

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR & LADDER OF REFERRAL 2023-2024



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ST. JOSEPH'S SECONDARY SCHOOL **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND LADDER OF REFERRAL** 2023-2024

Care, Courtesy, Consideration & Co-operation

Scope

This policy applies to all our students during the school day and on all other related school activities.

Mercy Philosophy of Education

Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, an education in the Mercy tradition is committed to holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a process informed and influenced by the teaching and example of Jesus Christ and is conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy. Mercy Education is committed to ongoing whole school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, Staff, Parents/Guardians and the wider community.

Core Values of CEIST (*Catholic Education an Irish Schools Trust*)

The Core Values underpinning the CEIST Charter are:

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

Mission Statement

St. Joseph's Secondary School Castlebar, Co. Mayo is a voluntary Catholic Secondary School for girls under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education an Irish Schools' Trust). We aim to provide a holistic Christian Education in cooperation with staff, students, parents/guardians, Board of Management and the Community. We work to create equality for all in an atmosphere of mutual respect. We strive for excellence in learning and endeavour to help each student to reach her full potential in a positive, caring and happy environment.

Rationale of our Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour (COB) was formulated in accordance with Section 23 of the Education and Welfare Act 2000, which requires our Board of Management to draw up and make available a Code of Behaviour to all its students and their respective parents/guardians.



THE 4 C's PILLARS OF OUR SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Secondary School

01

CARE



02

COURTESY



**THE 4'C's
PILLARS OF
OUR SCHOOL**



CONSIDERATION

03



COMMUNITY

04



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It also recognises the provisions of the EPSEN Act, the Equal Status Act and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act.

Our school is a community of people with shared interests and goals. We aim to promote good behaviour through encouraging our pupils to respect and have regard for their fellow pupils, teachers, support staff, the school environment and the world in which we live.

Similarly, an essential element to the formulation of our school's COB is beneficial consultation and communication between the partners involved including; the students, teachers, management, parents/guardians, the Educational Welfare Officer with responsibility for our school community and the Board of Management (BOM).

Upon enrolment, parents/guardians confirmed that the existing COB was acceptable to them, by signing the attached form. This consent pertains to all revised editions of our COB, any such revisions which will be communicated to stakeholders. Failure to confirm acceptance of COB in writing is deemed by the Board of Management as an acceptance of this policy and the sanctions held within. We look forward to the active support of parents/guardians in implementing our Code of Behaviour.

This Code of Behaviour was devised having regard for all of the above.

Principles Underlying our Code of Behaviour

- *In developing this Code of Behaviour, we endeavour to be inclusive, respect the dignity of all students and to integrate our Mission Statement therein.*
- *The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and behaviour of everybody in the school community and can best be summarised as underpinned by the values of Care, Courtesy, Consideration and Cooperation.*
- *Good behaviour can influence how students learn. Our Code of Behaviour is a positive support to the teaching and learning of our teachers and students.*
- *Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of our Code of Behaviour. Therefore, the school's Code of Behaviour is primarily preventive and secondarily corrective.*

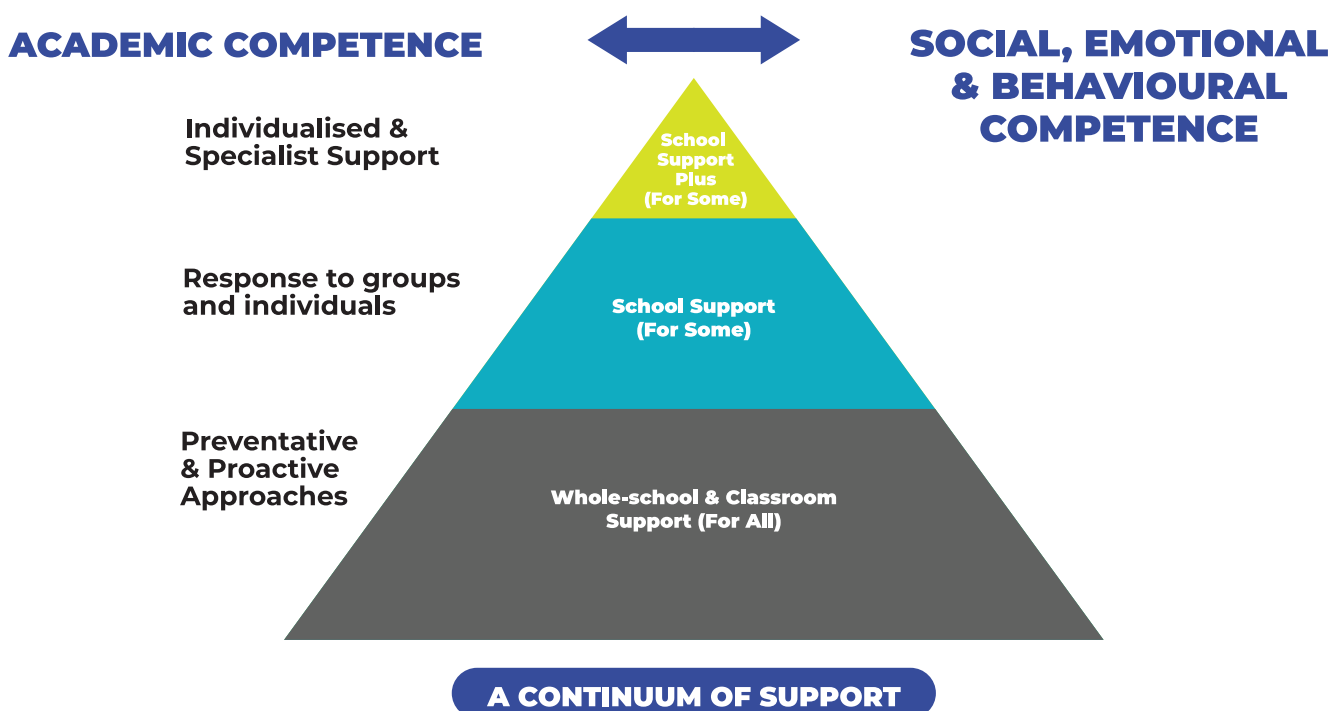
Student's engagement with their work and positive behaviour is affirmed and acknowledged by:

