

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Coláiste na Toirbhirte, Bandon, Co. Cork

CONTENTS

1. Introduction and Objectives
2. What the code of behaviour does
3. Principles underpinning the Code of Behaviour
4. Understanding Behaviour
5. Whole School Approach
6. Application of the Code of Behaviour
7. Setting Standards of Behaviour
8. Promoting Good Behaviour
9. Rules and Standards Behaviour
10. How Colaiste Na Toribhirte responds to unacceptable Behaviour
11. Detention Procedures
12. Suspension
13. Expulsion
14. Procedures for notifying the school about student absences
15. Procedures for raising concern

Abbreviations

NEWB	National Educational Welfare Board
NEPS	National Education Psychological Service
DES	Department of Education and Skills
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
HSE	Health Service Executive
CEIST	Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust
DLP	Designated Liaison Person

1 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

MISSION STATEMENT

Colaiste Na Toirbhirte, Bandon, is a Presentation School under the Trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust), providing second level education for girls, in the traditions of Nano Nagle, Foundress of the Presentation Congregation. Catholic Christian principles underlie the philosophy of education in the School. Our school is a community seeking to develop the full potential of each student – intellectual, spiritual, emotional and social.

The **Core Values of C.E.I.S.T.** are:

- Promoting Spiritual and Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person
- Creating Community
- Being Just and Responsible

To achieve this Coláiste na Toirbhirte seeks:

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum suited to the needs of each individual and the demands of a changing world.
- To recognise and affirm individual skills and abilities through curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- To encourage positive interaction and good communication among students, staff, parents/guardians and the wider community.
- To continue to develop and provide a framework of support and care which meets the needs of individual students and staff.
- To continue to provide religious education and spiritual development enabling the students to celebrate the Christian vision of life.
- To maintain and foster our willingness for and openness to ongoing staff development.

Inspired by these values, we dedicate ourselves to the ongoing development of our school.

Objectives of the Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour of Coláiste Na Toirbhirte Secondary School aims to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour and respect are expected and supported by all members of the school community.

The goals include:

- Creating a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- Facilitating the delivery of the curriculum to students.
- Dealing with students who may be disruptive of the work of the school, are uncooperative with their teachers and who may interfere with the delivery of the education that other students have a right to receive.
- Conforming to the statutory obligation in section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 which obliges recognised schools to prepare, for the information of students and their parents, a code of behaviour in respect of students registered at the school.
- Ensuring the safety of all members of the school community both on the school premises and on school activities.
- Creating a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.
- Encouraging students to take personal responsibility for their learning and behaviour.
- Building positive relationships of respect and support among students, staff and parents.
- Ensuring that Colaiste Na Toirbhirte's high standards of behaviour are known and understood by all members of the school community.

2 WHAT THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR DOES

The Code sets out:

- The standard of behaviour expected in the school.
- How the school promotes good behaviour.
- How the school responds to unacceptable behaviour.
- How the Code is implemented.
- Procedures for the use of de-merit/merit, report cards, detention, suspension and expulsion.

3 PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

To achieve our goals the following principles guided the development of the Code of Behaviour.

- a. Ensuring fairness and equality and the dignity of the individual
- b. Focusing on promoting good behaviour
- c. Affirming that everyone's behaviour matters
- d. Focusing on personal responsibility
- e. Recognising educational vulnerability
- f. Being respectful of the spiritual, emotional and physical welfare of every student on an individual basis
- g. Helping to promote a positive and safe working environment within the classroom and the school for all staff and students and promoting freedom from any threat of violence for both Staff and students
- h. Promoting positive conditions for learning and teaching
- i. Being guided by and applying the values in the C.E.I.S.T. charter

4 UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOUR

Understanding the context of behaviour is central to understanding behaviour. The responses to a student's behaviour influence the choices a student makes about how she behaves. The Code aims at responding to unacceptable behaviour in ways that are likely to work and attempts to avoid responding in ways that may cause the misbehaviour to escalate.

