



DUNSHAUGHLIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR 2024-2025



## Contents

School Mission Statement.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Whole School and Curriculum Support for Positive Behaviour .....	6
Promoting Good Behaviour.....	7
Rewards and Recognition.....	8
Ladder of referral .....	15
Level 1.....	15
Level 2.....	15
Level 3.....	15
Interventions and Supports.....	20
Attendance .....	20
Bullying and harassment .....	21
Concerns/complaints about a behaviour matter .....	21
Whole School Approach .....	22
Roles and Responsibilities .....	23
Students.....	23
Parent(s)/Guardian(s).....	23
Teachers .....	23
Other staff .....	24
Board of Management .....	24
SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES .....	25
Legal framework.....	25
Suspensions .....	26
Inappropriate use of Suspension.....	29
Procedures in respect of Suspension .....	29
Implementing the suspension .....	30
Appealing the suspension to the Board of Management .....	31
Expulsion.....	31



Factors to Consider before proposing to expel a Student .....	33
Procedures in respect of expulsion .....	33
Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing .....	37
Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer .....	37
Confirmation of the decision to expel.....	38
Section 29 Appeal against Expulsion.....	38
Review of use of Expulsion .....	39
Implementation and Review of Policy.....	39
Definitions under the Education Act, 1998 .....	40



## School Mission Statement

We are committed to the provision of a complete education maximising student potential to the highest possible standards through a highly committed staff in a modern well equipped college. We strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect in a happy, caring, supportive but challenging and well structured environment.

## Introduction

The school's code of positive behaviour is based around our four core expectations. These expectations were arrived at after careful discussion with students, staff, parents and management. The expectations for behaviour in this code apply to all students in the college during school time, on the school bus, in attendance at a school activity/extracurricular activity and also on school tours both at home and abroad.

## Goals of Positive Code of Behaviour

1. To promote respectful relationships for effective learning and behaviour in the school community
2. To promote positive behaviour and an environment of safety, inclusion, and forgiveness
3. To effectively communicate personal responsibility for behaviour and the consequences of behaviour to all members of the school community
4. To maintain equality and fairness for all members of the school community
5. To recognize vulnerability and provide a safe and encouraging school environment



### Understanding Behaviour

An understanding of the factors that influence behaviour is fundamental to developing and implementing the schools code of positive behaviour. Learning, relationships and behaviour are inextricably linked. The two categories of factors that influence behaviour are:

School life is fundamentally social and individual students and teachers are part of the many groups and subgroups in the course of a single day. The dynamics that operate within and between these groups are very powerful and are themselves significant influences on individual and group behaviour.

<i><b>Within-person Factors</b></i>	<i><b>External &amp; Interpersonal Factors</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Age &amp; stage of development</li><li>• Personality &amp; temperament</li><li>• Personal history &amp; experience Physical, sensory or medical</li><li>• characteristics</li><li>• Skills, ability to learn</li><li>• Beliefs about self &amp; others</li><li>• Resilience &amp; self-efficacy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parental &amp; family patterns &amp; relationships</li><li>• Social networks, including friends &amp; peer groups</li><li>• Neighbourhood &amp; community factors</li><li>• The status &amp; standing of different groups in society</li><li>• School factors</li><li>• Time, opportunity &amp; support for personal /social development</li></ul>

### Expectations

The Code of Behaviour is based around our four core expectations. These expectations were arrived at after careful consultation with staff, students and management.

- Be ready
- Be respectful
- Be responsible
- Reach





## Whole School and Curriculum Support for Positive Behaviour

Students are informed and supported in meeting the expectations of the code of positive behaviour in the following ways:

1. The code of positive behaviour is circulated to the parents/guardians of all new entrants into the school and they are asked to read it and to sign their agreement with the content and their support and co-operation with it.

*This is done to ensure that parents/guardians and students understand what our rules are, why they must be adhered to and what procedures will be followed if the rules are not upheld.*

2. At the start of each new academic year/induction process, each class is brought through the expectations for positive behaviour and any amendments to it are highlighted.

*This is done to remind students of the content and to take account of the fact that they have been out of the school environment for 3 months.*

3. School expectations and the reasons for these are discussed as part of the school's pastoral care programme. A synopsis of the expectations and a student contract is included in the school journal and must be signed on an annual basis by the student and their parents/guardians.
4. The notion of tolerance for others, self-control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are discussed as part of the religious education and SPHE programmes in the school.
5. Issues such as bullying, racism, sexism, harassment, violence, substance misuse...etc. are discussed with the students during their time in our school using SPHE, CSPE, current affairs and/or outside speakers.

*This is done to help our students to better understand these issues so that they can base their thinking, understanding and action on factual information and in the light of the values espoused in our school.*



6. The Student Support Team, Guidance team, Year Head and class tutor system are in place to support students who need additional guidance in behaviour management.
7. The emphasis on student voice and leadership motivates students to maintain high standards of behaviour and to aspire to be good role models

### Promoting Good Behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is one of the main goals of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour. This requires consistency across the teaching team. Strategies to promote good behaviour include:

- ✓ Involving students in the preparation of the school and classroom rules
- ✓ Agreeing upon, teaching and frequently reminding students of expectations
- ✓ Use of rewards systems for students through tutors and year heads
- ✓ Promoting and strengthening relationships between all partners through open conversations and meetings
- ✓ Adults modelling the behaviour that is expected from the students
- ✓ Good school and class routines being carried out
- ✓ Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
- ✓ Facilitating conversations with students on how people should treat each other and what this looks like in our school environment.
- ✓ Allowing opportunities for students to achieve leadership roles in our school
- ✓ Specific teachers are available to offer supports for students that may need them.