- Verbal praise
- Good work/behaviour noted in the student journal
- End of year award ceremonies acknowledging student performance in various aspects of school life throughout the academic year
- Rewards such as outings, trips etc.

Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour

Our school has formal and informal structures to support all members of our school community. The school endeavours to give students every possible support and assistance in upholding the Code of Behaviour and this is reflected in our extensive Pastoral Care system and Wellbeing programme. Teachers and management also provide additional support to students, parents and teachers in addressing behaviour issues with individuals or class groups.

Our Code of Behaviour is aligned to the **continuum of support model** advocated by NEPS and DES and is an integral part of our whole school approach to positive behaviour.



The levels of support in St. Joseph's Secondary School follow this evidenced based approach. When particular challenges with behaviour arise, the identified need(s) of the student and the related supports/interventions that have been put in place are taken into consideration, thereby, informing the best response for both the student and the school.

At the lowest level of the continuum of support all staff encourage and support positive behaviour in our students, while additional support is provided for some by our Guidance Counsellors, Chaplain and Special Educational Team who liaise with teachers, tutors, year heads, senior management and parents/ guardians. Finally, support for a few entails appropriate referrals to outside agencies in order to attain the best outcome for our student(s).

These relationships are central to the good behaviour and discipline which our Code of Behaviour is designed to promote.



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All Staff Members

Teachers and other school staff support and promote good behaviour at class and school level by using some of the following strategies:

- Explaining, teaching and modelling good behaviour
- Having a consistent approach to promoting good behaviour
- Fostering positive relationships and interactions between staff and students
- Ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is clear and widely understood by the students
- Recognising and giving priority feedback to students about behaviour
- Using interventions-including: individual, small groups and whole school supports led by appropriate and relevant personnel

Additionally, and in support of this:

Each year group has a dedicated **Year Head**.

The school's **Guidance Counsellors and School Chaplain** have a pastoral role with the students both on a one-to-one level and within each class/group/year.

The **Student Support team** composed of Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor and **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)** meet on a weekly basis to augment and support the work of all school personnel.

The **Special Education Needs Coordinator** leads a team of Learning Support teachers to oversee and support students with educational needs as they progress through our learning community.

The school offers a comprehensive suite of programmes as part of the school's **Wellbeing** offering.

The mutually supportive and close relationship between staff and students is represented through student engagement and participation in and on a number of student leadership initiatives not least, Mentors programme, Prefects, Student Council etc.

**The above is not an exhaustive list and serves as a representative example of the range of supports and interventions on offer within our learning community. It is resource and allocation dependent.*



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Expectations of a St. Joseph's Secondary School student

1. Care and Respect

All members of the school community are expected to treat each other and visitors to our school with care and respect.

Students must have courtesy, care, consideration, good manners and be cooperative in their dealings with others.

This means that a St. Joseph's Secondary School student is expected to:

- Treat every individual with respect, care, tolerance and understanding.
- Be kind, courteous and considerate.
- Respect the property of fellow students and teachers.
- Be polite, show respect, co-operation and courtesy to all members of the St. Joseph's Secondary School community.
- View all forms of bullying as extremely inappropriate behaviour (please read our Anti Bullying policy in conjunction with this Code of Behaviour).
- Not condone or be involved in fighting in or out of school.
- Not behave in any manner that seriously damages the reputation of the school and its community.

This is necessary because it is conducive to quality teaching and learning occurring in a healthy, safe and positive environment.

2. Attendance and Punctuality

At all times a St. Joseph's Secondary School student is expected to be **punctual, present and prepared for class.**

This means being:

- Present for mandatory daily assembly at 8.50am.
- Seated in the class and ready to learn from 9.00 am each morning, and again after lunch to the end of the school day.