5 WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

Students' behaviour is influenced by the ethos, values, atmosphere, practices and relationships within the school. The Code, on its own, cannot create the environment that makes it possible for students to learn and behave well. Instead Colaiste Na Toirbhirte Secondary School adopts a whole school approach.

This includes:

- Consistency in ethos, policies and practices.
- School policies and practices that support the objective of the Code.
- A classroom environment that promotes positive learning behaviour and where students have a clear understanding of what is expected.
- Opportunities for the Board of Management, Principal, Deputy Principal, teachers and non teaching staff, parents/guardians and students to live up to and understand their responsibilities.

6 APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

When and where behaviour will be subject to the Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour will apply:

- Within the precincts of the school during the school day and any after-hours activities.
- On all school and school-linked activities, including school tour, outdoor pursuits, field trips, sports activities, retreats, school visits/expeditions, official school charity collections and events.
- Where a student outside the school is clearly identifiable as a student of Colaiste Na Toirbhirte Secondary School and her conduct reflects on the good name of the school.

7 SETTING STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Values and standards

The school promotes values and standards including:

- Respect for self and others.
- Principles of natural justice.
- Fairness.
- Christian values.
- Kindness and willingness to help others.
- Forgiveness.
- A readiness to use respectful ways to reduce difficulties and conflict.

Students must be committed to their own learning and to that of their peers. This commitment includes:

- Regular and punctual attendance at school.
- Doing one's best in class and at all school related activities.
- Taking responsibility for one's work and action.
- Wearing the correct uniform and having a neat and tidy appearance.
- Keeping the school rules
- Helping to create a safe and positive environment.
- Respecting all school staff.
- Respecting all fellow students and their learning.
- Active participation in school activities.

In promoting high standards, the school recognises that certain kinds of behaviour are not acceptable and will incur sanctions, for example:

- All behaviour that is hurtful.
- All forms of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation by word, deed or act, including improper use of any form of technology or media.
- All forms of behaviour that discriminates or reflects negatively on a person's race, ethnic background, nationality, religion, disability, culture or sexual orientation.
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Threats or actual physical hurt to another person.
- Damage to property.
- Theft.
- Possession, use of or being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, un-prescribed drugs or any other harmful, dangerous or illegal substance.

Students

The school undertakes to explain and clarify the Code to students. By giving students an insight into their own and others' behaviour the school can equip them to think and understand what made people behave in a particular way. This builds their capacity to take responsibility for their behaviour and to help each other behave well.

The school provides opportunities, inside and outside the classroom for students to think and talk about behaviour, about learning and rules and what their school means to them. These opportunities are to be found especially, but not exclusively, in discussion with individual and class teachers, during C.S.P.E., S.P.H.E., Tutor classes and Religion classes and in the involvement of the guidance counsellor, Year Head and Deputy Principal. They are also available under the Meitheal mentoring programme provided by 5th year students for 1st year students. There are opportunities also to reflect on behaviour at assemblies of year groups where they are addressed by the Year Head and/or Deputy Principal and/or Principal.

These allow:

- Discussing how to turn standards into school and classroom rules.
- Ensuring students have a good understanding of standards expected to them and why.
- Identifying the skills needed to observe the rules and exploring ways of promoting and teaching these skills

Just as the school measures progress in achieving academic goals, so standards of behaviour provide a tool for measuring progress towards behavioural goals.

First Year Students

Colaiste Na Toirbhirte Secondary School is very conscious that entry into secondary school is a major change in a young person's life. First year students can take time to adapt to the new circumstances and requirements of secondary school. To make the adaption as easy and smooth as possible, the school takes the following additional measures:

- Information meetings for First Year parents are organised before the start of the school year and towards the end of September.
- In the first days of school students are shown around the school and all that is required of them is carefully explained.
- A group mentoring programme is organised with the Meitheal Team. (Meitheal organises social occasions throughout the year and this allows students to get to meet other students. This is also an opportunity for the school to introduce the students to the ethos of the school outside of the classroom.)

- Prefects are assigned from the student council to help with the integration of each year group

Parents/Guardian

The school believes the full support of parents/guardians for the Code is essential. Values at home and parental attitudes make a positive contribution to student's learning and behaviour. Parents/guardians are expected to model the standards that students are asked to respect.

