

Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin



Code of Positive Behaviour

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mission Statement

This school, being a source of pride in the community, aspires to the holistic development of its students, embracing the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions of their lives. Students will be challenged and encouraged to achieve their full potential through their cognition and reward of their effort and responsibilities, allowing them to feel confident in their ability to take their place as valued members of our society. Cultural differences will be respected.

The good name and reputation of the school as an institution must be nurtured and protected for the benefit of all pupils. Each of the partners, teachers, parents and students have roles and responsibilities which must be fulfilled if successful educational outcomes are to be achieved.

1.2 Behaviour

Behaviour is defined as the way one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others. It is often a response to a particular situation or stimulus. Behaviour cannot be managed separately from learning and wellbeing. The context usually has some influence over the behaviour.

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

Some factors that influence behaviour includes:

- Age, and stage of development
- Personal history and experience
- Physical, sensory or medical conditions
- Parental and family patterns and relationships
- Social networks, including friends and peer groups

Our Code of Behaviour is based around our three core pillars.

**A Achieve
R Respect
D Develop**

Ardscoil Rath Iomghain aims to develop the potential of every student in an environment where fairness, understanding, success and discipline are respected and upheld by all members.

Thus, our ethos reflects how we live, work and relate to each other in our school community.

1.3 Inclusion of all Students

Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin places a high value on respect, inclusion and the acceptance of diversity which is central to the policies and practices in the school.

2. THE AIMS OF OUR CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Our school's Code of Behaviour is built around three core pillars. These pillars of 'Achieve' 'Respect' and 'Develop', taken from our mission statement, are the foundation upon which all our expectations are obtained. We have extremely high expectations of our students in Ardscoil Rath Iomghain and, together as a whole-school community, we arrived at the behavioural expectations laid out in this code.

The school aims to help all students develop and mature into responsible young adults, all students are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour in our school. Being a student in our school implies commitment to abide by the rules.

- Our code seeks to facilitate teaching and learning by positive, reflective and fair approaches to discipline.
- Our code seeks to ensure the safety of all members of the school community on the school premises and when taking part in school activities.
- Our code seeks to promote a safe and secure learning environment, where students are supported to learn and achieve at the highest level.
- Our code seeks to promote positive behaviour and help students develop excellent behaviour and encourage self-discipline.
- Our code seeks to put in place reflective structures to help staff deal with incidents of misbehaviour that may arise. Our code seeks to provide clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the whole school community, students, parents and staff, both individually and as a whole school community.
- Our code seeks to provide clarity, transparency and consistency to procedures followed when expectations are not met.
- Our code seeks to deal fairly with students who are disruptive, affecting their own progress and/or the progress of other students using positive behaviour management planning. In addition, our code seeks to balance the needs of the students with the right of all to receive an education.

2.1 Relevant Legislation

The following legislation was considered in the creation of our Code of Behaviour:

- Article 42 of the Irish Constitution
- Education Act 1998 - Sections 28& 29
- Education (Welfare) Act 2000 - Section 23
- Teaching Council Code of Professional Practice
- TESS (Tulsa Education Support Service)

2.2 Consultation and Review Process

The Code of Behaviour of Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin will be reviewed regularly, as directed by the Board of Management.

At each stage of the code's development and subsequent review, there will be a systematic, reflective approach which aims to:

- Incorporate the input of all partners to the code, including teachers, students and parents/guardians.
- Monitor the impact of the Code on student's behaviour.

The next review process will take place at the beginning of each academic year.

The policy applies to students, staff and parents/guardians. It applies to students of the school when they are in school uniform, in the school building, grounds of the school and/or on a school activity/trip.

2.3 Links to Other Policies

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Safeguarding policy
- Homework Policy
- Information and Communication Technology Acceptable Usage Policy
- ICT Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Suspensions and Expulsions Policy

2.4 Expectations of Students

The aim of our Code of Behaviour is to promote and support teaching and learning in a caring, supportive and mutually respectful environment.

- Students should be aware that their full record relating to respect, discipline, work rate and punctuality will be taken into account when a reference is being given for any student.
- A student's behavioural record will exist for the duration of their time in Ardscoil Rath Iomghain.
- Student's records will influence decisions regarding whether students can represent the school, attend school trips or selection criteria for school programmes (Leaving Cert. Applied, Transition Year and LCVP) leadership roles (Meitheal, School Captain & Vice Captain and Student Council)

2.5 Role and Responsibilities of Students

Students of Ardscoil Rath Iomghain are expected to adhere to and embody the following high expectations in their attitude to learning and in all their interactions and actions, at school and while representing the school or on school trips or participation in school activities.

- Students of Ardscoil Rath Iomghain are expected to always be respectful, honest and courteous in their interactions with everyone in the school community. Members of the school community include fellow students, school management, teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff and visitors.
- Students are expected to be mindful of the language they use. Language should be appropriate for the school setting and should not be offensive, abusive or disrespectful to members of the school community.
- Every student should respect the property of their fellow students, their teachers, and the school.
- Students are expected to make a positive contribution to the learning environment, taking ownership and responsibility for their actions and for their own learning.
- Students are expected to be responsible in their actions and decisions while representing the school, while representing the school or on school trips or participation in school activities.
- Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the school expectations in all areas and work to their best ability to meet them.
- Students are expected to cooperate with each other, work together, be helpful and to always follow staff instructions.

- Students are expected to get involved in all areas of school life, academic, student leadership, trips, extracurricular, committees etc.
- Students are expected to be supportive, helpful and considerate of all staff and their fellow students, especially younger students.