Please be aware that:

- *If a student has 3 'lates', they automatically receive a lunch-time detention from the Year Head who will send a text/letter home to this effect.*
- *If the issue persists a meeting between parents/guardians and Year Head will occur.*
- *Parents must inform the school (via the school App) if their child is late or unable to attend school, and submit an explanation through the App **before** 8.30am. If the student arrives at school after 9am they must scan in using their OR coded fob.*
- *The school will notify parents of absence from school for morning/afternoon roll-call by App notification after P1 or P7. It is important that parents respond promptly to this notification via the App.*



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- Ongoing failure by parents/guardians to adhere to the above or engage with the school regarding attendance matters may result in the matter being referred to the EWO.
- Parents will receive a text message from the relevant Year Head at 10 day and 15 day absence(s). Please be advised that schools are obliged to report all absences 20 + to the EWO.
- In the event that a student must leave the school for an appointment:
 - A permission to leave note must be submitted through the school App before 8.30am on the date of the appointment.
 - The Year Head will approve the note.
 - A parent/guardian/ nominated adult must present at reception to sign out their child.
 - The student must scan out using their QR coded fob.

The above only applies if the note has been submitted and approved by 8.30am.

This is necessary because poor attendance and punctuality disrupts the teaching and learning environment.

3. Dress Code for Students

A St. Joseph's student is an ambassador for our learning community. The expectation is that a St. Joseph's Secondary School student will present in a clean, full uniform at all times during the school day and on all school related activities unless otherwise instructed by the teacher.

We have chosen our school uniform for the following reasons:

- Uniforms unite a school. Students make a commitment when they put on their St. Joseph's school uniform that they will abide by the rules and adhere to the expectations of a St. Joseph's Secondary School student.
- Uniforms help students look neat and ready to learn. Our school uniform reflects our values and reinforces our culture of high expectations.
- Uniforms make us all equal.

For Junior students:

- School approved **knee length** pinafore with school crest or school approved trousers.
- Blue gingham blouse.
- School approved airforce blue jumper with crest.
- Black tights.
- Black flat shoes only.

For Senior students:

- School approved check **knee length** or school approved trousers.
- White blouse.



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- School approved airforce blue jumper with crest.
- Black tights.
- Black flat shoes only.

During the cold weather a white tee shirt or polo neck jumper may be worn, while during the hot weather black socks are permitted.

In addition to the above the official optional school fleece may be worn. Overcoats/-jackets worn into school must be stored in the student's locked **locker** and are not permitted to be worn during the school day.

In the interests of Health and Safety:

- Students are asked to wear discreet jewellery- stud earrings **only**.
- Any piercing including 'hoops' which could pose a health and safety risk/hazard **are strictly forbidden**. Students will be given an opportunity to remove such piercings but refusal to cooperate will result with further sanction.

Students **who persistently** come to school without their full school uniform will be subject to imposition of a sanction even where a note has been supplied by a parent/guardian.

Other considerations:

- Excessive make-up is not permitted.
- No unnecessary modification or stylistic alteration **including length** to the school uniform is permitted.
- PE gear only worn in PE class
- **Leggings/Jeggings/Track-suit or sportswear are not appropriate for school. Only the approved school tracksuit pants are acceptable.**
- If there are any SEN or other **certified** medical considerations with regard to uniform, a meeting will take place with parents/guardians and the appropriate interventions will be investigated.

This is necessary because preparedness for class assists in a quality learning and teaching experience for both student and teacher.

4. School Environment

Everyone in St. Joseph's Secondary School is responsible for the care of our premises and stewardship of our environment.

This means that a St. Joseph's Secondary School student is expected to:

- Respect the school environment, keep it clean and free from graffiti and chewing gum.
- Place litter in the appropriate and relevant bins



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- Desist from using aerosols.
- Respect school property including lockers.

Students are expected to inform school management and/or the caretaking staff of any damage caused to school property. Any student who is responsible for damage, accidental or otherwise, to school property will be charged the cost of repair or replacement, as appropriate.

This is necessary to ensure a clean, healthy and safe environment which promotes the core conditions for quality learning and teaching to flourish and occur.

5. Classroom Practice, Organisation and Homework

St. Joseph's Secondary School students are expected to observe the required classroom procedure and to be prepared for each class.

This means:

- Arriving on time for each and every class with **all** necessary materials, e.g. journal, textbooks, pens, pencils, copies, calculator as listed on yearly booklists.
- Placing classwork/ homework and journal, Yondr pouch on the desk, ready for the start of each class.
- Refraining from eating in class unless given specific permission to do so.
- Picking up any paper/rubbish on/under your desk and putting rubbish in the appropriate bin as you leave the room.
- Visiting the locker area at appropriate times only (before first bell, during break and lunch-times and after school, and before and after PE/sport unless instructed by the teacher.
- Showing responsibility for their school bags during the school day. **Gear-bags are to be stored on the racks.**
- Recording all homework in the journal.
- Completing all work to the best of one's ability and presenting homework to the teacher upon request.
- Having personal responsibility to find out and complete homework assigned if absent due to extra/co-curricular participation.
- Presenting homework in a neat, tidy and legible fashion.
- Seeking clarification from the teacher on any aspect of their classwork/ homework of which they are unsure.
- Paying attention to feedback and corrections from teachers.
- Participating fully in class work and striving to achieve your full potential.



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This is necessary because good classroom practice and organisation are essential for effective teaching and learning to flourish and occur.

6. Student Journal

A St. Joseph's student is expected to have in their possession their school journal during class.