## Rewards and Recognition

In our school teachers use the following methods to reward students for meeting expectations for positive behaviour and or to mark noticeable efforts at improving their behaviour.

- Verbal praise to student in class or privately
- Acknowledgement at assembly
- Recording a positive note in school journal or sending home a letter to parents
- Positive phone call home
- Positive comment to class tutor or year head
- Well done stickers awarded by tutor
- Recognition on school website and twitter account
- Recording a positive note on the student's e portal record
- Sending home a Merit Card
- Movie class with treats for students with multiple well done stickers
- Display of students work
- Leadership roles given to students e.g. class captains, class representative on Student Council, peer mentor or prefect.
- Other class based rewards e.g. cinema trips, Pantry vouchers
- End of year award ceremony





The school expectations/rules are as follows:

### **BE READY**

Students will use their swipe cards to log their attendance at the start of each school day and also after lunch. Students will attend school regularly, remain for the full school day and if absent, the school will be notified of the reason for the absence.

*This is expected in our school because missing class adversely affects progress and can impede the progress of the students present. The school is legally obliged to report the reason for all absences. When students are absent due to school activities they are responsible for catching up on the work missed. Students and parents/guardians must follow the correct sign out procedures if a student must leave school early.*

Students will bring their journal, books, copies and all equipment that they need to all relevant classes.

*This is expected in our school to ensure that students can benefit fully from classes and minimise time wasting.*

Students will do their homework/class work and participate fully in class.

*This is expected in our school because homework reinforces learning and helps students to reach their full potential.*

Students will get their parents/guardians to sign their school journals every weekend.

*This is expected in our school because it facilitates communication between teachers and parents/guardians. In addition, it allows teachers/guardians to monitor student progress.*



Students will be on time for school/class and not loiter or go to their lockers between classes.

*This is expected in our school because not being on time causes disruption for the teacher and the class. In addition, DCC is concerned about the development of the whole child/person and encourages students to develop good punctuality which will be expected of them in the workplace.*

Students will be ready for class in full school uniform. This correct uniform must be worn to and from school. The full school PE tracksuit must be worn during PE only.

*This is expected in our school because uniforms promote a sense of pride and equality among the student population. The uniform is the public image of the school and it is the responsibility of each member of the school community to promote that image. The code of dress is clearly communicated to students and parents/guardians through the school journal, presentations at information nights and letters/information sheets sent to homes.*



## **BE RESPECTFUL**

Students will treat themselves, school staff, fellow students and visitors to the school with respect and have consideration for the rights and feelings of others.

*This is expected in our school because having respect for oneself and for others promotes a respectful, caring atmosphere where the rights of all are upheld. Having consideration for the rights and feelings of others creates a better, more pleasant learning environment.*

Students will co-operate and follow the instructions of all staff members. Students will cooperate with each other. They will listen to each other and their teachers and not disrupt any classes.

*This is expected in our school to maintain good order, avoid disruption and create a better learning/working environment for all. Instructions given to assist the smooth day to day running of the school are carried out in the interests of all. Disruption of classes is unfair on fellow students and prevents the teacher from teaching effectively.*

Students will move quietly around the school in an orderly manner.

*This is expected in our school for the health and safety of students and staff and so that the teaching and learning can take place without unnecessary disturbances.*

Students will show respect for all property and equipment in the school and on the school grounds.

*This is expected in our school because defacing/damaging school property is destructive and shows a lack of respect and consideration for the school community of which the student is a member. Damage to property costs money in repairs, which could be better spent on other school items and could also cause a hazard to health and safety. Everyone deserves to come to school/work in a pleasant environment.*



Students will not use or bring into school prohibited substances such as cigarettes, e-cigarettes, alcohol or drugs. This rule applies going to and from school, during break and lunch time, while wearing school uniform, away on trips and or representing the school

*This is expected in our school for the following reasons:*

- *Smoking on the school grounds is illegal and smoking seriously damages health*
- *Banned/prohibited substances pose a risk to the safety of all*





## **BE RESPONSIBLE**

Students are responsible for their own behaviour, they are encouraged to look out for each other and seek help/advice/support for themselves or others when in difficulty. This promotes a safe and caring environment for everyone and fosters a sense of responsibility.

Students will wear their full school uniform every day to and from school and comply fully with the correct DCC code of dress. Facial piercings and make up is prohibited and stud earrings only can be worn.

*This is expected in our school because uniforms promote/project an atmosphere of uniformity, pride and equality among the student population. The uniform is the public image of the school and it is the responsibility of each member of the school community to promote that image. The code of dress is clearly communicated to students and parents/guardians through the school journal, presentations at information nights and letters/information sheets sent to homes.*

Students are responsible for maintaining a safe and productive learning environment.

*This is expected in our school to maintain good order, avoid disruption and create a better working environment for all. Instructions given to assist the smooth day to day running of the school are carried out in the interests of all.*

Students must be responsible for appropriate use of technological devices.

*This is expected in our school to ensure that students can benefit fully from classes and minimise time wasting. Students will agree not to use their phones or any electronic devices to record or photograph any person/thing related to school without prior permission. This is a rule of our school for the following reasons:*

- *Mobile phones can cause many disruptions in school*
- *Camera phones impinge on the privacy of others*
- *Inappropriate use of mobile phones or electronic recording/listening devices causes disruption, prevents students from hearing instructions and impinges on the privacy of others.*





## REACH

Students will do their homework/class work, participate fully in class and ask for help when needed.

