing appropriate replacement behaviours that serve the same function (e.g. teaching the student an appropriate means of asking for a break from a demanding task without resorting to challenging behaviour).

Within ABACAS, all staff capitalise on learning opportunities throughout the day across all school settings to teach appropriate functional communication using whatever supports necessary (e.g. gestures, verbal & visual prompts; schedules of reinforcement, communication devices, Irish Sign Language & Lámh etc.) in order to reduce as much as possible instances of challenging behaviour for all students.

The positive school ethos extends to all members of the school community adopting a positive, calm approach to challenges that may be encountered from time to time. Every effort should be made to ensure that the classroom and school environment is enriched with frequent opportunities for students and staff to encounter social praise and acknowledgement for achievements and to experience a varied schedule of activities to be enjoyed across the school day.

Prohibited Practices

Prohibited practices which are criminal offences and civil wrongs may lead to legal action. Prohibited Practices include those that may not be unlawful, but are unethical.
Prohibited Practices include those that:

- Cause physical pain or serious discomfort;

- Restrict access to basic needs or supports;
- Are degrading or demeaning to the Service User;
- Are aversive;
- Are unethical.

The safety, dignity & welfare of pupils are prioritised at all times. Aversive stimuli, which can include sounds, smells, tastes, visual images or physical sensations that cause pain/overall discomfort are never used.

Exceptional Behavioural Responses

Due to the nature of the students behavioural excesses and deficits situations may arise where a parent cannot be contacted prior to crisis situation. In this event the staff will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the student, his/ hers teachers, and the other students in the school. An exceptional response may be required in situations where there is a clear and immediate risk of harm linked to behaviour(s) and there is no Positive Behaviour Support Plan in place. The risk may impact on the child/ young person or on others. In such circumstances immediate intervention may be considered necessary in order to manage the risk to the student and staff. This is referred to as an emergency response.

The family of the child/ young person will be informed of any emergency response that occurs in writing in order to confirm their understanding of the incident in question. ABACAS will offer any support that it can to the child/ young person in question and the family of this individual.

Duty of Care & Suspension/Exclusion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.

- Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.
- Where there are repeated instances of serious challenging behaviour, the parents will be requested to attend at the school to meet the Teacher, Clinical Director & Principal.

Should it be assessed that the Drogheda ABACAS Special School cannot fulfil its *Duty of Care* toward a child/ young person due to the consequences of challenging behaviour, or the school assesses that it's *Duty of Care* towards other child/ young persons and the staff of the school is compromised due to episodes of extreme challenging behaviour, the matter will be forwarded to the Board of Management of the school for consideration.

The Board of management reserves the right to suspend the child/ young person in question until the school has implemented the necessary supports or changes to safeguard its '*Duty of Care*' for the individual child/young person or others.

Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. In the case of extreme challenging behaviour, where it is necessary to secure the safety of the pupils and staff, the Board of Management may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. The Board of Management reserves the right to suspend the child/ young person in question until the school has implemented the necessary supports or changes to safeguard its *Duty of care* for the individual child/young person or others.

Drogheda ABACAS Special School's Board of Management reserves the right to exclude/expel students if, despite every effort, the school cannot accommodate for a child's needs or if a child poses a real threat to the Health and Safety of students and staff at the school. The Board of Management will follow the procedures as laid out by the National Educational Welfare Board's "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools".

Suspension & expulsion

When the school proposes suspension/expulsion parents have the right to be heard. This right to be heard will be accommodated via a meeting with the principal and other relevant staff. Parents also have the right to impartiality. Therefore, in the event that a member of the BOM is a parent, close relative or if a dual relationship exists between a BOM member and the relevant student in the school the relevant BOM member will be excused from any discussion regarding the matter.

Suspension:

Before any significant interventions such as suspension or expulsion are considered, all other supportive measures will have been explored. These include collaborative planning with parents and, where appropriate, engagement with external professionals to review and adjust the student's School Support File/Plan.

Open and ongoing communication between school and home is a key part of this process. Depending on the context, communication may be verbal or written. Families are consistently informed via Aladdin, phone calls, and shared documentation such as photos of the accident/ incident report whenever behaviours of concern arise. This ensures families have clear and functional insight into their child's school day.

Where the purpose of a proposed suspension is clearly identified, and no other reasonable alternative can achieve the same goal, a short-term suspension may be considered. In such cases, suspension is not a punishment but a structured pause, allowing time for the school, family, and any involved professionals to set meaningful goals and plan supportive interventions. The aim is always to help the student re-engage positively with school life and feel safe, supported, and understood.

Immediate suspension:

The principal may consider a suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at that time would represent a serious threat to the safety of the student themselves, other students or staff of the school. Where it is necessary to secure the safety of the students and staff, the Board authorises the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension. Drogheda ABACAS Special School considers behaviour of concern towards a student or staff which causes injury or harm as a serious matter.