This means:

1. The journal **must be brought to school every day and placed on every student's desk** at the beginning of each lesson/study period.
2. All Junior students must get their journal signed **weekly** by their parent/guardian.
3. The journal must be kept neat and tidy and free from graffiti.
4. In the event of the journal being lost, mislaid, damaged or containing graffiti, students must report this fact to their relevant Year Head. The purchase of a replacement journal may be required.
5. Journals may be subject to periodic inspections by staff members.
6. Failure to produce a journal and unsigned journals may lead to a sanction being imposed.

This is necessary because the school journal is the primary method of communication between school and home.

7. Extra and Co-Curricular Participation

St. Joseph's Secondary School students are encouraged to participate in extra and co-curricular activities. Extra and co-curricular activities promote the personal development of students, improves interpersonal relationships, enriches and enhances school life and fosters school spirit. This means:

- Wearing full school uniform, PE Uniform or school kit as instructed or where appropriate.
- Taking personal responsibility to find out and catch up on all work missed resulting from extra/co-curricular participation.

This is necessary because a student representing St. Joseph's in any extra or co-curricular activity is an ambassador for St. Joseph's. Therefore, if a student engages in behaviour contrary to this Code of Behaviour they may not be allowed to participate in, or attend extra and/or co-curricular activities for an indefinite period until substantial improvement has been recorded.





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8. Mobile Phones, Smart Watches and Yondr

St. Joseph's Secondary School students are entitled to learn in an environment free from outside distraction. In an effort to assist quality learning and teaching to occur we have certain rules in relation to the use of mobile phones and personal devices (including smart watches).

This means:

- Phones are not to be used during the school day and on school related activities.

Exceptions to the above:

- The expressed permission of the classroom teacher who may choose to use a mobile phone for educational and/or instructional purposes.
- On medical grounds where the device is essential to manage a medical condition and only with prior permission of the relevant Year Head.
- In the event that a student does not have parental permission to bring their phone to school the parent must inform the Year Head in writing of this fact.
- **Senior students who leave the school campus for the duration of lunchtime.**

Each student is assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. It is the responsibility of each student to bring their Pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

Upon arrival at school, students are required to:




1. Turn off or silence their phone/smartwatch.
2. Place and secure their phone/smartwatch inside their Pouch.
3. Store their Pouch in their bag until attendance at mandatory daily assembly.
4. Place their personal Pouch and their school journal on their desk during all class periods.
5. Store their pouched phones/smartwatches in secured/locked lockers during PE and lunch-time. The school accepts no responsibility for devices left unattended in bags or unlocked lockers.

Students who remove their phone/smartwatch from their Pouch without permission during the day will have their phone confiscated. Their parent/guardian will be contacted by text to inform them that the student's phone has been confiscated.

- The phone can be collected at the end of the school day by a parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian is not available to collect the phone, it will be kept overnight and returned to the parent/guardian on the next working day.
- The student will receive lunchtime detention.
- Repeated breaking of this rule will be viewed as a serious breach of the school policy and will lead to further, and more serious sanctions.



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 Leaving School (before the end of the school day)	If necessary to leave school before the end of the school day students should 'unpouch' their phones at the admin office.
 Damaged or Lost Pouch	Any loss or damage of the Pouch, which renders it unusable, will result in the student purchasing a new one at a cost of €15.
 Forgotten Pouch	In the event that a student forgets their pouch, they need to speak with their Year Head at daily assembly. If a spare pouch is available it will be provided for use on that day only. Alternatively, the phone will be stored in the office until the end of the school day. In the event that a student consistently forgets their Pouch, it is considered lost. Refer to the Lost Pouch policy above.

This is necessary because every student has the right to disconnect and learn in an environment that is free from technological distractions.

9. Social Media, Internet Use, Other Communication Mediums

All St. Joseph's Secondary School students are entitled to learn in an environment free from outside distraction and to assist quality learning and teaching to flourish.

This means the following rules apply in relation to the use of social media, internet use and other communication mediums:

- Students are forbidden from taking photos/videos/sound recordings of any other students, staff, or visitors without prior informed consent.¹
- A student cannot post, share, comment, reprint or republish photos, videos.

¹*The only exception to the above is for educational purposes with the permission and oversight of a teacher and with the prior informed consent of the individual(s) concerned.



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- text, emails, and/or sound recordings of anyone in the school, or any aspect of school life on-line or on social media. ²
- Students are forbidden from making abusive or threatening calls or sending abusive or threatening voice messages/voice notes to any member of the school community at any time. ³

Any student found to be in breach of the above will be subject to a sanction in line with our Code of Behaviour.

Please note: Parents are asked to support the school in maintaining boundaries with regard to mobile phone usage while their children are in the care of our school community. Therefore, we respectfully request that in the event of an emergency parents make contact with their child during the school day through the school office 094 9021406.

This is necessary because every student has the right to disconnect and learn in a happy, safe and healthy environment that is free from technological distractions.

10. Substance Abuse

The following rules apply with regard to substance abuse:

- The possession, consumption, sale and purchase, supply/ distribution of alcohol and tobacco (including vaping and e-cigarettes), non-prescribed drugs or controlled substances, aerosols or other, is strictly forbidden while on the school grounds or on school related activities.
- Students must never attend school under the influence of alcohol or other illegal substances.

Any student found to be in breach of the above will be subject to a sanction in line with our Code of Behaviour up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

This is necessary so as to preserve the health, safety and Wellbeing of all our students.