The school provides many opportunities for parents/guardians to be familiar with the standards and to understand the importance of expecting students to behave in accordance with these standards.

The school maintains regular communication with parents/guardians and if necessary, parents/guardians will be invited to discuss their child's behaviour, with the objective of achieving an agreed common approach.

8 PROMOTING GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of the Code. The school seeks to achieve consistency in promoting good behaviour. This can be achieved by mutually respectful relationships between student and teacher.

- Students are involved in the consultative process in implementing the Code.
- The Code is made to work in a fair and consistent way.
- Standards are clear, consistent and widely understood and high expectations are set.
- The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions of everyone who is connected to the school: teaching staff, other staff, parents/guardians and students.
- The school gives priority to promoting and affirming good behaviour.
- Parents/Guardians, students and teachers are invited to be involved in seeking to promote good relationships and a happy school atmosphere through positive interaction.
- Adults model the behaviour expected from students.
- Clear boundaries and rules are set for students.
- Students are helped to recognise and affirm good behaviour.
- Positive feedback is provided where merited.
- Students explore how people should treat each other.
- Students are involved in preparation of school and classroom rules.

The Code of Behaviour recognises that the dignity of all staff, students and parents/guardians must be afforded the utmost priority and emphasises the right of all student and staff to work in an educational environment free from disruption. Observance of the code will help to develop a hard-working, secure, relaxed, happy and caring atmosphere in the school.

Coláiste Na Toirbhirte expects all students to abide by the Code of Behaviour. Central to good behaviour is the relationship between staff and students. All teachers in Colaiste Na Toirbhirte strive to develop good relationships. To help build good relationships, the school acknowledges, promotes and rewards good behaviour in a variety of ways. This includes the following:

- Individual expression of encouragement, thanks and appreciation.
- Positive feedback given to students through a merit system.
- Regular contact with parent/guardians, especially when there is a concern about a student's work or behaviour.
- Acknowledgement of student's achievements.
- Comprehensive guidance policy.
- Annual Parent/Teacher meeting for all year groups.
- Class Tutors/Year Heads regularly meet students and discuss matters of interest or concern.
- Year Heads hold regular assembly of the year group where there is an emphasis on positive behaviour: appearances, uniform, good work ethic.
- Pastoral Care System
- Regular meetings of the Student Council.
- Opportunities for student leadership
- House Examinations and School Reports at Christmas and the end of the school year.
- Strong encouragement of participation in school activities, including extra curricular activities.
- Acknowledgement of achievements by the Principal over the P.A. system.
- Awards ceremonies
- Public display in the main area of the school ('The Street') of photographs, art work and other relevant documents on students' achievements.
- Celebrating success in internal and external publications.
- Inviting experts and other speakers to talk to students about matters that relate to a healthy and constructive life within and outside the school.

9 RULES AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Interacting with others

Students must accept the authority of teachers within the school environs and when on out of school activities

- a. This means that students must show respect and courtesy to members of staff at all times
- b. This means that students must obey specific directives from staff
Because this ensures that teaching and learning can take place.
Because this ensures the health and safety of all
Because this is the embodiment of our Mission Statement

Students must not intimidate, harass or bully others

- a. This means that students must always behave with courtesy and good manners towards others.
- b. This means that students must always treat other students in a fair and respectful manner
Because Colaiste Na Toirbhirte does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment
Because every student has the right to an education free from fear and intimidation
Because this is the embodiment of our Mission Statement

Attendance and Punctuality

Students must attend on all school days in accordance with the Welfare Act 2000

This means that students who are absent must provide a satisfactory written explanation, in their school journal, from their parent or guardian to the class Tutor on their return

Because students are legally required to attend school
Because the school has a duty of care towards students
Because students who habitually miss school may not reach their full potential

Students must not leave the school without permission from the Year Head or Class Tutor

- a. This means that if a student must leave school a note must be presented in advance to the Year Head/ Class Tutor and the parent/guardian must inform the school.
- b. This means that if a student is taken ill she must contact her class Tutor. The school will contact a parent or guardian.
- c. This means that the Exit book detailing the circumstances of leaving is correctly filled in by the student. Parents or Guardians must also sign the Exit book
Because the health and safety of students is paramount

Students must be on time for school and for all classes

This means that students are in school at least ten minutes before school starts

This means that students are finished in Locker rooms before classes start.