*This is expected in our school because homework/class work reinforces learning and asking for help when needed boosts confidence.*

Students will endeavour to participate in as many extra-curricular activities as possible.

*This is expected in our school as it ensures students explore and develop their talents and skills as well as availing of the opportunity to experience something new.*

Students will set targets and goals and be provided the opportunity for ongoing self-evaluation and reflection.

*This is expected in our school because target setting keeps students focussed and motivated to reach their full potential.*

Students will be encouraged to become part of the schools growing leadership team.

*This is expected in our school because DCC values our student's contributions as well as realising it plays a vital role in improving their educational engagement and social awareness.*

Students will be invited to develop and implement community based projects (School charity events, GAISCE, Musicals etc.)

*This is expected in our school because it fosters an awareness and appreciation of the diversity of others as well as helping to develop our students into responsible young adults.*



## Ladder of referral

The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour/breach of the school rules are referred to as our 'ladder of referral'. The basic principle is that the more serious the incident, the higher up the ladder it is dealt with varying degrees of response.

### Level 1

Each subject teacher has responsibility for promoting positive behaviour in his/her own classroom. With the help of consistent rules and routines in class/school, occasional minor behaviours for concern should be attended to effectively by the classroom teacher. Subject teachers may use some of the schools agreed sanctions. Subject teachers should record all incidents of failure to meet expectations in their own records and in the student journal where necessary.

### Level 2

Each class group is assigned a Class Tutor with special responsibility for them. The Class Tutor monitors the student diaries and imposes sanctions. Class Tutors should keep records of student misconduct and may enter them onto the school Facility ePortal system.

### Level 3

Each year group is assigned a Year Head. The Year Head has special responsibility for the year group and has a pastoral and disciplinary role to play for the students in their year group. Year Heads usually deal with more serious offences or an accumulation of minor offences. Year Heads can impose school sanctions up to and including suspension (sanctioned by Senior Management). Year Heads should keep detailed records of student conduct and may enter them onto the school Facility ePortal system.

Students whose behaviour has not modified despite the school's best efforts will be referred by the Year Head to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

The Principal informs the Board of Management of all suspensions and recommendations of exclusion (see section on Suspension and Exclusion).

Below is the ladder of referral and suggested responses for students who struggle or fail to meet the schools expectations regarding behaviour.



# LEVEL 1

BEHAVIOURS FOR CONCERN	SUGGESTED TEACHER RESPONSES FOR MISBEHAVIOURS (Keep all records) child protection guidelines	POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS WHEN IMPROVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of materials</li> <li>• No homework</li> <li>• Chatting</li> <li>• Gum</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Chair swinging</li> <li>• Bad language</li> <li>• Uniform</li> <li>• Tardiness</li> <li>• Movement</li> <li>• Interacting with visitors</li> <li>• Litter</li> <li>• Throwing paper</li> <li>• Avoiding cleaning up</li> <li>• Disengagement</li> <li>• Changes in behaviour</li> <li>• Using the phone 1<sup>st</sup> time</li> <li>• 3 behavioural notes in journal</li> <li>• Bad language to peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-verbal reminder</li> <li>• Re positioning of teacher</li> <li>• Rule reminder</li> <li>• Re direction of student(task orientated)</li> <li>• Timing of tasks</li> <li>• Differentiation</li> <li>• Tap on desk</li> <li>• Relocation of journal</li> <li>• Verbal warning</li> <li>• Meeting after class</li> <li>• Seating plan</li> <li>• Note of concern in journal and e portal</li> <li>• Phone call home(liaise with tutor and YH)</li> <li>• Tutor referral</li> <li>• Observation card</li> <li>• Audio cues e.g A bell or Gong sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal praise</li> <li>• Positive note in journal and e portal</li> <li>• Tutor referral (Well done stickers)</li> <li>• Phone call home</li> <li>• Begin a fresh start</li> </ul>





