

Ardcoil Rís Code of Behaviour



Mission Statement

Ardcoil Rís aims to provide a holistic education, which is driven by a Catholic ethos. We strive to create a safe environment, which fosters inclusion, honesty, dignity and respect. The School community encourages the individual in their pursuit of excellence. We aim to promote among our students a sense of pride in their school.

Rationale

Ardcoil Rís is an Edmund Rice School which strives to promote the highest standards of respect, courtesy and behaviour in order to create a positive learning environment where students can learn to the best of their ability. Our Code of Behaviour is designed in line with our mission statement in that we strive to create a caring and safe environment where we encourage the individual student in their pursuit of excellence. We aim to promote a positive atmosphere in our school where a sense of pride and nobility, - ***Dilseacht agus Uaisleacht*** - our school motto, is developed. We aim to promote positive relationships where all members of our school community have the opportunity to grow and develop in an atmosphere of respect and dignity.

Our code of behaviour is one that is based on the recognition of the student as an individual and yet creates an environment in which the welfare of all is protected. We also aim to ensure that students are given an opportunity to learn from behaviour which does not meet expectations and also to repair any relationship which may have been damaged by unsatisfactory behaviour.

Students in Ardcoil Rís have a tradition of high standards of behaviour, manners and courtesy which have contributed enormously to a positive community spirit in our school. This code is designed to remind students, teachers and parents alike of these high standards and to assist all members of the school community in maintaining these standards.

Throughout the code of behaviour, the word 'Parent' is used to refer to parents, guardians, carers and any other personnel who have full legal authority to act on behalf of the student attending Ardcoil Rís.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Ardcoil Rís Code of Behaviour has its basis in Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. The Code of Behaviour draws its criteria from the school's characteristic spirit, our Mission Statement, the Edmund Rice Charter and different legislative Acts passed by the Oireachtas. The Code of Behaviour was drawn up in line with NEWB Guidelines following consultation between students, parents and teachers.

Scope

The Code of Behaviour is applicable to all students during the hours of school, including lunchtimes and break times, during school activities and when the student wears the school uniform. The Code of Behaviour can also be applied to activities or behaviours which may not occur within school hours or during school activities but which nonetheless impact on members of the school community or bring the school's name and reputation into disrepute. In some cases, however, inappropriate behaviour committed by a student in his own time may be beyond the scope of the school's code of behaviour in terms of sanction or intervention. The school will however listen to the concerns of parents and students and provide support where possible subject to limitations. The Code of Behaviour also applies to online or remote learning scenarios. Students are expected to follow the same standards and expectations of behaviour online, on social media and through any other forms of communication as they would in person.

The Code of Behaviour is communicated through the:

1. School website
2. School App
3. Student Journal
4. Various aspects of the curriculum

The aims of our Code of Behaviour are to:

- Assist in maintaining a positive, caring and safe environment conducive to effective teaching and learning
- To provide clear guidance to all members of the school community on the standards and expectations relating to our behaviour in school.
- To promote positive attitudes and behaviours.
- To provide opportunities for learning.
- To promote respectful interactions between all members of the school community.
- To reinforce positive behaviour.
- To assist in building cooperative relationships between all members of the school community.

We acknowledge that every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Having consulted with our school community, the roles of each partner in our school are agreed as follows;

Board of Management's Responsibilities

- To provide a comfortable, safe environment conducive to effective teaching and learning.
- To ratify and review the code of behaviour.
- To deal with cases which are brought to the Board in a fair and consistent manner.
- To support the school staff and management in its implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Principal's Responsibilities

- To promote a positive climate in the school.

- To ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- To arrange for a review of the Code, as required.
- To arrange for the effective communication of the Code of Behaviour to the school community.
- To inform the Board of procedural issues in relation to the code.
- To implement the school's policy on Suspensions and Expulsions.
- To support, advise and guide teachers on the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Deputy Principal's Responsibilities:

- To promote the positive implementation of the code.
- In the absence of Principal assume Principal's responsibilities in implementing the code.
- To support and guide staff in the implementation of the code.
- To collaborate with the Principal and staff in reviewing and amending the Code, where required.
- To assist Year Heads in the implementation of the code.