²*The only exception to the above is for educational purposes with the permission and oversight of a teacher and with the prior informed consent of the individual(s) concerned.

³ **Links to Anti-Bullying policy-** Any student using their phone to bully or intimidate others will be subject to further sanctions in keeping with our Code of Behaviour and Ladder of Referral. Additionally, if a phone has been used in a bullying incident or any incident that has been referred on to Tusla and/or Gardaí, the phone may be passed to the external agency as part of an on-going investigation.



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11. Car and Personal Vehicle Use

Students wishing to park on school grounds/property must be in receipt of and display a Board of Management issued permit. Permits will only be issued to holders of a full Irish/EU licence.

Students and their parents/guardians may apply by completing the relevant application form which is available upon written request from the admin office (info@stjosephscastlebar.com).

In the interest of Health and Safety cars must remain parked for the duration of the school day. Please be advised that a parent/guardian must **still** present to school reception to 'sign out' any student needing to leave the school early. There will be **no** exception to this rule.





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Notes- Inappropriate Behaviour

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Principal, under its direction, administers the Code of Behaviour in a fair and equitable manner.

It is the responsibility of the school authorities to maintain a classroom and overall school environment which is supportive of teaching and learning.

The Deputy Principal under the direction of the Principal, administers the Code of Behaviour in the school on a day-to-day basis, liaising with, and supporting the Year Heads, keeping records as appropriate and reporting to/consulting with the Principal.

Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are repeated and persistent. Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of other students appropriate interventions and sanctions may be applied and will be determined using professional judgement.

Interventions and Sanctions are necessary to:

- Help students to accept responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Assist students in realising when their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Encourage students to recognise the effects of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Help students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand about choices and chosen behaviour, and that all chosen behaviour has consequences.
- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- Keep the student, or other students or adults safe.

As a normal course of events, minor breaches of rules within St. Joseph's Secondary School are dealt with at the lowest level.

Behaviour which repeatedly falls short of required expectations of a St. Joseph's Secondary School student will merit, at a minimum a Stage 1 referral on our Disciplinary Pathways/Ladder of Referral* by the classroom teacher, with appropriate intervention/sanction.



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Explanatory Notes Disciplinary Pathway/Ladder of Referral

The Power of C-Care, Consideration, Co-operation Courtesy and Community.

Stage 1 Staff Member

The Classroom teacher will deal with the implementation of the Code of Behaviour at Stage 1.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified through use of the journal.

The Classroom teacher will make a note of any sanction/intervention at this point.

It is imperative that the teacher maintains a record of any communication at Stage 1.

Stage 2 Staff Member

The Classroom teacher is responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour at Stage 2. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may/will be notified via phone call/Email from the Classroom Teacher.

Stage 3- Stage 4 Year Head

All of our Year Heads in St. Joseph's Secondary School work closely with the class teachers. If remedial steps taken at Stage 1 and Stage 2 to improve behaviour are unsuccessful the Year Head will intervene. Equally, a student's behaviour may merit immediate recourse to Stage 3 or Stage 4 at the professional discretion of the Year Head. Behaviour, intervention and sanction will continue to be monitored and recorded by the Year Head.

The Year Head determines the Stage to be applied may have to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or if necessary liaise with the Deputy Principal/Principal on the matter of the student's behaviour.

Stage 5- Year Head and/or Deputy Principal

In general, the Deputy Principal will deal with the implementation of the Code of Behaviour at Stages 5 and/or at Stages 2, 3 and 4 in the absence of the Year Head. When it is found necessary to impose serious sanctions the Year Head will discuss the matter with the Deputy Principal and/ or Principal.

⁴ In the event that a member of non-teaching staff, PME, teacher engaged on a casual substitute basis or other wishes to record an incident of indiscipline the student support referral sheet should be completed and submitted to the relevant Year Head who initiates contact with home.

⁵ *Multiple stages may be applied depending on behaviour. Similarly, a student may find themselves directly at Stage 7 if their continued presence in the school presents a real and genuine health and safety risk to students and staff or a severe disruptive influence upon the teaching and learning process.



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Stage 6-Stage 7 Principal

The Principal is the ultimate authority within the school and is involved in all cases of indiscipline that might involve serious sanctions but particularly at Stages 6 and 7.

**Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour may be reported to the Deputy Principal/Principal and dealt with directly.*

Detention (Stages 3 and Stage 4)

Lunchtime detention takes place from 1.30pm-1.50pm. A day's notice will normally be given to a student being put on detention and parents will be notified by text/letter with further detail outlined on the detention slip in the journal.

A more serious sanction of a morning detention from 8.15am -8.45am may be imposed by the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by text.

A student may be asked to complete a Reflection Sheet during detention.

If a student is unavoidably absent on the day of detention due to illness/appointment they must attend for the next scheduled detention.

Students who fail to present for detention may move to the next stage of the Ladder of Referral/ COB.

Behaviour Review Committee (Stage 5)

Arising at Stage 5 the Behaviour Review Committee (BRC) constitutes the Year Head, DP and a classroom teacher who serves as an advocate for the student.

The BRC is a valuable opportunity for the student to fully understand the rule(s) they have broken, the effects of their behaviour on themselves; their peers, and other members of the school community.