This means that students are waiting outside classrooms before classes start.

Because these are the optimum conditions for teaching and learning to take place
Because this demonstrates respect and courtesy towards teachers and fellow students

Presentation

Students are required to wear the official full school uniform on all school days

This means that all students wear the school uniform as agreed by the parents, students and the school authorities, on all school days

This means that students wear their school uniform with pride and are well presented at all times

This means that students wear the agreed PE uniform only for PE classes

This means that students come to school in uniform and leave school in uniform

Because this is the uniform agreed by parents, students and the school authorities
Because the school image is a responsibility for all the school community

Students must come prepared for class

This means that students come properly prepared and equipped for all subjects
This means that students do the assigned homework each night
This means that students carry their school journal with them at all times
This means that students must not disturb the learning process of other students

Because these are the optimum conditions for teaching and learning to take place
Because every student has the right to learn in an environment that supports the learning process
Because every teacher has the right to teach in an environment which is conducive to teaching and learning
Because Homework is an essential part of the learning process

Responsibility towards the environment

Students must not interfere with, remove, or damage school property or the property of others

This means respecting all school property and the property of others
Because interfering with the property of others could be seen as bullying or harassment which is not tolerated by Coláiste Na Toirbhirte
Because an attractive school environment is the optimum environment for teaching and learning to take place
Because every student and staff member in the school deserves a pleasant working environment

Lockers are provided for the use of students but are at all times the property of the school, and it is a condition of the rental of lockers to students that the school reserves the right to open and search students' lockers. The student will be invited to be present during any such search.

Students must co-operate with the staff in keeping the school clean and tidy

This means actively co-operating with staff to keep the school clean and tidy
This means actively supporting the schools green code
This means not chewing gum in school.
Because everybody benefits from working and learning in a pleasant environment
Because the school is a committed participant in the Green Schools programme

Students must not be on school grounds after school hours unless under the supervision of a Staff member

This means that all students leave the school when school is over unless engaged in curricular or extra curricular activities supervised by staff.
Because the Health and Safety of students is paramount

The use of Mobile phones and digital recording/playing devices (including MP3 players and cameras) is not allowed in the school building or environs

This means that students are encouraged to leave such devices at home
This means that where students bring such devices to school they must be powered off and locked in lockers
Because personal privacy and freedom from intrusion of students and staff is to be respected.

Note: The school takes no responsibility for the loss or theft of any such devices

Smoking is strictly forbidden. Banned and illegal substances are not allowed

Because this is in accordance with state legislation
Because the Health and Safety of students is paramount

The following is intended to give a broad outline of what is meant by harassment, discrimination and bullying

Harassment

- Any behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, directed at an individual or a group, that is offensive or objectionable, and which creates an environment that is intimidation, hostile, or offensive.
- When an individual or group of individuals is subject to unwanted or unprovoked attention.
- It can include verbal or written comments, graffiti, gestures, improper use of technology or media, and can extend to physical abuse.
- Whatever the intent, harassment has a direct and disturbing effect on the person or persons who are the target of this behaviour.

Discrimination

- Discrimination is when an action is taken which inappropriately differentiates between individuals or groups of individuals on grounds of race, gender, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age or a member of the traveller community.

Bullying

- Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological and/or physical aggression conducted by an individual or group against others

Coláiste Na Toirbhirte's position on harassment, discrimination and bullying

- Coláiste Na Toirbhirte is committed to the maintenance of a social environment in which all members of the school community, irrespective of gender, religion, colour, ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation can participate in all activities free from any form of harassment or discrimination of any nature whatsoever.
- All students are obliged to respect the rights of others and to uphold the school's commitment to the policy on harassment and discrimination at all times.
- Students shall not infringe the rights of others by engaging in any conduct which causes harassment or discrimination

10 HOW COLÁISTE NA TOIRBHIRTE RESPONDS TO UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

It is the responsibility of the school authorities:

- To maintain a classroom and school environment that is safe for students, teachers and other staff.
- To maintain a classroom and school environment that is supportive of the learning of every student and ensures continuity of education.