Teachers' Responsibilities

- To recognise and affirm good work and good behaviour among students.
- To communicate instances of improvement and noteworthy behaviour to students and parent(s)/guardian(s), where appropriate.
- To deal appropriately with misbehaviour, through classroom management strategies.
- To record instances of misbehaviour.
- To communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
- To apply and implement the Code of Behaviour consistently and fairly.
- To ensure that notes home are followed up and acknowledged.

Students' Responsibilities

- To attend school regularly and punctually.
- To listen to teachers and to follow directions and advice.
- To show respect for all members of the school community.
- To respect school property and the property of other students.
- To not engage in behaviour that could in any way endanger others.
- To not engage in behaviours such as swearing, bullying, name calling or any language, gestures or actions that are deemed to be inappropriate and hurtful to others.
- To bring correct materials, books etc. to school.
- To follow school and class rules.
- To participate in class to the best of their ability.
- To not engage in behaviours which disrupt teaching and learning.
- To represent the school in a positive light at all times when on school activities.
- To not engage in any behaviour which could damage the reputation of the school.

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

- To encourage students to have a sense of respect for themselves and for others.

- To ensure that students attend school regularly and punctually.
- To support and encourage their son's school work and homework.
- To be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
- To cooperate with teachers in instances where their son's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- To communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their son's progress/behaviour.
- To check students' journals regularly.
- Confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by their son.
- To support the school in its implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

SECTION 2: STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured, caring environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to.

The school's standards of behaviour express the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for teaching and learning.

In Ardscoil Rís, we place a strong emphasis on recognising and commending appropriate behaviours and on supporting students to take responsibility in addressing patterns of negative and disruptive behaviour.

The following are the standards of behaviour that the school expects from students in relation to their own learning and to that of their peers:

- Respecting everyone in our school community
- Attending school regularly
- Arriving to school and class, in full uniform, prepared and on time
- Always doing your best to achieve your potential
- Taking responsibility for your learning and behaviour
- Helping to maintain and support a safe, positive and eco-friendly learning and teaching environment
- Supporting our Edmund Rice school ethos and participating fully in school activities
- Representing your school in a positive manner at all times.
- Being the best version of oneself

These standards also signal the kinds of behaviours that are not acceptable in the school:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination)
- Behaviour that interferes with learning and teaching
- Threats or physical hurt to another person
- Damage to property, vandalism and theft
- Offensive or Intimidating language
- Fighting and/or physical aggression

The school's Standards of Behaviour express the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for learning and teaching. The School Rules translate these standards into practical guidance about the behaviour expected of students. They provide clear boundaries. They describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible individuals.