Significant adults present at the BRC stage endeavour to guide the student on how they can react differently and more positively in future situations.

The BRC may:

- Require the student and/or the student's parents to attend a meeting of the committee.
- Recommend internal pastoral support/intervention for the student.
- Recommend support/ intervention for the student from outside agencies.
- Recommend a period of suspension to the Principal.
- Discuss and explore alternative options and placements for the student such as Youth Reach etc.
- Recommend a referral through Tusla or seek the support and assistance of the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Impose any other sanction/intervention including detention/on-report/ counselling which they deem appropriate.



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***The overall aim of the BRC is to provide students with the opportunity to make amends for their actions.**

Disciplinary Sub-Committee Board of Management (Stages 6)

The Disciplinary Subcommittee of the Board of Management is convened at Stage 6 and includes the Principal to meet with students and parent(s)/guardian(s).⁶

The purpose of the Disciplinary Sub-Committee is to make both the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) aware that all interventions and/or sanctions in line with our staged Code of Behaviour, thus far have proven unsuccessful.

The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed that any subsequent breach of the Code of Behaviour will result in the student's file being brought before the BOM for the purpose of consideration of permanent expulsion/exclusion.



⁶Please note: Participation by a BOM member at a hearing of the Disciplinary Subcommittee is shared/rotated. In the event that a student's file/case arrives before the Board of Management for the consideration of permanent expulsion/exclusion from the school community, any BOM member who sat on a Disciplinary Subcommittee hearing shall recuse themselves from any such hearing or deliberations concerning the student.










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As a normal course of events, minor breaches of rules within St. Joseph's Secondary School are dealt with at the lowest level by the classroom teacher, with an appropriate sanction/intervention. Behaviour which repeatedly falls short of required expectations of a St. Joseph's Secondary School student will merit, at a minimum a Stage 1 referral on our Disciplinary Pathways/Ladder of Referral*. Aside from Stage 1 and Stage 2 interventions/sanctions as appropriate the Year Head will determine the relevant Stage applicable and/or onward referral to the Student Support Team or other.

		Sanction/Intervention
STAGE 1	 Any Staff Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded on a Student Support Referral Sheet and submitted to relevant Year Head Parents/guardians informed by note in journal by the relevant classroom teacher* Sanction/intervention in line with normal good classroom management and practice by classroom teacher/staff member. Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head
STAGE 2	 Any Staff Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded on a Student Support Referral Sheet and submitted to relevant Year Head Parents/guardians informed by phone call by the relevant classroom teacher.* Sanction/intervention in line with normal good classroom management and practice. Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head.
STAGE 3	 Year Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded on Student Support Referral Sheet by classroom teacher and submitted to the relevant Year Head Parents/guardians informed by text/letter from the Year Head Lunchtime detention and/or other appropriate sanction. Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head.
STAGE 4	 Year Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded on Student Support Referral Sheet by classroom teacher and submitted to the relevant Year Head. Parents/guardians informed by text/letter from the Year Head Morning detention and/or other appropriate sanction. Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head
STAGE 5	 Year Head And/ Or Deputy Principa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded on Student Support Referral Sheet by classroom teacher and submitted to the relevant Year Head. Meeting sought between Year Head and where required, Deputy Principal, student and parents/guardians. Appropriate sanction/intervention applied. This may include recourse to a Behaviour Review Committee, input from the relevant support agencies including EWO, and/or the recommendation of a suspension. Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head
STAGE 6	 Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded on Student Support Referral Sheet by classroom teacher and submitted to the relevant Year Head. Disciplinary subcommittee of the Board of Management to include the Principal meets with parents/guardians and students. Appropriate sanction/intervention applied. This may include input from the relevant support agencies including EWO, and/or the recommendation of a suspension. Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head.
STAGE 7	 Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case file brought to the Board of Management with recommendation for expulsion by the Principal.



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Suspension policy

The Board of Management has delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend a student for up to five days. The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board, with reasons for and duration of each suspension. Suspension will only be warranted by very serious misbehaviour and fair procedures will be applied. Reasonable opportunity will be given to students and parents/guardians to discuss any situation warranting suspension. The principles of natural justice will apply, i.e. the right to be heard and the right of impartial decision-making. The Board will review the use of suspension in the school on an annual basis. The Principal, or a staff member designated by the Principal, will emphasise to the student and parents their responsibility for the student's good behaviour, upon return to school and will offer support and guidance.

Suspension procedures:

1. A breach of the Code of Behaviour has taken place and been reported to the Principal (or in the absence of the Principal the Deputy Principal).
2. The Principal may delegate investigation and documentation of the breach to the Year Head and or Deputy Principal. Students reaching Stages 5 and 6 may receive an automatic suspension.
3. The student and their parents/guardians are informed of the precise grounds which have given rise to the possible suspension, and the student is given the right to reply.
4. The Principal is satisfied that grounds for suspension exist.
5. The Principal suspends the student.
6. If the suspension is immediate (in the interests of Health and Safety) the parents/guardians are informed by phone and invited into the school immediately. A written notification will follow.
7. A letter is sent to the parent/guardian containing:
 - Notice of the suspension.
 - Starting date of suspension.
 - Length of suspension.
 - Reasons for suspension.
 - Expectations of the student by the school while suspended.
 - Importance of parental assistance in dealing with the breach of the Code of Behaviour.
 - A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of parents while on suspension.
 - A statement that the Educational Welfare Officer has been informed (If suspension is 6 days or longer, or if the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year).
 - Information on appeal rights.
 - Requirements, which have to be in place when a student returns to school (written apologies, extra work etc.).
 - The possible consideration of proceeding to expulsion must be made clear in the letter.
 - Any study programme to be followed.