It is the policy of the school to intervene early and positively when a student's behaviour does not meet the standards expected.

Responses and sanctions

Since one student's misbehaviour interferes with the right of another to work, we have to strive to create the right environment for pupils to learn. The school has adopted a graded response to intervene early and positively to misbehaviour. To ensure our continued success, it is essential that all parents support the school in its efforts. The following responses and sanctions are in use in Colaiste Na Toirbhirte Secondary School:

Possible classroom sanctions

- ❖ Verbal Reprimand
- ❖ De-Merit
- ❖ Written comment in journal signed by parent/guardian
- ❖ Removal of privileges
- ❖ Educationally directed extra work

Possible sanctions following referral

- ❖ Verbal Reprimand
- ❖ De-Merit
- ❖ Phone-call to parent/guardian

- ❖ Removal of privileges
- ❖ Confiscation of inappropriate items
- ❖ Detention
- ❖ Report card
- ❖ Suspension
- ❖ Expulsion

These lists are not exhaustive

De-merit

A de-merit may be issued to a student who does not comply with the school's code of behaviour. Under the school's de-merit system a file will be kept on each student who receives de-merits. This file will be in the care of the Year Head. The class Tutor forwards de-merits to the Year Head. The number of de-merits are awarded in response to the level of misbehaviour.

On reaching **ten** de-merits a student may be detained in School under supervision for 30 minutes on an appointed day. Parents/guardians will be informed in a letter from the School.

A student who accumulates **thirty** de-merits may be suspended from school. The school will notify parents/guardians and the School Board. An undertaking of good behaviour signed by the student and her parents/guardians must be received by the school after suspension.

On Report

On Report is a pastoral measure used where there is clear evidence that a student is failing to reach the school standards in relation to behaviour and/or work. The student is issued with a card on which each teacher records her progress at the end of each class. The parent/guardian signs the report card each night.

Rewards

We at Coláiste Na Toirbhirte value positive behaviour and encourage all students to give of their individual best. The following methods are used in Colaiste na Toirbhirte to reward students:

Possible rewards

- ❖ Verbal praise
- ❖ Note in journal (signed by parent/guardian)
- ❖ Merits
- ❖ Affirmation on intercom or plasma screen, at assembly
- ❖ School newsletter/app/website
- ❖ Display of student's work
- ❖ Congratulations board
- ❖ Certificates
- ❖ Graduation ceremonies

This list is not exhaustive

Merits

In order to affirm such positive behaviour, a merit system has been established which recognises voluntary effort outside of class time. The following are deemed worthy of a merit:

- Showing exceptional concern of other students and teachers.
- Showing marked improvement in behaviour.
- Showing high degree of co-operation, responsibility and school spirit.

Use of responses and sanctions

In responding to each instance of inappropriate behaviour and in applying sanctions the school will be guided by the following:

- Its duty of care to the student and all other members of the school community.
- The need for fairness, consistency and timeliness.
- That any sanction will be proportionate and appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the student.

- That where necessary it will take account of the cultural background of the student or any disability.
- That the educational needs of a student whose behaviour is unacceptable is balanced with the educational needs of the other students.
- That any sanctions will preserve the dignity of all concerned.
- The wish to defuse and bring an end to the incident.
- The wish too achieves a positive change in the student's conduct.
- The wish to help the student understand that her behaviour is unacceptable, that it has a detrimental effect on others and that she needs to take responsibility for her own actions.
- The need to signal to other students and staff that their well-being is being protected.
- The need to prevent serious disruption to teaching and learning.
- That no sanction will be discriminatory against particular students or groups of students.

11 DETENTION PROCEDURES

The Principal, the Deputy Principal, and/or Year Head will impose detention after a student has failed to reach the required standard of behaviour.