SCHOOL RULES

1. All members of the school community should strive to work together in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.
2. Students should cooperate promptly and courteously with all school staff, following instructions as soon as they are given.
3. Students should strive to achieve their full potential.
4. Students should attend school each day the school is open.
5. The school uniform should be worn in full all day and must be worn in a neat and tidy fashion. Students must wear black or brown shoes. Shoes must be conventional school shoes. Students are also required to wear full school uniform during State exams and House exams. The normal school rules are in operation during the State and House exams.
6. Students should be punctual for class. Students should be present in class at 8.30am in the morning and 1.30pm in the afternoon. Students who are not on time for the first class in the morning or afternoon must 'sign in' at the school office.
7. Students must remain on the school premises from 8.30am to 3.30pm from Monday to Thursday and from 8.30am until 12.45 pm on Fridays unless they are:
 - a. taking part in an organised school activity
 - b. Leaving the school premises for lunch 12.45pm (but must be back in the school at 1.25pm)
 - c. Have parental permission to leave school (which must be communicated to the school by parents/guardians through the School App).
8. Students should have the appropriate textbooks, notebooks, writing materials and subject specific equipment with them for each class.
9. At all times, students must have their school journal with them. It is each student's responsibility to look after his own journal, to see that it is used appropriately and that it is not defaced.
10. Students must show respect for the rights of others at all times. This rule particularly prohibits:
 - a. Bullying of any kind.
 - b. The possession or use of aerosol sprays (including for PE class), tippex or similar products.
 - c. Theft, damage and/or interference with the property of the school, staff members, school visitors or other students.
 - d. Disruptive behaviour which prevents a teacher teaching and/or students learning.
 - e. Any action that puts others at risk of injury.
11. Smoking and/or vaping is prohibited on the school premises, in the vicinity of the school and on school activities.
12. No student may possess, distribute, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs during school hours or any activity organised by the school. Students who are found to be in breach of this rule are liable to be referred to the Board of Management where the student's exclusion from the school will be considered.
13. Earrings, nose studs, eyebrow rings/bars, tongue piercing jewellery or other items of facial piercing must not be worn in school.

14. Hair must be a natural colour. Hairstyles must be appropriate for school. No extreme hairstyles will be allowed. Long hair must be tied up and facial hair must be groomed neatly.
15. Students must never behave in a manner that would damage the reputation of our school.
16. Students are not permitted to park cars, motorbikes or other motor vehicles on the school premises. This includes electric scooters and electric bikes, as for insurance purposes they are classes as a mechanically propelled vehicle and students are not covered.
17. Cycling on school grounds is not allowed.
18. Eating and drinking is permitted only in the GP area and in the school yard. Students are not permitted to eat or drink in classrooms or on the school corridors. Chewing gum is not permitted.

SECTION 3: GENERAL REGULATIONS

Attendance

Students are encouraged to make every effort to achieve full attendance at school where possible. If there is a genuine reason for a student not being able to attend school, that reason must be communicated through the School APP on or before the day the student returns to school.

Students are not permitted to leave school during the school day except to attend an organised school activity or with their parent's expressed permission. Parents who wish their son to leave school early must communicate this through the School App or in an emergency, by phone to the school office. Students must sign out at the school office before leaving.

Students who do not attend classes for which they are timetabled or who "mitch" from school will be sanctioned in accordance with our Policy on Attendance and Participation.

How Attendance is monitored

Subject Class Registration

Each subject teacher in each class throughout the day records the attendance and absence of students on the student database. The attendance data gathered daily by each subject teacher contributes to the subject teacher's academic record for each student and will be communicated to parents at Parent-Teacher meetings and in the student's journal, if required. This attendance data will also be used by the subject teacher to alert the relevant Year Head of attendance concerns in relation to individual students.

Daily Notification to parents of their son's absence

Once attendance for the first class in the morning has been entered by the subject teacher, a text message is then sent to the parents of each absent student. The purpose of the text message is to alert parents that their son is absent from school.

Written explanation for all absences

Parents are responsible for providing a written explanation for all absences via the School App. In accordance with its statutory obligations, the school will notify TUSLA if a student (under 16) is absent for 20 days or more or where the absence gives rise to concern.

Journals

The school journal acts as both a reference book for students and parents and as a daily record of homework to be done. It is designed to help students organise their work. It is not a private diary and should be seen by parents as well as students. Students should note the following instructions:

- The school journal must be available at all times for inspection by either the school staff or parents.
- All homework assigned, both written and oral, must be recorded in the journal daily.
- Defacing the journal or the removal of pages is not permitted.
- Students are not allowed to write on or deface another student's journal.
- If a student loses a journal, a temporary journal must be obtained from the school office. A new journal must be purchased from the school office on the following school day

School Uniform

The uniform is an integral part of school identity and every student is expected to wear the full school uniform. If there is a genuine reason for a student not being able to wear the full uniform, a note from a parent to that effect must be put in the school journal.