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1. The student is to be supervised until suspension takes effect.
2. The student will not be sent home during the school day, unless suitable arrangements can be made for the student to be collected by parent/guardian.
3. The student will be informed of the procedures for their formal reintroduction into the school.
4. Parents will be requested to attend with the student on the day of their return to the school.
5. Students may be required to sign a Contract of Behaviour.
6. Parents and students may be required to sign agreed conditions on their return.
7. Upon their return, the relevant Year Head, or a teacher designated by him/her, will attempt to provide support to the student during the reintegration process. A meeting between the students and a member of the Student Support Team will be arranged.
8. Written records will be kept.

Grounds for removal of a suspension may include the following:

- Successful appeal to the Board of Management.
- Student and parent/guardian have met the specific conditions as laid down by the Principal/Board of Management during the initial suspension meeting.
- Successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- New circumstances or other grounds considered relevant come to light.

Appeals

- A suspension can initially be appealed to the suspending body, Principal/Board of Management, by means of a formal letter.
- The Chairperson of the Board may set up a sub-committee of three members to hear any formal appeal. This committee has the right to deal with any disciplinary matter up to but not including permanent exclusion.
- At all times the Board shall adhere to the principles of natural justice.
- Subsequent to this, appeals may be made to the Department of Education under Section 29 of the 1998 Education Act.
- The school may insist that the student remain at home while any appeal on a suspension is in progress.
- All appeals will be heard as soon as is practically possible.
- If an appeal has been successful and the suspension has already been served, it is possible that the only remedy available is to have the suspension removed from the student's file or record.



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Expulsion policy

A student is expelled from the school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude them from the school, having complied with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

The school will have taken significant steps, which will be recorded and monitored, to address the misbehaviour and avoid expulsion, including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with the student and parent/guardian to try to address/ change behaviour.
- Explaining to the student the possible consequences of behaviour.
- Ensuring other options have been tried.
- Seeking the support of outside agencies, if appropriate, e.g. National Educational Psychological Services, National Behaviour Support Service, Tusla, Educational Welfare Officer, Youth Advocacy Officer etc.

Expulsion will only be considered in the most extreme cases of indiscipline and when other appropriate sanctions and interventions have failed.

Similarly, expulsion is considered when the behaviour of the student clearly puts the health and safety of others at risk, or where the behaviour is so disruptive as to interfere substantially with the constitutional right of the other students to education.

Furthermore, expulsion is considered when the student's behaviour causes serious damage to property.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. This measure is allowed by the NEWB's Guidelines for Schools, Developing a Code of Behaviour Section 12.2.

These could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Consuming drugs and/or alcohol or other illegal substances
- Supplying illegal drugs and/or alcohol or other illegal substances to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.



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While consideration is being given to the question of expulsion, the parents/guardians will be informed of this by registered letter and of their right to present the student's side of the case, under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

The decision to expel a student rests with the Board of Management.

Expulsion Procedures

The school will follow fair procedures when proposing to expel a student. When there has been serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedures will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of this recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer as prescribed under Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

When a decision to expel is made by the Board of Management, a Letter of Notification will be sent to the parents/guardians. The letter will include:

- Notice of expulsion.
- The date that the expulsion becomes effective.
- The reasons for the expulsion.
- A statement that the Education Welfare Officer has been informed.
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians for a period of 20 days required by the Education Welfare Officer to examine alternative provisions for the education of the student.
- Information and documentation on Appeals rights-a parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. TUSLA'S EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (TESS) may also bring an appeal, on behalf of a student.



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Background information

Our Code of Behaviour, including Ladder of Referral/Disciplinary Pathway, Suspension and Expulsion policy has been drawn up with the assistance and input of the following stakeholders: students, teachers, parents/guardians, middle leadership and management team and senior leadership and management team, the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and the Board of Management. The NEWB Guidelines for developing a Code have provided invaluable assistance. Members of various sub-committees gave generously of time and expertise in drafting this document.

The Students' Council has played a valuable role, particularly in relation to the rules for behaviour in the classroom, which are in the form of a contract between the student body and the school.

This Code of Behaviour, including Ladder of Referral/Disciplinary Pathway, Suspension and Expulsion policy is subject to ongoing review and shall be discussed, during the second school term each year by a committee of at least three people from the senior management team. The code will also be presented, annually, for discussion at a Students' Council meeting and at a Parents' Council meeting. A more comprehensive review should take place at least every three years and the Code should again be presented to the Board of Management for ratification.