Procedure

- When a student receives de-merits these are given to the Class Tutor who keeps a record.
- When a student has received 10 de-merits the Class Tutor gives the de-merits to the Year Head who fills in 'Details of Detention' and passes it on to the Deputy Principal.
- The Deputy Principal notifies the parents/guardians of the detention and the reasons for the detention.
- A list of students on detention is given to the Detention Supervisor.
- A list of the students detained is posted by the Detention Supervisor on the staff room notice board.

Time and Precedence

- Detention periods are held either during lunchtime or after school in a designated room.
- All detention periods are supervised.
- A student will attend at the earliest possible detention period.
- Detention takes precedence over all other activities.

Work

- Students may be asked to complete a reflective exercise examining the reasons that have led to their detention.
- Under no circumstances will homework be completed during detention time.

12 SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as:

Requiring the student to absent herself from the school for a specified, limited number of school days

During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school.

As part of the Code of Behaviour, the Board of Management of Coláiste Na Toirbhirte has a policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension which are in line with NEWB guidelines.

Authority to Suspend

Only the Principal and the Board of Management of Coláiste Na Toirbhirte have the legal authority to suspend a student. The Principal may suspend any pupil for a limited period and shall report any such suspension to Board at its next ordinary meeting.

Grounds for Suspension

Suspension is a serious sanction and normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that;

- 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

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

Determining the appropriateness of suspending a student

Where the purpose of a proposed suspension is clearly identified, and that purpose cannot be achieved in any other way, suspension can have value.

As part of a behaviour management plan suspension can

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- Impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour

In determining the appropriateness of suspending a student the school is informed by the NEWB Guidelines on developing a Code of Behaviour.

Suspension Procedures

Suspension is a serious sanction. Before considering suspension the school will investigate the complaint thoroughly and be guided by the principles of natural justice and fair play. These include the right of the student and her parents/guardians to be heard and to respond to the complaint and the right to impartiality.

Normally involved would be the Year Head and the Deputy Principal. They may seek assistance from other members of staff not involved in the incident. The investigation will include meeting all those concerned and giving them every opportunity to present their case. Where there has been a very serious breach the Deputy Principal will be immediately informed.

On completion of the investigation the results and evidence are given to the Principal

Implementing Suspension

1 Informing the student and parents that suspension is being considered

The school will let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.

2 Opportunity to respond

Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school will record the invitations made to parents and their response.

3 Proceeding with suspension

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. Only when the total number of days reaches twenty does the right to appeal under Section 29 come into play. This appeal is to be made "within a reasonable time from the date the student/parent/guardian was informed of the decision"(Education Act, Section 29)
- Any other relevant matter

4 After the suspension ends

On completion of the suspension, the school will make every effort to re-integrate the student into school life. The student will be expected to take responsibility for catching up on any work missed. Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work, however. The student will be expected to follow the school Code of Behaviour and to honour any commitments she or her parents/guardians may have made as a condition of her returning to school. Where necessary, a designated member of staff will provide support to the student during the re-integration

5 Clean Slate

The student will be given the opportunity and the support for a fresh start. A record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, however, once the sanction has been completed the school will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

FORMS OF SUSPENSION

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of a student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff in the school, or any other person. Fair procedures will still be applied.

Suspension during a State Examination

This sanction is normally approved by the Board of Management and will only be used where there is

- A threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- A threat to the safety of other students and personnel
- A threat to the right of other students to do their examination in a calm manner

This sanction will be treated like any other suspension, and the principles and fair procedures governing suspensions will be applied. (The DES Best Practice Guidelines concerning Certificate Examinations offer guidance to schools on this matter)

Automatic Suspension

Certain breaches of the rules, if serious and self-evident, may lead to automatic suspension. Such breaches would include:

- Fighting or assault or violence.
- Physical or sexual assault.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Reasonably suspected possession of or dealing in drugs, alcohol, addictive substances (un-prescribed drugs) or illegal substances.
- Serious damage to school property.
- A serious breach of the schools Acceptable Use Policy (ICT)
- Smoking

Rolling Suspension

A student will not be suspended again shortly after they return to school unless

- They engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension and
- Fair procedures are observed in full and
- The standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student