Bullying

Ardscoil Rís aims to create a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all students. Bullying of any kind (physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, racial, relational or cyber bullying) is strictly forbidden. Instances of bullying behaviour will be approached as outlined in the schools anti-bullying policy. Students who engage in bullying behaviour may be sanctioned in line with our school's Anti-Bullying Policy. Please refer to the school's Anti-Bullying policy for further information.

Mobile Phones, iPads & Other Electronic Devices

In recent years, the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices has caused significant disruption in classrooms. In addition to this, the use of camera phones potentially present very serious harassment, bullying and invasion of privacy issues. Students are not permitted to use their phones for any purpose while on the school premises unless given explicit permission from their teacher to use their phone for the purposes of teaching and learning.

Punctuality

Students are required to be present at 8.25am each morning when the first bell rings to get their books ready and to be in class when the second bell rings at 8.30am. In the afternoon, students are required to be in class when the second bell rings at 1.30pm. Students who arrive in class after the second bell rings in the morning or afternoon are deemed to be late. If a student is late in the morning or afternoon, he must first go to the school reception to have this fact recorded on the school system. In the case of a late being recorded in the morning or afternoon, the student will receive a detention at the end of that day. Teachers will also record the fact that students are late to class if lateness occurs over the course of the school day.

School Environment/Litter

Students are encouraged to have a positive attitude towards their environment. To this end, great care should be taken of furniture and fittings and all school equipment. A student found to have damaged school property will have to repair and/or repay the damage done. If the damage is exceptionally serious and malicious, the student may be suspended.

The School Campus

Students must behave in a safe manner on the school campus at all times. Failure to do so may result in appropriate sanctions being imposed depending on the seriousness of the offence. Students must follow the one-way system to ensure safe movement around the school. Students are not permitted to be at lockers or in toilets at the breaks of classes and must go directly to class. Students are permitted to access their lockers at the following times:

- 08.25am
- 10.30am -10.45am
- 12.45pm -1.25pm
- 3.30pm (Monday-Thursday), 12.45pm (Friday)

Students are not permitted to cycle on the school premises or to park their cars on the school grounds. Students who cycle to school must store their bicycles in a safe and secure manner, using the bike racks and sheds provided by the school.

SECTION 4: SCHOOL RESPONSE TO INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour can happen. Even minor breaches of the code of behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the student's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a threat to the safety of students and staff. Where a student's behaviour disrupts the learning and teaching of other students, school leadership & management have to balance the needs of that student with the needs of other students and staff.

The role of the Classroom Teacher

The classroom teacher is the front-line source of help for students. As a leader of learning, and someone with an established relationship of trust, the teacher will have a strong influence with students. The classroom teacher will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies, thus minimising the need for other interventions. These strategies may include:

- Talking to the student
- Verbal warning
- The student may be directed to work elsewhere in the classroom.
- The student may be directed to take a few minutes of cool-off time to sit quietly in a quiet area of the classroom.
- The student may be asked to meet with the teacher and work out a solution
- Assigning additional work to the student, relevant to the specific subject area, if the behaviour has led to a loss in learning time.
- Sending the student to another teacher for the rest of that class, by prior arrangement. (Teachers will record the fact that the student had to be removed from class in the student's journal. This note must be signed by the student's Parents/Guardians.)
- Confiscating an item which the teacher deems is a possible health and safety concern or is deemed to be a disruption to teaching and learning.
- Assigning a cleaning duty to the student where the behaviour involves litter, chewing gum, damage, vandalism etc.
- Contacting the Parents/Guardians of the student to discuss concerns regarding behaviour
- Reporting the matter to the Year Head, Deputy Principal and/or Principal depending on the seriousness of the matter.
- Engaging with the student and the student's parents in restoring relationships which may have been damaged by the behaviour.

