

# Gaelcholáiste Reachrann Code of Behaviour

## 1. Basic Principles

The basic goals of the code of behaviour include:

- Creating a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- Creating a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning
- Encouraging students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- Helping young people to mature into responsible participating citizens
- Building positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- Ensuring that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood

## 2. Principles

The code of behaviour was created in order to set a standard of behaviour.

Standards of behaviour outlined in the code of behaviour include values such as;

- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- Forgiveness

### **Introduction:**

Respect is at the heart of the Gaelcholáiste Reachrann Code of Behaviour; Self respect, mutual respect, respect for the environment and respect for the Irish language, in the class room, in the school and at school events. This is clear throughout the code of behaviour, and the entire school community work together based on this principle. As a school community we believe that this fosters a cooperative environment among the various parties and that it enriches the holistic development of the student.

- 2.1 Everybody will behave in a polite manner towards each other.
  - 2.2 Each student will behave in class in order to foster a positive learning environment in the classroom. Such a positive environment will encourage progress in school or on any school related activities.
  - 2.3 An Ghaeilge is the language of communication in the classroom.
  - 2.4 Each student will pay attention to the teacher in order to learn and to allow fellow students to learn.
  - 2.3 Bring all necessary equipment and materials to class.
    - 2.4.1 It is essential that each student has the school journal on their desk in each class.
    - 2.4.2 In the case of a student not having the journal (as above mentioned) the following procedure will come into place:
      - 1<sup>st</sup> Occasion:** (During the school term): The matter will be discussed with the student and he/she will collect a daily journal from the form tutor.
      - Second Occasion:** (During the school term): The matter will be discussed with the student and he/she will collect a daily journal from the form tutor.
      - Third Occasion:** (During the school term): The student will collect a daily journal from the form tutor and will receive a one hour detention.
      - Fourth Occasion:** The form tutor will contact parents /guardians to discuss the matter, after which the matter will go on to the Year Head.
- Students are to collect the daily journal from the form tutor(Principal/Deputy Principal when necessary) only. Students must hand up the daily journal to the form tutor the following day who will keep it in his/her form class records.**

2.4.3. The school journal is a school document where a record of students behaviour and continuous progress is recorded. The school journal is the first step in communication between the school and parents/guardians. Any form of destruction or the writing of notes by students on their own journals or on the journals of other students is strictly forbidden. The student is ultimately responsible for maintaining a neat and tidy journal at all times. If the journal is lost or in an unsatisfactory condition a new diary at the cost of €10 must be purchased.

2.4.4. The form tutor will monitor and sign the journal on a regular basis. Parents/guardians are requested to sign the journal on a weekly basis.

## 2.5

Classrooms will be kept clean and tidy and students are requested to put chairs on the tables at the end of the day. Eating and drinking are strictly forbidden during class time except in exceptional circumstances, e.g.; certain illnesses (**the school must be informed of this in writing beforehand**)

2.6 Students are expected to complete homework on time and to the best of their ability. Homework must be completed by the deadline given and students must have the homework in the relevant class.

2.7 Students will follow the appropriate *Health and Safety Policy*, which has been established in accordance with the various subjects.

2.8 Students are permitted to go to their lockers at the start of the school day, at break time, at lunchtime and at the end of the school day only.

## 3. School Uniform

3.1 Each student is obliged to wear the school uniform and to maintain a clean and neat appearance. Entire black is the only accepted colour for shoes as part of the school uniform, except for exceptional circumstances whereby the Principal/Deputy Principal will advise students otherwise (e.g; permission to wear boots during heavy snow).

*f* (feistias) will be written into the journal in the case of the appropriate uniform not being worn.

3.2 The wearing of runners is strictly forbidden on the way to or from school.

3.3 Runners must be worn during games at lunchtime or at any other relevant time when sports games are played. School hoodies are available (optional) **and can be worn during p.e classes and on school outings**. Students are not allowed to wear the school hoody instead of the school jacket except on these occasions.

- 3.4 The wearing of jewellery is limited to discrete jewellery. Visible body piercings are totally forbidden with the exception of discrete ear rings
- 3.5 The wearing of makeup is limited to light and discrete foundation only. Eye makeup is not allowed.
- 3.6 Students are expected to maintain a natural hair colour and to wear a hair style which is appropriate to the image of the school.