## LEVEL 2

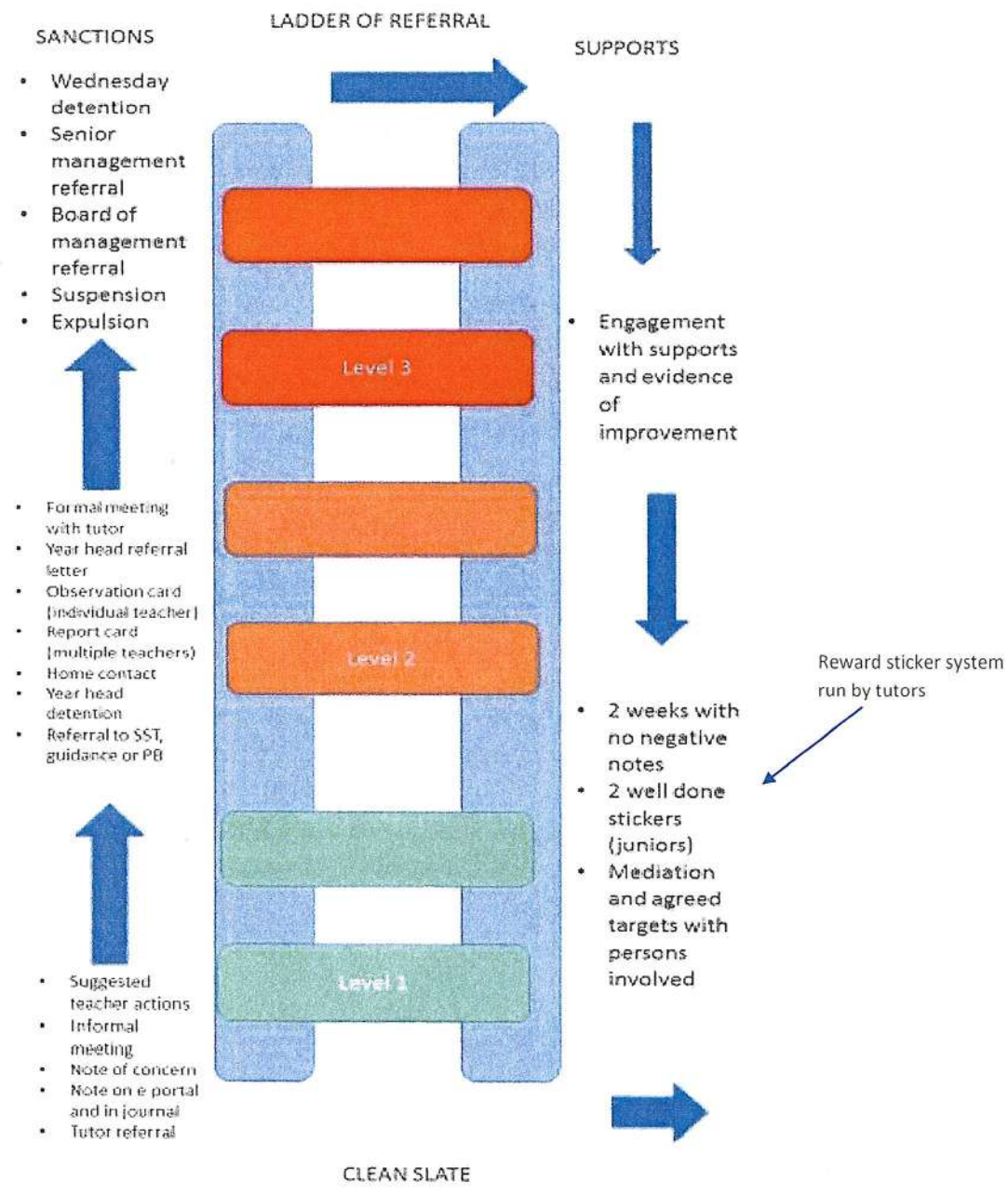
BEHAVIOURS FOR CONCERN	SUGGESTED TEACHER RESPONSES FOR MISBEHAVIOURS (Keep all records) child protection guidelines	POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS WHEN IMPROVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refusal to follow instruction</li> <li>• Bad language to teacher</li> <li>• Defiance</li> <li>• Inappropriate comments</li> <li>• Graffiti</li> <li>• Using materials inappropriately(practical subjects)</li> <li>• Out of class without permission</li> <li>• Refusal to hand up phone</li> <li>• 3 behavioural notes in journal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative note in journal-e portal</li> <li>• Meeting with tutor and student</li> <li>• A school community task such as picking up litter, removal of graffiti or assisting a teacher with a task</li> <li>• Year head referral letter</li> <li>• Observation card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal recognition</li> <li>• Positive note in journal-e portal</li> <li>• Phone call home</li> <li>• Acknowledgement by tutor/year head</li> <li>• Support a fresh start</li> </ul>



## LEVEL 3

BEHAVIOURS FOR CONCERN	SUGGESTED TEACHER RESPONSES FOR MISBEHAVIOURS (Keep all records) child protection guidelines	SUGGESTED TEACHER ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THESE BEHAVIOURS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical fighting</li> <li>Intimidation/bullying</li> <li>Mitching</li> <li>Changes in behaviour</li> <li>Concerns about student welfare including attendance</li> <li>Disengagement from learning</li> <li>Smoking</li> <li>Threatening behaviour</li> <li>Substance abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek advice from Year Head</li> <li>Complete Year Head referral form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home contact</li> <li>Record on e-portal and in journal</li> <li>Support a fresh start</li> </ul>
	<b>SUGGESTED YEAR HEAD ACTIONS</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate based on referrals</li> <li>Restorative meeting with student</li> <li>Mediation between students</li> <li>Student Behaviour Contract</li> <li>Academic tracking and target setting Attendance targets, Return to School Learning Plan and Student Absence Learning Plan</li> <li>'On Report' with Year Head</li> <li>Home contact: phone calls and meetings with parent/guardian</li> <li>Refer to and liaise with Guidance/Student Care Team/PBL teacher/SEN teachers</li> <li>Refer to and liaise with outside agencies e.g. Social Workers, Tusla, SESS, NBSS, HSE, etc.</li> <li>Early morning detention for poor punctuality</li> <li>Wednesday afternoon detention</li> <li>Refer to Principal/Deputy Principal.</li> <li>Board of management referral</li> </ul>	







## Interventions and Supports

The subject teacher will deal with the majority of routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies, thus minimising the need for interventions. The school has both formal and informal structures in place for when intervention is necessary.

- Formal structures include: tutor systems, year heads, pastoral care teams, guidance counsellors and the student care team...etc
- Informal structures include: peer support, mediation or providing informal support to colleagues e.g. removing a student to a colleague's room for time-out.