Open-ended suspension

Students will not be suspended for an indefinite period

RECORDS AND REPORTS

Records of Investigation and decision making

Formal written records will be kept of;

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

Report to the Board of Management

- The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of management of Colaiste Na Toirbhirte, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension

Report to NEWB

- The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education Act 2000, section 21(4) (a))

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 Skills directs that it be removed under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Review of the use of suspension

The Board of Management of Coláiste Na Toirbhirte will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that the use of suspension is appropriate and effective

13 EXPULSION

A student is expelled from school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. As part of the Code of Behaviour of Coláiste Na Toirbhirte, Bandon the Board of Management of the school has a policy on, and procedures for expulsion which are in line with NEWB guidelines.

Authority to expel

The Board of Management alone has the authority to expel a student. Only extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour will warrant consideration of expulsion.

Grounds for expulsion include:

- Behaviour that is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of herself, other students or staff members.
- Serious damage to property.

Misconduct that might lead to a proposal to expel will be very serious examples of those that could lead to suspension.

Automatic Expulsion

Necessary? Refer NEWB Guidelines p.81

Expulsion for a first offence

A single act of serious misconduct might form the basis of a proposal to expel.

Such misconduct could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another person.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Sexual assault.
- Possession or dealing drugs or illegal substances

Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the Board of Management will undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding to expel a student. In this they will ensure fair procedures and be guided by the NEWB guidelines (Ch 12 p 82) on "Factors to consider before proposing to expel a student".

Procedures in respect of expulsion

The school is required by law to follow fair procedures and the principles of natural justice. To that end, the school will follow the procedures in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008), paragraphs 10.3-10.6, pages 67-68 and paragraph 11.5, pages 74-75., as may be amended or updated by the NEWB.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. **The Principal directs a detailed investigation.** This includes informing the student and her parents/guardians, in writing, of the nature of the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The Principal will assure the student and parents/guardians that they will be given every opportunity to respond before any decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting and failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to parents and their response.
2. **The Principal recommends to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.** The parents/guardians and the student are informed, in writing, of the decision and the grounds to recommend expulsion. They and the Board are provided with all relevant documentation. A hearing is arranged to which the student and parents/guardians are invited. This will be held at a time and date that will allow time for the parents/guardians and the student to prepare their presentation. They can make a written and oral submission to the Board.
3. **The Board considers the Principal's recommendation and arranges a hearing at which the student and her parents/guardians may put her case forward.** As a first step, the Board will consider the manner of the investigation and assure itself that all procedures were followed properly and in accordance with the principles of fairness and natural justice. No party who has had any direct involvement in the case, or a close connection with a party to the case will be allowed to participate in the Board's deliberations. If the Board decides to consider expulsion it will hold a hearing that is properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing the Principal and the student and her parents/guardians each put their case in the presence of the other. Each side is allowed to question the other. The Board is impartial as between the Principal and the student. If parents/guardians wish to be accompanied, the Board will make every reasonable effort to facilitate this. After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents/guardians are not present for the Board's deliberations.
4. **Following the hearing the Board deliberates and acts.** The Board has the responsibility of deciding, first, whether the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether expulsion is the appropriate sanction. If the Board does decide to expel it will, as required by law, notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing. The expulsion cannot take effect for twenty school days from the date the EWO receives notification. The Board informs the student and parents/guardians, in writing, of its conclusions and the next step in the process.
5. **The EWO engages in consultations with all parties.** This will happen within 20 days of receipt of notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled. Pending these consultations the Board may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and the safety of students is secured. (Education Welfare Act 2000 s24(5) These steps may include suspension if there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student in the school will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.
6. **Proceeding with expulsion** If, after the twenty day period of notification to the EWO has elapsed, the Board remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board will formally confirm the decision. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately, and told of the right of appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeal

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 Skills (*Education Act, 1998, Sec 29*).

Review

The Board of Management of Coláiste Na Toirbhirte will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that exclusion is used appropriately.