#### **4. Personal Safety**

- 4.1 The self-respect of the student and respect for their own personal safety will be promoted.
- 4.2 The use or possession of drugs, lethal substances, tobacco or any alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden to students within the school, on the school premises, while attending school events or when wearing the school uniform. Students are strictly forbidden to enter the school premises and/or to attend school events under the influence of any of the above-mentioned substances.
- 4.3 Every student has the right to work and learn in a safe environment, free from any form of harassment or maltreatment. Irresponsible or anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated. The anti-bullying policy will be adhered to at all times.
- 4.4 It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to provide the school with any relevant information in writing in relation to the health of the student

## **5. Personal Property and the School Environment**

- 5.1 Students are strictly forbidden to have in their possession mobile phones, pocket radios or any such electronic equipment that is not switched off during school time. The school does not accept responsibility for any such equipment.  
In the case of a mobile phone (with SIM card)/or pocket radio or any electronic equipment being confiscated from a student, the student will inform his/her parents/guardians who are then obliged to collect the phone etc from the Principal/Deputy Principal in the school. School authorities will not keep a mobile phone during any school holidays.
- 5.2 Students will make contact with Parents/guardians via the school phone during the school day and not via a mobile phone.
- 5.3 Students are obliged to keep a lock on their lockers at all times. The school will not accept responsibility for any personal property which is left in the school and not locked in the student's locker or in any other suitable place specified to students by school authorities. The school lockers are a part of school equipment and each student is responsible for the maintenance and condition of their own locker. Students must ensure that lockers are kept clean and tidy and that they are not damaged.
- 5.4 If a student causes any damage to school property, at school or while attending a school event, he/she will be responsible for paying for the cost of repairing that damage.
- 5.5 Chewing gum is strictly prohibited on the school premises.
- 5.6 Each student is obliged to respect the school environment and to keep it clean and tidy.
- 5.7 In order to respect the privacy and integrity of all individuals in the school, camera/video facilities on mobile phones and any recording without permission on the school premises is not allowed.
- 5.8 No member of the school community is permitted to take any belongings or equipment that does not belong to him/her without permission.

## **5. Attendance and Punctuality**

### **Introduction:**

It is the aim of Gaelcholáiste Reachrann to provide the highest level of education which will help students reach their full potential. This philosophy encourages the self-esteem and the talents of students which in turn prepares them as capable functioning citizens in today's world.

Regular school attendance is vital in order to receive this consistent education. Regular absenteeism and lack of punctuality seriously disrupts the learning process of the student. The continuous disruption of a student who regularly arrives late to class or who is frequently absent can have a seriously negative effect on the teaching process and the learning of other students in the class.

### **Attendance:**

- 6.1 Students are obliged to attend school on a regular and ongoing basis. Whenever a student is absent for whatever reason parents are requested to adhere to the following procedure;
  - 6.1.1 The school must be informed of any reason(s) for absenteeism (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 18). Parents/guardians are obliged to provide the school **in writing** with the reason for absenteeism on the student's return to school. Any relevant sick certs must also be given to the school on the student's return. The form tutor will keep a record of this on the system.
  - 6.1.2 In the case of a student being absent for two consecutive days or more, parents /guardians are requested to phone the school to explain the reason for absenteeism. This must also be put in writing on the student's return to school.
  - 6.1.3 In the case of parents/guardians failing to give notification to the school regarding a student's absence the form tutor will ring home to make the relevant inquiries.
  - 6.1.4 In the case of regular absenteeism parents/guardians will be requested to attend a meeting with the Year Head or the Deputy Principal to try to resolve the matter.
  - 6.1.5 If the problem of continued absenteeism continues the case will then go on to the Principal in order to try to resolve the matter
  - 6.1.6 It is the duty of the Principal to inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing of any student who misses 20 days or more within one school year.

## **Punctuality & Leaving the School Premises:**

6.2 The school day commences with form class at 08:25. Every student is expected to attend school on time.

6.2.1 In the case of a student being late three times within a half-term he/she will do a detention. A letter will be sent home beforehand. In the case of a continuous problem parents/guardians will be requested to make an appointment with the Year Head to discuss the matter and reach a solution.

6.2.2 If the problem continues parents/guardians will be requested to attend a meeting with the principal/Deputy Principal to discuss the matter and reach a solution.

6.2.3 Students are not permitted to leave the school premises during school time without permission from the school authorities. In the case of a student leaving early parents/guardians are obliged to explain this in writing on the same day and the student will then give the note to either the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal. Whenever a student must leave school early due to illness, parents/guardians are obliged to collect a student from school or to make suitable arrangements; the school must be informed of any such arrangements.