Interventions refer to the strategies used to help prevent students from re-offending and give specific help to those students who find it particularly difficult to live by the code of conduct. Such strategies usually involve gathering information and consultation with school personnel, parents/guardians and others as appropriate. Specific intervention packages may need to be designed to suit individual needs. Examples of specific interventions include:

1. The Student Support Team, Guidance team, Year Head and class tutor system are in place to support students who need additional guidance in behaviour management.
2. Additional support may be necessary for some students for example: a behavioural plan, a target sheet etc
3. Specialised support may be necessary for a small minority of students for example: having an SNA<sup>1</sup> appointed, going home at lunchtime, involvement of external agencies....etc

## Attendance

The school's Attendance Strategy acknowledges the link between attendance, learning and behaviour. It is vital that the school is informed of a child's absence in order to protect, in conjunction with all other aspects of school life, the care and welfare of the students. The following are the procedures to be followed by parents when they are notifying the school about a child's absence:

1. Provide a written explanation for the student's absence in the student journal to the Class Tutor on the first day of return to school.

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<sup>1</sup> SNA = Special Needs Assistant

2. To inform the school in advance of any planned absences from school.
3. A doctors' certificate should be provided for significant absences due to illness
4. Students who leave the school during the day due to illness or appointments must be collected by a parent/guardian at School Reception and must then sign out. The signing out is inputted to ePortal by the Admin Staff.
5. To acknowledge and, where necessary, reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues.

Failure to provide a reason for absence as outlined above may result in a sanction being imposed on the student.

### Bullying and harassment

Bullying and harassment are prohibited in DCC. Every student has the right to a safe learning environment and DCC fully endeavour to provide this at all times. The school's Anti Bullying Policy provides clear guidelines for responding to bullying behaviour.

### Concerns/complaints about a behaviour matter

When a parent or student has a concern about a behaviour matter it is advisable that they contact the teacher directly involved in the matter in the first instance. This may be the class teacher, tutor or Year Head. The teacher involved will either address the concern directly or provide advice on how to proceed if dissatisfied with the outcome.





### Implementing the Code of Conduct

The implementation of the Code of Conduct for Dunshaughlin Community College will include the following:

- All school partners are involved in the development and review of the code
- Amendments to the Code of Conduct will be communicated to the stakeholders
- A major review will involve consultation with and ratification by all partners
- The code will be made accessible to all through its publication on our school website and hard copies will be available on request
- All incoming students will receive a copy of the Code of Conduct and parents/guardians will be required to sign an acknowledgement of receipt of it
- A synopsis of the code will be published in the student journal for students to refer to. The code will also be referred to in class by teachers on a regular basis. Students and their parents/guardians must sign a student contract in the student journal each year

### Whole School Approach

The code of behaviour, on its own, cannot create the environment that makes it possible for students to learn and behave well. All members of the school community have responsibility to ensure that our students behave well. The main elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

- ✓ An ethos, policies and practices<sup>2</sup> that are in harmony to create a positive school environment. Related policies include the schools Anti bullying, Pastoral Care, Attendance and Substance Use Policies.
- ✓ A teamwork and consistent approach to behaviour
- ✓ Effective classroom management and good curricular planning
- ✓ An inclusive and involved school community

Classroom management and teaching methods have a strong influence on students' behaviour.

The classroom environment, like the wider school community, gives students clear messages about teachers' expectations and creates boundaries. The skills of the teacher in managing a routine engagement with students are critical in preventing problems. In addition, the supervision of students at break times also helps to ensure the school creates and maintains a positive school environment for all members of the school community.

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<sup>2</sup> Practices include the ability groupings in the school and Timetabling.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Our school acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour and a role in responding to negative behaviour. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities allow for consistency among staff as well as ensuring that there is a planned approach to helping students to change their own behaviour.

### Students

The school expects that students will at all times uphold the code of positive behaviour.

### Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians in the development and operation of the code of positive behaviour and expects them to support the code and encourage their sons/daughters to uphold it. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share information with the relevant school personnel in order to assist the school in understanding a student's behaviour and to plan interventions where necessary.

### Teachers

The school acknowledges the role of teachers in the development and operation of the code of positive behaviour. The school recognises that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management. That pivotal role forms a core element of this code. The teachers in DCC with special responsibilities for emphasising and reminding students of the code are:

- Tutors
- Year heads
- Guidance Counsellors
- Learning support teachers
- Behavioural support teacher
- Psychological services, other agencies
- Deputy Principal and Principal





### Other staff

The school acknowledges the contribution of ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful delivery of our code of positive behaviour. In particular, they have responsibility to report incidents of misbehaviour and examples of positive behaviour they witness.

### Board of Management

The Board of Management is the decision making body of the school. The school acknowledges the role of the Board of Management in the development and operation of the code of positive behaviour. All policies are developed with the authority of the Board and must be approved by it before becoming official school policy. While it is not involved in the day to day procedures, it is the body to which parents and students over the age of 18 years can appeal in cases of suspension and Exclusion.



## SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The suspensions and expulsions policy applies to all schools established and maintained by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board.

### 2. Legal framework

- 2.1. Louth and Meath ETB acknowledges the duty of schools under its control to publish their policy concerning admission and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of Students pursuant to Section 15 (d) of the Education Act 1998 and Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

The Code of Behaviour in Dunshaughlin Community College specifies:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each Student attending the school
- The measures that may be taken when a Student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a Student may be suspended or expelled from a school
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a Student
- The procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school

- 2.2. Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that its Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board 2008. The Code of Behaviour addresses:

- The standards of behaviour expected in the school
- The plan for promoting good behaviour
- The ways in which a school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- The plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- School procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion



- 2.3. Dunshaughlin Community College recognises the Right to Appeal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act.
- 2.4. In regard to informing the Education Welfare Board, Dunshaughlin Community College affirms its statutory obligation pursuant to section 21 (4)(a) of the Education Welfare Act.
- 2.5. Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that data collected in relation to Students and Parents is in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003.