The following may result in immediate suspension:

- Physical contact resulting in injuries sustained to students.
- Physical contact (e.g., scrapes, kicks, bites, punches) resulting in significant injury to students.
- Physical contact resulting in injuries sustained which has required the staff member to take assault leave.
- Physical contact (e.g., scrapes, kicks, bites, punches) resulting in significant injury to staff which has required the staff member to take assault leave.
- If the student is responsible for the serious damage to property.

- If the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to the safety of themselves or others.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for immediate suspension. Some injuries sustained by students of staff may not present themselves immediately (e.g., concussion) and the Chairperson or Principal may not be aware of the seriousness of the impact of the assault until the evening following the incident. If this occurs the parents will be contacted as soon as possible to inform them of their child's suspension.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others. A preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The principal will ring the student's parents and request they are collected immediately from school. The formal investigation should immediately follow the imposition of the immediate suspension.

The principal will notify the parents/guardians in writing of a decision to suspend. This letter will include:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- Reasons for the suspension.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour).

During the suspension the parents concerned will be invited to discuss their child's case. Outside agencies involved with the student will also be invited.

A suspension will not exceed 3 academic days except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than 3 academic days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. Approval and guidance will be sought from the Board of Management if the principal, after consulting with other relevant staff, decides a suspension period longer than 3 academic days is required.

Fair procedures will still be applied. All the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended.

Rationale for suspension:

Suspension can have value when a rationale and purpose is clearly defined. Due consideration will be given to whether a period of suspension is likely to result in a decrease in the serious behaviour displayed and/or whether this time will allow the school to make changes likely to support the student in being successful upon return. The objectives of a suspension will be discussed at a meeting with the student's parents/guardians, relevant school staff, and outside agencies where applicable.

Where the outcome of these discussions result in the conclusion that the school and/or family requires the support of external professionals to support readmission or cannot prepare for a successful or safe reintegration within 3-days), this 3- day period of suspension can be extended until such a time as the appropriate supports become available. Referrals for exceptional supports will be made immediately by the school with the consent of the student's parents.

If a student is suspended for a period of 6 consecutive school days or more, then the school is obliged to report this to Tusla Education support service (TESS). If a student is suspended for a shorter period(s) then it must be counted in the aggregate number of absences and if the student exceeds 20 days absence (including any suspensions) then this should be reported through the normal referral and reporting processes www.tusla.ie/tess/information-for-schools/education-welfare-service-tess/

Parents have a right to appeal (circular 22/02) if the suspension period brings the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year to the Secretary general of the Department of Education and skills.

Returning from Suspension

The school will use the period of suspension to review all supports in place for the student and put further supports (where possible) to help the student become successful in school and to reduce the likelihood that a suspension will be put in place again.

Grounds for removing a suspension

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

If a period of suspension is unlikely to positively impact the level of behaviours of concern or if the school cannot make any changes that are likely to result in an improvement in the behaviours of concern upon return, the school may consider expulsion as the appropriate course of action.

Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a student, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Education Officer (EWO) in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. The school will take significant steps to address the behaviour of concern and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with parents/guardians to try to find ways of supporting the student's behavioural needs to maintain their school placement.
- Ensuring that all other possible options/interventions have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Council for Special Education (NCSE), National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Children's Disability Network Team, the Child and Adolescence Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

If when all supports and interventions mentioned above are exhausted and the student's continued presence in school is still a significant risk to the health and safety of the student, other students or staff members, then expulsion may be considered as a last resort.

Exceptional circumstances and procedures in respect of expulsion that may result in the expulsion process if

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process

- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety their own safety, the safety of other student & the safety to staff.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, the school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for safely accommodating the students' wellbeing and/or behavioural support needs.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious behaviour of concern that could warrant expulsion the following steps will be followed:

- A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the principal, who will inform the student's parents/guardians in writing of the details of the alleged behaviour of concern, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The principal will invite the student's parents/guardians to a meeting at which parents/guardians will be given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious behaviour of concern before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

- Where the principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged behaviour of concern, that expulsion may be warranted, the principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

- The Board of Management considers the principal's recommendation, and a hearing is held.

- If the Board deems that expulsion is necessary, consultations will be arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer within twenty days of receipt of a notification from the Board of Management its opinion that a student should be expelled (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

- Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board will formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately in writing that the expulsion will now proceed.

- A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29).

Limitations

This document is not designed to list all the possible situations that may arise, nor state all the possible strategies to address behaviours of concern, but to serve as a general guide to the students, the teachers, and the Principal to be used to solve individual problems.

Policy Review

It is fully acknowledged by all parties that this code of behaviour policy will be reviewed at least annually to ensure that it is kept up to date and that it retains its relevance.

Other Relevant Policies

The Code of Behaviour Policy must be read in conjunction with the following relevant policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour of concern policy
- Community outing policy
- Sickness policy
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Bi Cinealta Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Intimate Care / Personal Care Policy Governance & Staff:
- Complaints & Grievance Policy

This Code of Behaviour Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on

Signed: _____ Date 01/10/2026

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Michelle Mc Hugh Date: 1st October 2026

Principal