6.2.4 Senior students have the privilege of going out at lunchtime on certain conditions. They will be given a letter of permission at the start of the school year which must be signed by parents/guardians.

## **7. Internet Access**

7.1 Students are given access to computers and the school Internet facilities only with the permission and supervision of a teacher. Students are strictly forbidden to go into the I.T room without permission.

7.2 Eating and drinking in the I.T room is strictly forbidden

7.3 If a student downloads or comes across any illegal or dangerous material of a violent or sexual nature, the teacher in charge must be informed immediately. The further downloading of any such material is strictly forbidden.

## **8. Rewards and Sanctions**

### **The Purpose of Rewards:**

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of the code. We believe that rewards help to promote this principle by;

- Developing and fostering a positive relationship between teachers, parents and students
- Promoting a happy school atmosphere
- Promoting respect for the Irish language among the school community
- Setting a clear standard which is understood by everyone
- Encouraging students to participate in school life and to reach their full potential
- Encouraging responsibility and self-esteem among students
- Encouraging students to behave in a manner that supports their own learning and development
- Demonstrating fairness and equality to students and to the entire school community
- Emphasising the holistic development of the student

### **The Purpose of Sanctions:**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping students to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- Helping students to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- Helping students to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour

A sanction may also:

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- Signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- Keep the student, or other students or adults,

## **Introduction:**

- The Board of Management is responsible for and the implementation of the Code of Discipline.
- The Principal and the Deputy Principal are responsible for behaviour and discipline in the school.
- The Year Head is responsible for behaviour and discipline in the school.
- The Form Tutor monitors student behaviour within the various classes.
- The class teacher is responsible for maintaining discipline within his/her own classroom. They are also responsible together with the other teachers for maintaining a sense of order in the school in general

8.1 It is recognised that it is important to reward students who make a positive contribution to school life. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Praise in the classroom (orally) from the teacher and/or school authorities
- Presentation of certificates at the end of each term - College Awards.
- Positive comment in homework journal
- Progress slips
- Public recognition at school assemblies and in school newsletter
- Delegation of responsibilities to students.
- Trips
- Non uniform day
- Guest Speaker
- Pizza & DVD

8.2 The following strategies/sanctions may be used in the case of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with the student
- Reprimand, including advice on how to improve
- Move place in class
- Giving the student a useful task to carry out in the school
- Note in the homework journal
- Extra homework given
- Extra work to be completed at lunchtime
- A complaint slip given to student (B.F. written in the journal)
- The removal of a student from class when earlier agreed with Principal
- Detention
- Loss of privileges e.g.; not allowed to go out at lunchtime or attend a school activity
- Daily report
- In-house suspension
- Suspension

8.3 The following strategies will come into place in the case of a student breaking the school rules:

8.3.1 The matter will be discussed with the student/ or verbal warning

8.3.2 A note will be made in the homework journal as a record of unsatisfactory behaviour.

8.3.3 In the case of continuous unacceptable behaviour, the student will receive a complaint slip (bileog ghearáin). The complaint slips are at the back of the homework journal.

8.3.4 In the case of continuous unacceptable behaviour/lack of work the Form Tutor/Year Head will put the student on report card.

#### **8.3.4.1 Report Card:**

- The Form Tutor/Year Head will send a letter home to parents/guardians explaining that the student is on report and the reason why.
- Parents/guardians are requested to sign this report card every day.
- The student will keep the report card for the week and he/she will hand it to the relevant teachers at the start of each class.
- At the end of the week the Form Tutor/Year Head will discuss the report card with the student.
- The Form Tutor/Year Head will keep the report card as a record of the student's behaviour.
- In the case of a student losing the report card, the Form Tutor/Year Head will investigate and will contact parents/guardians to discuss the matter if necessary.