The Role of the Class Tutor

The role of the class tutor is a pastoral role in the school. In being informed by other teachers and/or looking at the student's record of behaviour, the class tutor may discuss with the student instances of inappropriate behaviour. The tutor may also refer the student to his Year Head.

The Role of the Year Head

The Year Head takes a lead role in managing the overall behavioural environment in their year group. Working closely with colleagues, the Year Head promotes a positive, constructive and effective approach by all to behaviour. In dealing with student inappropriate behaviour, the Year Head will make interventions and/or apply sanctions as necessary.

In addition to the interventions outlined in the previous section, Year Heads may also use the following interventions:

- Issuing a report card to a student: Report cards will be signed by class teachers at the end of each class and the student will meet the Year Head at the end of the day. A parent/guardian must sign the report card each day.
- Removal of privileges
- Assigning the student to lunchtime or Friday detention
- Assisting the student in restoring a relationship which may have been damaged by inappropriate behaviour
- Referring the student to the school's Guidance Counsellor for guidance/support
- Referring the student to the Deputy Principal
- Referring the student to the Behavioural Support Team
- Referring the student to the Principal

The Role of the Deputy Principal and Principal

As part of their overall role, the Principal and Deputy Principal provide leadership in the upkeep of an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment in the school. As part of the school's response to inappropriate behaviour, a student may in some instances be referred to the Deputy Principal. This will normally happen in cases of persistent minor breaches of the code of behaviour or in an instance of serious misbehaviour. In consultation with the Year Head, the Deputy Principal will make interventions and/or apply sanctions as necessary. In the most serious of situations the student may be referred to the Principal.

The Principal and Deputy Principal reserve the right to become involved in any behavioural matter (or to request the relevant Year Head to deal with the matter) if it is deemed that such involvement is necessary in the particular instance.

SECTION 5: LADDER OF REFERRAL

The discipline system in Ardscoil Rís is designed to give a student every reasonable opportunity to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and to resolve instances of unacceptable behaviour. The school has designed a number of staged interventions to support students in this regard. Depending on the seriousness of a breach of the school's Code of Behaviour, a student may be dealt with at stages further along the process. Behaviours which are violent, dangerous, illegal or which pose a threat to the health and wellbeing of a member or members of the school community may incur automatic suspensions or referrals to the Board of Management where the student's exclusion from the school may be considered. The stages of referral are outlined as follows;

Stage 1: It is expected that teachers will make every reasonable effort to create a positive, respectful and engaging classroom environment and to keep opportunities for disruption to learning to a minimum through effective classroom management. Teachers are expected to make every reasonable effort to resolve instances of poor behaviour or disruption within the classroom. However, in the event of a student not responding to the teacher's approach or where an issue is serious enough to warrant a referral, the teacher may refer the issue to the Year Head. For serious breaches of the school's Code of Behaviour, the issue may be referred directly to the Principal or the Deputy Principal.

Stage 2: A teacher may refer the issue to the Year Head on VS Ware. The Year Head can then look to resolve the issue using the menu of options available to them.

Year Heads review the number of Referrals issued to a student on a weekly basis. Each student that has been issued with 3 Referrals (a minimum of 3, not necessarily three in the same week) has to attend detention on a Friday evening from 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm. A letter informing Parents/Guardians of a student's detention will be posted or emailed home prior to the detention. This letter has to be signed by the students Parent/Guardian and returned to the Year Head. This signed letter must be returned to the Year Head on or before the Thursday of the week of the detention. Failure to do so will result in further sanctions.

If a student is referred to his Year Head on two more occasions (a minimum of five Referral Sheets issued in total), they become liable for a second detention. The student will bring home a note to be signed by his Parent/Guardian informing them of the Friday detention. Following the second detention, in the case of further breaches of the school's Code of Behaviour the Year Head may move the student to Stage 3 of the discipline system and place the student on report for a defined period of time.