### 3. Suspensions

- 3.1 The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College holds the authority to suspend a Student. This authority is devolved under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Boards of Management of each of the schools under its control.
- 3.2 Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College may delegate this authority to the Principal of Dunshaughlin Community College. The Board of Management should make a formal delegation arrangement taking due account of the provisions of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.
- 3.3 Dunshaughlin Community College recognises that suspension is only one strategy within the Dunshaughlin Community College Code of Behaviour in response to inappropriate behaviour.
- 3.4. Dunshaughlin Community College recognises that when all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension affords a Student time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for their behaviour and to accept the need for the behaviour to change. Dunshaughlin Community College works closely with Parents to assist a suspended Student to re-integrate into the school community successfully.



- 3.5. Dunshaughlin Community College acknowledges that suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a Student requires serious grounds such as:
- The Student's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on the education of other Students.
  - The Students continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
  - The Student is responsible for serious damage to property.
  - The Student breaches the Code of Behaviour. (At the discretion of the Principal)
- 3.6. Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that all suspensions must be notified to the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College.
- 3.7. Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that the Education Welfare Services of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) should be Informed of suspensions in the following circumstances:
- Where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive school days.
  - Where the aggregate number of days on which a Student has been suspended /absent in any school year is 20 or more days.
- 3.8. Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that suspension may be warranted after the following factors have been considered:
- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
  - The impact and context of the behaviour
  - The interventions tried to date
  - That all discipline options under the Dunshaughlin Community College Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
  - That all actions /decisions taken are recorded and all correspondence copied
  - Discussion has occurred with the Student and Parents(s) regarding the specific behaviour which the school considers unacceptable, and which may lead to suspension





- 3.9. The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that Students attending Dunshaughlin Community College may be suspended for the following reasons pending investigation and /or discussion with Parents. The following list is not exhaustive:
- For serious misbehaviour
  - For an unacceptable level of repeated misbehaviour
  - For bullying, insulting, aggressive or violent behaviour towards others whether in person, by mobile phone or via social media or other electronic means in the school, or when identifiable with the school
  - For the supply/possession /use of alcohol and /or illegal drugs
  - For the supply /possession /use of weapons/ hazardous materials
  - For behaviour that may be a danger to self or others
  - For racist behaviour /supply of racist behaviour/use of racist material
  - For behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act 2000
  - For sexual harassment and/or the possession/supply /use of pornographic material.
- 3.10. Dunshaughlin Community College acknowledges that a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Such grounds may include where the continued presence of the Student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety or welfare of Students, staff of the school or any other person.
- 3.11. A Student may be suspended during a state examination and such suspension should normally be approved by the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College. This type of suspension should only be used where there is:
- A threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
  - A threat to the safety or welfare of other Students and personnel
  - A threat to the right of the other Students to do their exam in a calm atmosphere
- 3.12. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College may decide as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following a consultation process with the Principal, Parents, teachers and Students, that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction. This does not remove the duty of the Board to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.





#### 4. Inappropriate use of Suspension

- Rolling suspension. One Student should not be suspended again shortly after he/she return to *Dunshaughlin Community College* unless he/she engages in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension, that fair procedures are observed in full and the standard applied to assessing the behaviour is the same as that standard applied to assessing the behaviour of any other Student.
- Informal / unacknowledged suspension. Exclusion of a Student for part of the school day as a sanction is a suspension.
- Open-ended suspension. Students should not be suspended for indefinite periods. Any such suspension would be regarded as a de-facto expulsion.

#### 5. Procedures in respect of Suspension.

- 5.1 Louth and Meath ETB affirms that Dunshaughlin Community College is required to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a Student. The school should observe the following procedures:
- The Student and Parents(s) should be informed about the complaint
  - The Student and Parents(s) should be given the opportunity to respond
  - In the case of 'immediate' suspension, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Parents must be notified and arrangement made for the Student to be collected from the school. The school must have due regard for its duty of care for the Student.
- 5.2 A Student should not be suspended for more than 3 days except in exceptional circumstances. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College should provide guidance to the Principal concerning the kinds of circumstances under which suspensions of longer than 3 days might be approved. If a suspension of longer than 3 days is being proposed the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval.



However, Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. Such authorisation must be recorded in the minutes of meeting of the Board of Management and reviewed on an annual basis.

- 5.3 Louth and Meath ETB affirms the Boards of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College should formally review any proposal to suspend a Student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the Student has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

## 6. Implementing the suspension

- 6.1 The Principal of Dunshaughlin Community College should notify the Parents(s) 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.
  - Any study programme to be followed.
  - 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 Department of Education, in the case of a suspension which would bring the days suspended in one academic over 20 days.
- 6.2 In the case where Parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, Louth and Meath ETB confirms that written notice will serve as notice to impose a suspension.
- 6.3 A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College decides to remove the suspension for any reason.



## 7. Appealing the suspension to the Board of Management

- 7.1. Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the Minister for Education.
- 7.2. An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.
- 7.3. An appeal must be made within **42 calendar days** from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.
- 7.4. Appeals must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Form and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

## 8. Expulsion

- 8.1. Louth and Meath ETB has the authority to expel a Student. This authority may be delegated under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College.
- 8.2. Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the Student's behaviour. Dunshaughlin Community College acknowledges that expulsion of a Student is a very serious step and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.





- 8.3 The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College affirms that Dunshaughlin Community College needs to have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion.

Such measures may include:

- Meeting with Parents and Students to try and find ways of helping the Student to change their behaviour
- Making sure that the Student understands the possible consequences of his/her behaviour should it persist
- Ensuring that all possible options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of relevant support agencies, e.g. Child and Family Agency Education Welfare Services, HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Behavioural Support Service JLO, NEPS, NCSE.