8.3.5 If necessary the Form Tutor will refer the case to the Year Head.

8.3.6 If necessary the Year Head will discuss the next step with the Principal/Deputy Principal.

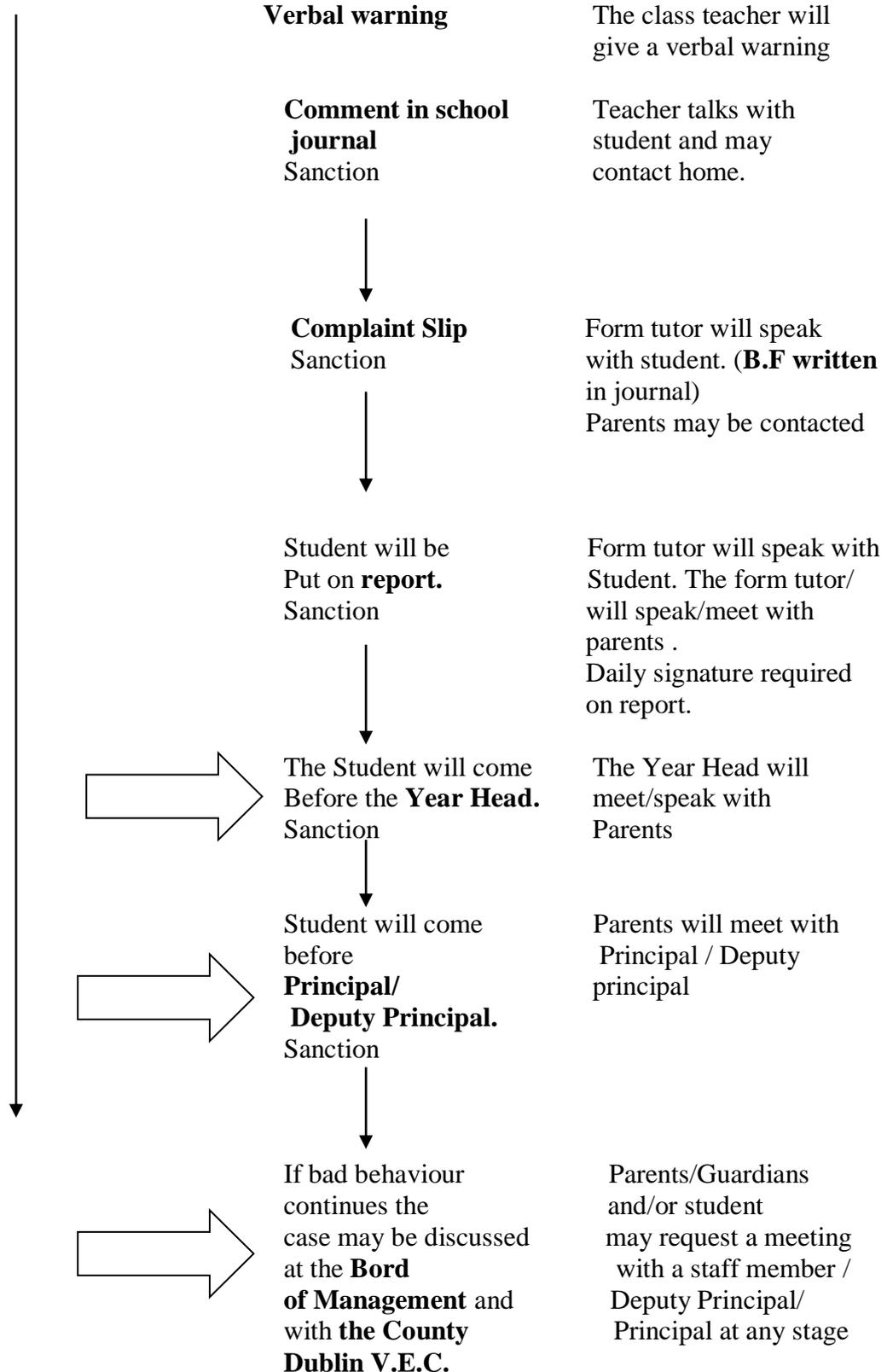
8.3.7 There will be cases whereby detention will be used as a strategy to assist in improving the student's sense of responsibility: e.g. bad timekeeping, continuous unacceptable behaviour, continually failing to complete homework etc. A letter will be given to the student the day before at the latest. Detention will usually be held on a Thursday after school. It is the responsibility of the student to make whatever necessary arrangements in order to attend. In the case of a student not attending detention on the Thursday, parents/guardians will be informed and arrangements will be made with the Principal/Deputy Principal for the student to do detention on another day.

## Disciplinary Procedures

**Serious incident  
At any time**

**Inappropriate Behaviour**

**Possible Interventions**



## **9. Students with Special Educational Needs:**

Teachers will take particular care that they help the student with special needs understand clearly the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable.

## **10. Roles and Responsibilities of Various Parties:**

### **Roles / Responsibilities of Teaching Staff and School Management**

Every class teacher is responsible for his/her class and it is the responsibility of that teacher to maintain discipline in his/her class and to make certain that his /her approach is consistent and fair.