Stage 3: The Year Head will communicate the decision to place the student on report to the student's parents/guardians. While on report, the student must get his report card signed for each class. During this period, if a student is referred to his Year Head by a teacher, the student will automatically be placed on Friday detention. More serious breaches of the school's Code of Behaviour may result in suspension. The student must also get his report card signed by his parents/guardians each day and present his card to the Year Head for inspection each day. The Year Head will meet with the student and his parent(s)/guardian(s) at the end of the report process. The purpose of this meeting will be;

- To discuss the student's progress while on report
- To identify what learning has taken place during the report process.
- To re-emphasise the school's expectations of the student.
- To identify any further steps which may need to be taken.

If the required progress has not been made by the student while on report, the Year Head may initiate a new term of reporting. In this case, if the student breaches the school's Code of Behaviour while on report, he may be suspended.

Stage 4: After the report procedure has been complete, if there is a further breach of the school's Code of Behaviour, the student will be referred to the Behavioural Intervention Support Team*.

The student, accompanied by his parents/guardians will meet with the Behavioural Intervention Support Team to outline the issues which have led the student to this point. At this stage, the Behavioural Intervention Support Team can consider one or a combination of the options outlined in Section 4 of the Code of Behaviour.

Stage 5: In the event of further breaches to the school's Code of Behaviour, the issue will be referred to the Principal who will then decide on how the issue is to be resolved. At this point, the full range of interventions, including a full suspension can be imposed by the Principal, or by the Deputy Principal in the Principal's absence. Procedures for suspensions are outlined in the school's policy on Suspensions and Expulsions. After a student returns from suspension, the student must meet with the Principal to discuss what learning has taken place from the behaviours which has led the student to this point and to identify the next steps for the student.

The Board of Management of the school is informed by the Principal of every suspension and where students are suspended for an accumulation of six days or more over the course of a school year, the relevant Education Welfare Officer in the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) will be informed.

Stage 6: Where the student further breaches the Code of Behaviour or in the case of serious misconduct, the matter may be referred to the school's Board of Management for consideration. Procedures for Board hearings are outlined in the school's policy on Suspensions and Expulsion.

*** Behavioural Intervention Support Team**

The convening of the Behavioural Intervention Support Team is one of the most serious interventions provided for by the code of behaviour. The team is convened by the Principal and comprises the relevant Deputy Principal, an Assistant Principal 1, the relevant Year Leader and a member of the Pastoral Care Team. The role of the team is to meet with the student and his parents and review the behaviour of the student. The Behavioural Intervention Support Team will implement appropriate interventions and/or appropriate sanctions and provide a formal report to the Principal.

Interventions which may be used by the Behavioural Intervention Support Team

The Behavioural Intervention Support Team may use one or a combination of the following interventions;

- The student to be placed on report for the remainder of the school term.
- The student is required to enter into a Behavioural Contract in which he affirms his commitment to the school's Code of Behaviour and commits to addressing the issues which have brought him to this point. If the student breaches the school's Code of Behaviour during the term of their contract, a suspension will be imposed, the length of which depends on the severity of the breach.
- Removal of privileges and participation in school events and activities.
- Referral to the school's Guidance Counsellor.

- Referral to an outside agency, e.g. CAMHS, GP, Jigsaw, NBSS, NEPS.
- Recommend that the student be referred to the Principal for suspension.
- Assist the student in taking steps to restore any relationship which has been damaged as a result of the behaviour.

Exceptionally Serious Breaches of the School's Code of Behaviour

There are of course some exceptionally serious breaches of the School's Code of Behaviour which necessitate immediate action rather than progressing through the various stages of referral outlined above. In the event of an occurrence of an exceptionally serious breach of the School's Code of Behaviour, immediate action can be taken. Such action may include suspension or Board of Management expulsion.