- 8.4 A proposal to expel a Student requires serious grounds such as:

- 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 the safety and welfare of others
- The Student is responsible for serious damage to property

- 8.5 Before expulsion is considered, school authorities must satisfy themselves that all possibilities have been exhausted for changing the Student's behaviour.

- 8.6 'Automatic Expulsion'

The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College may decide in consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students that particular named behaviours would result in 'Automatic' expulsion. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedure.

- 8.7 Expulsion for first or once-off offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College decides that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the Code of Behaviour could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to students in the school
- Sexual assault





## 9. Factors to Consider before proposing to expel a Student

9.1 The Board of Management of *Dunshaughlin Community College* should take the following factors into consideration before considering expelling a Student:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions already tried to change the Student's behaviour
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

9.2 Expulsion would not be appropriate for the following:

- Poor academic performance
- Poor attendance or lateness
- Minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

## 10. Procedures in respect of Expulsion

10.1 A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. The Principal should ensure that any party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is not part of the investigation.

10.2 The Principal should inform the Student and his/her Parents about the specific details of the alleged breach of behaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The Principal must ensure that the Student and Parents are given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour. The Principal should communicate this in writing to ensure that Parents have a permanent record of having been informed.



- 10.3 A meeting should be arranged between the Student and his/her Parents and the Principal of Dunshaughlin Community College before a sanction is imposed.
- 10.4 Should a Student and his/her Parents(s) fail to attend a meeting the Principal should write advising:
- the seriousness of the matter
  - the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting
  - failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour
  - record all correspondence
- 10.5 Where the Principal of Dunshaughlin Community College forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board to consider expulsion.
- 10.6 The Principal should:
- Inform the Student and Parents in writing that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
  - Ensure that Parents have written records of (a) the allegation, (b) the investigation, (c) written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
  - Provide the Board with the same comprehensive records as are given to the Student and the Parents.
  - Notify the Parents in good time of the date of the hearing with the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
  - Advise the Parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
  - Ensure Parents are given enough notice to allow them to prepare for the meeting.
- 10.7 It is the responsibility of the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.
- 10.8 The Board of Management should undertake its own review of documentation and all circumstances of the case.



- 10.9 The Board of Management should ensure that any party who has had involvement with the circumstances of the case is not part of the Board's deliberations.
- 10.10 Where the Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College decides to expel a Student it must hold a hearing and this meeting should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures.
- 10.11 Parents may be accompanied at the Board hearing but, as this is a lay forum; legal representation is not the normal practice. However legal representation may be allowed due to the potentially serious consequences for the Student. In cases where legal representation has been received by the Parents, the Board Secretary should be informed in writing who shall be attending this meeting at least two days prior to the meeting taking place.
- 10.12 At the start of the meeting the Chairperson shall enquire whether any member has an objective bias in respect of the matter being considered by the Board. Where the Board is satisfied that an objective bias exists, the member(s) involved shall withdraw from the meeting.
- 10.13 At the hearing the Principal and the Parents, (or a Student aged 18 or over) put their case to the Board in each other's presence and each party will be available to answer questions from Board Members. Each party should be allowed question the evidence of the other party. Questions should be directed through the Chairperson, at the end of each presentation.
- 10.14 Once the Principal and the Parents have made their cases, they will withdraw from the meeting.
- 10.15 Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal, the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting, briefly, for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there will be no discussion on the merits of the particular case being considered.





- 10.16 In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure it is and is seen to be impartial as between the Principal and the Student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this in line with good practice and Board procedures.
- 10.17 When both sides have been heard, the Board should ensure that the Principal and Parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.
- 10.18 In hearing and considering a proposed expulsion the Board shall have regard to:
- (a) the nature, scale and persistence of any behaviour alleged to have given rise to, or contributed to, the decision made by or on behalf of the Board
  - (b) the reasonableness of any efforts made by the school to enable the Student to whom the appeal relates (the 'Student concerned') to participate in and benefit from education
  - (c) the educational interests of the Student concerned and the desirability of enabling the Student as far as practicable to participate in and benefit from education with his or her peers
  - (d) the educational interests of, and the effective provision of education for, other Students of the school and the maintenance of a classroom and school environment which is supportive of learning among the Students of the school and ensures continuity of instruction provided to Students in any classroom concerned and the school
  - (e) the safety, health and welfare of teachers, Students and staff of the school
  - (f) the code of behaviour under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act of 2000 and other relevant policies of the school and —
    - (i) in the case of that code of behaviour, the extent to which it is in compliance with that section 23 and any guidelines issued under subsection (3) of that section, and
    - (ii) in the case of those other policies, the extent to which each of them is implemented, promotes equality of access to and participation in education and is in compliance with —
      - (I) any enactment that imposes duties on schools or their Boards, (II) any relevant guidelines or policies of the Minister
  - (g) the duties on schools or their Boards imposed by or under any enactment
  - (h) guidelines issued pursuant to section 22(7) of the Act of 2000, and
  - (i) such other matters as the Board considers relevant.





## 11. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

- 11.1 Having heard from all the parties involved, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and if expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
- 11.2 When the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the Student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Education Welfare Officer, in writing, of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion pursuant to section 24 91) of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Board should refer to the Child and Family Agency Education Welfare Services reporting procedures, for proposed expulsions.
- 11.3 The Student cannot be expelled before 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives written notification.
- 11.4 The Board of Management should inform the Parents in writing about its conclusions and where expulsion is proposed, the parents should be informed that the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

## 12. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

- 12.1 Within 20 days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management, the EWO will make all reasonable attempts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parent and the student. The EWO will convene a meeting of those parties. These consultations will focus on alternative educational arrangements for the student.
- 12.2 Pending the consultations in 12.1 the Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. This should only be considered where the continued presence of the student during this time would seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a risk to the safety and health of students or staff.