Teachers and Management will endeavour to maintain a consistent and fair approach to supporting positive behaviour

Teachers and Management will endeavour to foster a mutually respectful relationship between students, parents/guardians and all staff.

Teachers and Management will reward positive behaviour and learning achievements/effort and general progress.

Teachers and Management will follow and adopt clearly defined procedures/sanctions in an effective, fair and helpful manner.

Teachers will implement appropriate teaching strategies and mixed methodologies to enable all students to achieve their potential

Teachers and Management will support students through an effective pastoral care system and through the 'Social, Personal and Health Education' programme.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

Parents/Guardians and teachers are the significant adults in the lives of the young people at school. Parents/Guardians will encourage positive student behaviour by;

Fostering mutually respectful relationships between students, parents/guardians and all staff

Supporting the school in its high expectations of positive behaviour and high standards of achievement and by encouraging and supporting their children's progress

Informing the school of concerns which may affect the child's progress

Providing feedback through the Parents' Association in relation to policies.

## **Roles and responsibilities of Students**

Students are the centre of the school community. He/she is responsible for his/her own behaviour and will engage in responsible and positive behaviour by:

- Speaking Irish at all times
- Respecting each other, the college staff and any visitors to the college
- Creating a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom
- Working to the best of their ability to achieve the best possible education
- Acting in a safe manner and considering the safety of others
- Showing respect for other people's property and the school environment
- Supporting the Student Council in its role as a voice for the students
- Raising issues which concern you with the appropriate person
- Keeping the school environment clean and tidy

## 11. Suspension

### Suspension is defined as:

‘Requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’

(Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board, 2008)

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

#### 11.1 The grounds for suspension:

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school management will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

#### 11.2 Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan:

Suspension should be part of an agreed plan to address the student’s behaviour. The suspension should:

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

#### 11.3 Procedures in respect of suspension:

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, school management will observe the following procedures:

Inform the student/parents of the complaint

Give parents/guardians and students an opportunity to respond

#### 11.4 Implementing the suspension

When school management make a decision to suspend a student, the following procedure will be followed; (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23 (2) );

Written Notification: A letter will be sent home and the Board of Management will be notified.

The letter should 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/guardians
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management

Where a decision to suspend has been made, it can maximise the impact and value of suspension if the Principal or another member of management meets with the parents/guardians to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave well when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this.

Where parents/guardians do not agree to meet with the Principal, written notification will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

#### 11.5 After the suspension ends

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

Certain conditions will be agreed with the student before returning to class.

#### 11.6 Appeals

At the time when parents/guardians are being formally notified of a suspension, they and the student should be told about the right to appeal to the VEC under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, and should be given information about how to appeal. Where an appeal to the VEC is concluded, parents/guardians or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Science.

## 12 Expulsion

The grounds for expulsion:

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will take significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with parents/guardians and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies.

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
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property (personal, school or other)

### 12.1.2 Expulsion for a first offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Sexual assault

## 12.2 Procedures in respect of expulsion

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education Welfare Act 2000*, when proposing to expel a student.

There are two main parts in fair procedure:

- The right to be heard
- The right to impartiality

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

A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal

A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

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

Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer

Confirmation of the decision to expel

**It is a matter for each 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.**

## 12.3

A parent/guardian, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the VEC. Where an appeal to the VEC has been concluded, parents/guardians, or a student aged over eighteen years, may go on to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

### The Appeals Process

The appeals process under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998* begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the appeals committee (Department of Education and Science). For further details about the appeals process, refer to the current DES guidance.

### **13. Criteria for Success:**

We will recognise that this policy is effective if;

- The atmosphere in the school is open and positive
- The code of behaviour runs fairly and effectively
- If discipline matters in the school are in order
- Each of the various parties comprehends and recognises the abovementioned Policy

### **14 Monitoring:**

School Management will monitor the implementation of the Policy.

### **15. Review:**

This policy will be reviewed by the Review Committee and formally adopted by the Board of Management on a regular basis.  
Submissions from parents/guardians, teachers, students or other interested parties are welcome

## GAELCHOLÁISTE REACHRANN

### POLASAÍ SMACHTA AGUS CÓD IOMPAR

**Tá an polasaí thuasluaite léite go cúramach agam agus tá mé sásta glacadh leis agus é a chomhlíonadh.**

**Siniú an Dalta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bliain:** \_\_\_\_\_

**As Parents/Guardian(s), we/I have read and fully accept the Discipline policy and Code of Behaviour.**

**Síniú:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Síniú:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_