Withdrawal of a privilege - trips/tours

A school trip/tour can only take place if we are happy that the tour has the safety and welfare of the students at its core. If for any reason a student's behaviour, during the course of the year or immediately before the school trip/tour, gives rise to concern about their ability to behave appropriately while on a school trip/tour, then their place on the trip/tour may be reviewed. A review such as this may result in the loss of the non-refundable deposit and subsequent monies paid.

SECTION 6: SUSPENSION

A proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour. As a school, we are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. The requirement for fair procedures derives from the Constitution of Ireland, international Conventions and case law

Fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice

Fair procedures have two essential parts:

- the right to be heard
- the right to impartiality

The right to be heard means that a student and their parents will be fully informed about an allegation and the processes that will be used to investigate and decide the matter; and that they will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before suspension or expulsion are imposed.

The principle of impartiality in decision-making means that, where possible, the Principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Principal. The Principal is then free to take a view about whether the student did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation.

Involving the Gardaí

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

Suspension

Suspension is defined as:

requiring the student to absent himself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

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

Authority to suspend

The Board of Management has formally delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend a student. In implementing a decision to suspend, the Principal shall adhere to:

- (1) The procedures for suspension as set down in the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- (2) *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* (NEWB:2008)

In the event of the absence of the Principal on approved leave or school business, the authority to suspend is delegated to the designated Deputy Principal/Person-in-charge subject to the provisions of (1) and (2) above.

The grounds for suspension

The decision to suspend a student will be on serious grounds such as:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students;
- The student's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to safety;
- An incident (or incidents) of exceptionally serious or gross misbehaviour that is repugnant to the ethos and values of the school
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property;

- Repeated deliberate and sustained breaches of the Code of Behaviour with the student having proceeded through the various stages of the Ladder of Referral

The list of grounds listed above is not exhaustive.

Factors that will be considered before suspending a student

The factors that will be considered before suspending a student will include:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date (where relevant)
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of suspension.

Suspension as part of a behaviour support plan

Suspension can be part of a plan to address the student's behaviour. The suspension can:

- enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and the parents;
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions;
- impress on a student and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

Suspension during a State examination

Should it be necessary to suspend a student from school during a State examination, the suspension will be approved by the Board of Management and will be used where there is:

- a threat to the safety of other students and personnel
- a threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- a threat to the rights of other students to do their examination in a calm atmosphere
- an exceptionally serious breach of the code of behaviour.

Procedures in respect of Suspension

Fair procedures will be followed if proposing to suspend a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will

- A. inform the student and their parents about the complaint (Parents may be informed by phone or in writing)
- B. give parents and the student an opportunity to respond.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.

The period of Suspension

In general, a student will not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed because of the seriousness of the behaviour or in order to achieve a particular objective. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed, the Board of Management has authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student is suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more.

These provisions enable school leadership & management to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures.

Appeals

The decision of the Principal to suspend a student may be appealed to the Board of Management.

Section 29 Appeal

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and will be given information about how to appeal.

Implementing the suspension

Written notification

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. This 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 (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management

Grounds for removing a suspension

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

After the suspension ends

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Re-integrating the student

The school will have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. The Year Leader or a designated member of staff will also provide support to the student during the reintegration process.

Records and Reports

Records of investigation and decision-making

Formal written records will be kept of:

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

Report to the Board of Management

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

Report to TUSLA

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, section 21(4)(a)).

SECTION 7: EXPULSION

Introduction

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

A student is expelled from a school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Grounds for Expulsion

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- Repeated deliberate and sustained breaches of the Code of Behaviour with the student having proceeded through the various stages of the Ladder of Referral and where the school's other interventions and sanctions have failed

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a one-off 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, member of staff or visitor
- Actual violence or physical assault against another student, member of staff or visitor
- supplying illegal drugs to others in the school
- Malicious and/or Criminal online behaviour
- An incident (or incidents) of exceptionally serious or gross misbehaviour that is so repugnant to the ethos and values of the school, that expulsion is judged the proportionate response.