Date of this review: 17th May 2018

Next review date proposed: 17th September 2020

14 PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL ABOUT STUDENT ABSENCES

General

The school keeps a daily record of all students which is submitted to the NEWB at the end of the year

- Any absence from school should be unavoidable and for a very good reason.
- It is not acceptable that parents/guardians take students out of school for holidays, or for other non-essential reasons.
- It is the duty of parents/guardians to inform the school, in writing, if their child will be absent for any period, giving the reason for the absence and its anticipated duration.
- If a student is absent and the school has not been informed, it reserves the right to contact the parents/guardians seeking a reason for the absence.
- If a student is absent for twenty or more school days in one school year, the school is legally obliged to report this to the NEWB, and to give reasons for the absences.
- The school may notify the NEWB at any time if it has concerns about a student's absence.
- The NEWB has the right to investigate absence from school where it deems it appropriate.

Absence through illness

- If a student is absent for more than three days parents/guardians should phone the school with a progress report, to be given to the Year Head.

Return after absence

- On a student's return from absence, parents/guardians must complete and sign the Note Explaining Absence at the back of the journal, detailing dates absent, date of return, reason for absence and the number of days absent.
- The student must present the journal immediately on her return, to the Class Tutor for signature, and to all her teachers at the start of each class.
- Where there has been a significant absence through illness the school may request a doctor's certificate.

Procedures for students leaving the school during the school day

- Students are encouraged to make medical appointments outside school hours. Where a student needs to leave the school during the school day, a note must be written in the school journal detailing the reason for absence. This must be signed and dated by a parent/guardian and presented to the Class Tutor. The student must then sign out in the Exit Book at Reception before leaving the building. We encourage parents/guardians to collect students in these circumstances.
- Where a student has to leave the school unexpectedly, for example in the case of illness, a parent/guardian must come to the school office to collect her and sign her out. A note in the school journal, detailing the reason for absence, must be presented to the Class Tutor the following day. We are in *loco parentis* and, in emergencies, may take appropriate action where necessary, e.g. call a doctor or ambulance.
- Students must sign the Exit Book at reception when leaving the school on school business. The Book must be signed on exiting and re-entering the building, stating the date and time and naming a contact teacher.
- Students who are licensed drivers, and who drive to school, may not use their cars to take other students as passengers at any time during school hours.
- Students who are 18 years or more do not need a parent/guardian to collect them but must have a note from parent/guardian.

Doctor's Notes/Hospital Notes

Where the above are available, it is helpful to include them for reference.

15 PROCEDURES FOR RAISING A CONCERN

Any member of staff who has a concern or complaint on a child protection issue must inform immediately the Principal who has been appointed the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), as required by the Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary and Primary Schools (Department of Education and Science, 2011).

Any parent or individual who has a concern or complaint on a child protection issue may contact the Gardaí, the local duty social worker or any member of staff. In the latter case, the member of staff will immediately inform the DLP.

APPENDIX 1

Coláiste Na Toirbhirte
Ard Aoibhinn, Bandon, Co. Cork
Trustees: Ceist
Tel: 023-8841814
Fax: 023-8841385
Email: colnato@eircom.net
Web: www.presbandon.ie

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to express concern about _____ absences from school. As you may know, under current legislation the school is obliged to contact the National Education Welfare Board where students are under 16 and have absences of 20 days or more, or where the school is concerned about patterns of non attendance by any student. I would appreciate it if you could contact me with regards this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Carolyn O'Flaherty
Deputy Principal

To date _____ has been absent _____ days.

APPENDIX 2

Coláiste Na Toirbhirte
Ard Aoibhinn, Bandon, Co. Cork
Trustees: Ceist
Tel: 023-8841814
Fax: 023-8841385
Email: colnato@eircom.net
Web: www.presbandon.ie

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your daughter _____ will be detained on _____ from _____ to _____
under a teacher's supervision, due to a breach of school discipline.

Yours sincerely,

Carolyn O'Flaherty
Deputy Principal

Reason for Detention

- Accumulation of 10 or more de-merits _____
- Behaviour _____
- Mobile Phone _____
- Unauthorised absence from school _____