### 13. Confirmation of the decision to expel

- 13.1 When the 20 day period, following notice to the EWO, has elapsed and the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel. The Board of Management may delegate authority to the Chairperson and Secretary to review this decision of expulsion after the twenty days has expired.
- 13.2 Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will then proceed. Parents and the student must be informed of their right to appeal to the Minister of Education.

### 14. Section 29 Appeal against Expulsion

- 14.1 The parents(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the expulsion under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- 14.2 Parents and the Student should be informed about their right to appeal to the Minister of Education.
- 14.3 An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.
- 14.4 An appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.
- 14.5 Appeals must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Form and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide LMETB – Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedures Page 13 administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)



## 15. Review of use of Expulsion

- 15.1 The Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College should review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals.

## 16. Implementation and Review of Policy

- 16.1 The Principal and Board of Management of Dunshaughlin Community College will be responsible for the implementation of this policy.
- 16.2 This policy shall be reviewed periodically, in light of emerging legislation and circulated Guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills from its official adoption by the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board and Dunshaughlin Community College Board of Management.


This policy was reviewed and adopted by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board on 15 November 2018 for incorporation into school's Codes of Behaviour.

This policy was reviewed in November 2020 in light of commencement of changes to the Section 29 Appeals procedures under the Education (Admission to schools) Act 2018.

This policy was ratified by the Dunshaughlin Community College Board of Management on 5th November 2024.

Signed:   
Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: 18th November 2024

Signed:   
Acting Principal

Date: 18th November 2024

## Definitions under the Education Act, 1998

**“parent”** includes a foster parents, a guardians appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997, or other person acting in *loco parentis* who has a child in his or her care subject to any statutory power or order of a court and, in the case of a child who has been adopted under the Adoption Acts, 1952 to 1998, or, where the child has been adopted outside the State, means the adopter or adopters or the surviving adopter; .

**“Principal”** means a person appointed under *section 23*;

**“school”** means an establishment which—

(a) provides primary education to its Students and which may also provide early childhood education, or

(b) provides post-primary education to its Students and which may also provide courses in adult, continuing or vocational education or vocational training, but does not include a school or institution established in accordance with the Children Acts, 1908 to 1989, or a school or institution established or maintained by a health Board in accordance with the Health Acts, 1947 to 1996, or the Child Care Act, 1991;

**“Student”**, in relation to a school, means a person enrolled at the school and in relation to a centre for education, means a person registered as a Student in that centre.



	BE READY	BE RESPECTFUL	BE RESPONSIBLE	REACH
IN OUR SCHOOL (Classrooms, corridors, lockers and lunch area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be on time</li> <li>• Be in correct uniform</li> <li>• Be free of piercings and make up</li> <li>• Have all materials in class</li> <li>• Line up respectfully</li> <li>• Sit in assigned seat</li> <li>• Phones off and out of view</li> <li>• Have homework completed and out on display</li> <li>• Have a book in your bag</li> <li>• Only visit lockers and toilets at assigned times</li> <li>• Get ready at first bell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect others and their right to learn</li> <li>• Respect other students' belongings</li> <li>• Follow teacher instructions</li> <li>• Welcome visitors appropriately</li> <li>• One voice</li> <li>• Respect school property</li> <li>• Always walk</li> <li>• Bags up and out of way</li> <li>• Keep to the left</li> <li>• Queue in an orderly fashion</li> <li>• Be polite</li> <li>• Leave it as you found it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swipe in</li> <li>• Provide an absence note</li> <li>• Sign out when leaving</li> <li>• Look out for others and speak up</li> <li>• Make healthy choices</li> <li>• Meet deadlines</li> <li>• Use bins provided</li> <li>• Seek help if having difficulty</li> <li>• Move calmly and promptly</li> <li>• Follow instruction of teachers and leaders</li> <li>• Keep areas tidy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try your best</li> <li>• Get involved in school life</li> <li>• \be a leader</li> <li>• Challenge yourself</li> <li>• Look out for each other</li> <li>• Be creative</li> <li>• Recycle</li> <li>• Be environment ally aware</li> </ul>

	BE READY	BE RESPECTFUL	BE RESPONSIBLE	REACH
<b>OUTSIDE OUR SCHOOL</b> <b>(Pitches, to and from school and school trips)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch the time</li> <li>• Be ready for buses</li> <li>• Be in full and correct uniform</li> <li>• Be mindful of school expectations</li> <li>• Have relevant permission slip completed</li> <li>• Notify teacher of all dietary and medical requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show respect while on and waiting for bus</li> <li>• Look after the school grounds</li> <li>• Show good manners to everyone you meet</li> <li>• Follow all adults instructions</li> <li>• Respect property</li> <li>• Include everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow instruction</li> <li>• Wear seatbelt while on the bus</li> <li>• Be on time for meeting points</li> <li>• Catch up on any school and homework missed</li> <li>• Look after your personal belongings</li> <li>• Manage your own prescribed medicines</li> <li>• Give teacher in charge updated contact info</li> <li>• Make healthy and legal choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display exemplary behaviour</li> <li>• Have increased cultural awareness</li> <li>• Connect real experiences to curriculum</li> <li>• Be good ambassadors for your college</li> </ul>