This list is not exhaustive.

Factors that will be considered before proposing to expel a student

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

Procedures in respect of Expulsion

The School will follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps 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 Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks involved in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures:

- The Principal will inform the student and their parents in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- A meeting will be arranged with the Principal to give the parents and student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and a sanction is imposed.
- If the parents and students fail to attend the meeting, the Principal will write explaining the gravity of the issue, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting, and failing that, the duty of the Board of Management to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour.
- A record of the invitation issued and the response of the parents will be kept on file.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Ensure that parents have records of the allegations against the student, the investigation, and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by 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 that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing

The Board of Management will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it will hold a hearing. The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, will put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party will be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board will take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student. After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

Step 4: Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)). The student will not be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24 (1)).

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents will be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. These consultations may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that would avoid expulsion. However, where the possibility of continuing in the school is not an option, at least in the short term, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned will be invited to come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education.

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24 (5)). A Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension will only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued

presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

Step 6: Confirmation of the decision to expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel (this task might be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeals

A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

The Appeals Process

An appeal may be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills in respect of a decision by a board of management to:

- permanently exclude a student from the school, or
- suspend a student from the school for a cumulative period of 20 school days in any one school year

Circular letter M48/01 *Appeal Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998* applies. Section 29 Appeals Application Forms and further details are available on www.education.ie

Review of use of Expulsion

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

SECTION 8: CONCLUSION

It must be remembered that the vast majority of students in the school behave in a positive manner and the sanctions in the code of behaviour will therefore not apply. The Code of Behaviour is designed to offer students every chance to alter patterns of negative behaviour, promote high standards of behaviour and to ensure a positive school climate. This Code of Behaviour should enable all members of the school community to work together in a safe, structured, orderly and respectful environment. It has been approved by the Board of Management and will be subject to on-going review in light of the changing environment in which the school may find itself. The school reserves the right to modify this Code of Behaviour at short notice. Any change(s) made will be communicated to Parents/Guardians and students as soon as is realistically possible after the change(s) is made.

**Acceptance of the
Code of Behaviour of**



**Ardscoil Rís
Griffith Avenue
Dublin 9**

School Copy

(The student and his parents are asked to complete the relevant sections of this form, detach the page and return to the school.)

Student's Name: _____

***Parents:**

I/we have read, understand and accept the Code of Behaviour of Ardscoil Rís, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9. I/we have discussed the Code with my/our son and I/we will support the school fully in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Parent(s) signatures(s): _____

Date: _____

Student:

I have read, understand and accept the Code of Behaviour of Ardscoil Rís, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9. I will behave in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Additions and/or changes to the Code of Behaviour may occur throughout the school year. Such changes will be communicated to students and parents. Students are bound by any such additions and/or changes.

In all cases the School Leadership & Management are the arbiters of acceptable standards and expectations of behaviour.

**Please note that on this form and throughout the Code of Behaviour, 'parents' refers to a parent, guardian or carer.*

**Acceptance of the
Code of Behaviour of**



**Ardscoil Rís
Griffith Avenue
Dublin 9**

Student & Parent Copy

(The student and her parents are asked to complete the relevant sections of this form.)

Student's Name: _____

***Parents:**

I/we have read, understand and accept the Code of Behaviour of Ardscoil Rís, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9. I/we have discussed the Code with my/our son and I/we will support the school fully in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Parent(s) signatures(s): _____

Date: _____

Student:

I have read, understand and accept the Code of Behaviour of Ardscoil Rís, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9. I will behave in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Additions and/or changes to the Code of Behaviour may occur throughout the school year. Such changes will be communicated to students and parents. Students are bound by any such additions and/or changes.

In all cases the School Leadership & Management are the arbiters of acceptable standards and expectations of behaviour.

**Please note that on this form and throughout the Code of Behaviour, 'parents' refers to a parent, guardian or carer.*