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Appendix 1: LADDER OF REFERRAL- Actions/Supports/Sanctions

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this policy. Rewards have the ability to change behaviour.
Supports/Rewards:

- Signal/sign e.g. thumbs up
- Smile/nod of approval
- Verbal praise - private and public
- Specify why giving a compliment - "Good, you have waited your turn to speak"
- Year Head reward
- Sitting with friends during class
- Positive comments on written work
- Written praise by Class Teacher/- Year Head/Parent
- Record in homework journal
- Display of students work throughout the school
- Award at end of School Term/Year
- Public recognition at school assemblies and/or school website/social media.
- Referral of praise to Deputy Principal/Principal
- Participation in extra-curricular and social occasions
- Trips, days out
- Nomination for award on Annual Awards/Celebration Day

SANCTIONS

Where sanctions need to be imposed, good practice seeks to ensure that:

- **They are a part of a plan to change behaviour**
- **They are used consistently**
- **Students and parents/guardians know what sanctions are used in the school**
- **Sanctions are proportionate**
- **Sanctions are appropriate**
- **Sanctions are imposed in a timely fashion**








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STAGE	EXAMPLE OF COB BREACH	ACTION BY	POSSIBLE SANCTION
1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unprepared for class (no books or materials) No Journal No Homework including project work Interrupting teaching and learning Late for class Chewing Gum Incorrect Uniform Uncooperative in class <p>Reports of Bullying may also be investigated in line with our Anti Bullying policy</p>	<p>Class Teacher</p>  <p>Recorded by teacher for own records and Year Head informed using Student Support Referral Sheet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoning Verbal Warning Assigning a designated seat within the classroom. Confiscation of mobile phone/smartwatch/device Loss of privileges Note in Student Journal Phone Call to parent(s)/guardian(s) (at Stage 2) Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head <p><i>*The above serves as an illustrative example of typical breaches of the COB and is not an exhaustive list</i></p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated breaches of COB at Stages 1 and Stage 2 Immediate referral to Stage 3- Phone not pouches Immediate referral to Stage 3- Not following correct 'sign in' 'sign out' procedure <p>Reports of Bullying may also be investigated in line with our Anti Bullying policy</p>	<p>Year Head</p>  <p>Recorded on a Student Support Referral Form by teacher and forwarded to relevant Year Head</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunchtime detention Report Card Punctuality, Attendance and Journal Card Text/Letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) Confiscation of mobile phone/smartwatch/device Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head <p><i>*The above serves as an illustrative example of typical breaches of the COB and is not an exhaustive list</i></p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not presenting for class/absenting oneself from class without permission (Mitching) Leaving school grounds without permission (Mitching) Truancy Unauthorised parking on school grounds without a permit or use of a vehicle <p>Reports of Bullying may be investigated in line with our Anti Bullying policy</p>	<p>Year Head</p>  <p>Recorded on a Student Support Referral Form by teacher and forwarded to relevant Year Head</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morning detention Report Card Punctuality, Attendance and Journal Card Phone Call to parent(s)/guardian(s) Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head <p><i>*The above serves as an illustrative example of typical breaches of the COB and is not an exhaustive list</i></p>



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STAGE	EXAMPLE OF COB BREACH	ACTION BY	POSSIBLE SANCTION
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate referral to Stage 5 • Vaping / Smoking • Vandalism • Theft • Forgery/ Chatgpt • Cheating in exam • Plagiarism • Fighting /Incitement to fight/ Intimidation • Inappropriate use of the internet • Taking photos/videos/sound recordings of any other students, staff, or visitors without prior consent. • Posting, sharing, commenting, reprinting or republishing photos, videos, text, emails, and/or sound recordings of anyone in the school, or any aspect of school life on-line or on social media. • Making abusive or threatening calls or sending abusive or threatening voice messages/voice notes to any member of the school community. <p>Reports of Bullying may be investigated in line with our Anti Bullying policy. Generally, 3rd Reported Incident of Bullying is an immediate suspension</p>	<p>Year Head and/or DP</p>  <p>Recorded on a Student Support Referral Form by teacher and forwarded to relevant Year Head</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Card. • Phone Call to parent(s)/ guardian(s) • Meeting with parent(s)/ guardian(s) • Behaviour Review Committee • Suspension • Input from the relevant support agencies e.g. EWO, CAMHS, NEPS, Tusla, Gardaí or other. • Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head <p><i>*The above serves as an illustrative example of typical breaches of the COB and is not an exhaustive list</i></p>
	<p>Recurrence of breaches of the Code of Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate referral to Stage 6 • Consumption of Alcohol/Drugs/Other illegal substances • Possession, sale and purchase, supply/ distribution of alcohol and tobacco (including vaping and e-cigarettes), non-prescribed drugs or controlled substances • Extreme behaviour that threatens the Health & Safety of any member of the school community. • Ongoing disruptive influence upon teaching and learning process 	<p>Principal and DP</p>  <p>Recorded on a Student Support Referral Form by teacher and forwarded to relevant Year Head</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Parent/Guardian • Disciplinary Sub-Committee Board of Management to include Principal meets with parents/guardians and students. • Appropriate sanction/ intervention applied. This may include input from the relevant support agencies including gardaí, EWO, CAMHS, NEPS, Tusla, Gardaí, or other • Possible recommendation of Suspension. • Termly review and oversight of behaviour by Year Head
7		<p>Principal</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case file brought to the BOM with recommendation for expulsion



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Principal Signature

[Handwritten Signature]

Chairperson of the Board of Management

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ST. JOSEPH'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

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