2.6 Roles and Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents have an important role to play in their child/children's educational journey. The more a parent participates in the education of their child, the more likely their child will succeed at school and reach their potential.

In supporting their children, we ask all parents/guardians to:

- To support the school positively.
- To encourage and support the students by showing an interest in their work and school life.
- To praise their son/daughters' efforts.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time each day in full uniform.
- Ensure your child has all necessary materials/equipment for classes and extracurricular activities.
- Regularly login to VSware to check your child's attendance/punctuality/behaviour/test results etc.
- If your child is late for school, this must be documented on VSware, and the student must sign in with the principal/deputy principal. Where a student is signing out early, this must also be documented on VSware with a valid reason. The student must sign out with the Principal/ Deputy Principal before leaving the school grounds. Parents/guardians should have a valid reason for all these incidents.
- Provide a medical certificate to the school should there be significant absence due to illness. This medical cert will be uploaded to the students profile on VSware.
- Provide medical certificates if their child is not able to participate in practical subjects e.g. physical education for a prolonged period of time.
- Be informed and familiar with all policies/guidelines developed by the school.
- Ensure that your child is familiar with and adheres to the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Support the school in its implementation of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- To listen to both the school and your child when a problem occurs.
- Check journals to see that all homework, whatever format, is completed.
- Respond to any comments that are written by teachers on end of term reports or general feedback by phone, VSware or the journal.
- To attend relevant information evenings, parent teacher meetings, and scheduled meetings with year heads/management. To provide space & time for homework & study.
- To support the wearing of the uniform, including correct PE gear.
- To inform the school of any change of circumstances, i.e. address, phone number, email etc.
- Be polite & respectful in all verbal interactions with the staff of Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin.
- Parents will, at the discretion of the senior management, be required to compensate the school and members of the school community for any damage caused by their son/daughter to (school property) and or personal belongings of other students and or staff members. whether accidental or otherwise.

2.7 Role of Classroom Teacher in Supporting the Code of Positive Behaviour

- Developing and maintaining respectful and professional relationships between students, parents/guardians.
- Approaching conflict and treating students in a professional manner and with the same level of respect expected of students.
- Providing opportunities for all students to experience success, regardless of ability.

2.8 Role of the Tutor in Supporting the Code of Positive Behaviour

- Tutors meet students every Monday & Friday morning for tutorial class where they take attendance, make announcements, update students on achievements, well-being and upcoming school events/activities.
- Regularly check uniforms and check journals.
- Tutors refer issues or difficulties that arise to the relevant Year Head, Pastoral Care Team, management and advocate on behalf of their students.

2.9 Role of Year Head in Supporting the Code of Positive Behaviour

- Encourages, models and reinforces behavioural expectations outlined in the code.
- Collaborates with tutor, colleagues, pastoral care team, mentoring team, school counsellor, HSCL, SCP coordinator, AEN department, senior management in order to meet student needs.
- Motivates students in all areas of school life, academic, behavioural, extra-curricular etc
- Develops and maintains positive relations and open lines of communication with parents/guardians.

2.10 Role of School Management in Supporting the Code of Positive Behaviour

- Fostering mutually respectful and professional relationships between students, parents/guardians and all staff.
- Approaching conflict with a restorative mindset, modelling appropriate interactions and healthy conflict management.
- Promotion and facilitation of Continuous Professional Development in the areas of Positive Behaviour, Teaching and Learning and Wellbeing etc.
- Providing the space and opportunity for authentic reflection and accountability.
- Supporting systems for rewarding positive behaviour, academic achievement, extra-curricular involvement and success in all areas of school life.
- Promoting positive behaviour, cooperation, and wellbeing through support and facilitating of 'Themed' weeks, e.g. Wellbeing Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Science Week, Math's Week, Mental Health Week etc.
- Implementing the Code of Positive Behaviour in a manner that is equitable, fair, consistent, transparent and just.
- Ensuring effective teams are in place i.e. AEN, Pastoral Care, Year-head, HSCL/SCP, Wellbeing, etc. and facilitating time for collaboration.
- Helping students navigate difficulties by modelling forgiveness, accountability and restoration.
- Facilitating an effective Home-School-Community Liaison and School Completion Programmes that are developed and reviewed according to needs of our students at risk of disengagement and early leaving.

In order to encourage students to set high standards for themselves, in and out of class, academic endeavour and other achievements will be recognised by Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin in the following ways:

- Praise and rewards by class teachers, Year Heads, Tutors, Principal and Deputy Principal.
- Achievements/Positive Comments recorded on Vsware
- Certificate of Excellent Attendance.
- Recognition and acknowledgement for attendance, work rate, participating in competitions, punctuality etc.
- Nominations for Student of the Year.
- Announcements in school and on school's social media platforms. .
- Places on the Student Council
- The role of School Captain and Vice Captain.
- Awards Day Ceremony

The reward scheme in the school encourages the healthy participation of students in all aspects of school life. At the end of the school year, awards will recognise the achievements of our students.

3. REWARDS FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

When expectations are met and a standard of behaviour is shown by students, it is important to acknowledge these achievements and reinforce positive behaviour. This can be private and informal or public, formal acknowledgements.

3.1 Informal acknowledgements

- Praise by classroom teacher, tutor, year head, principal or deputy principal.
- Positive comments on VShare, in journal, home etc.
- Small rewards by classroom teachers.
- Class competitions with whole class rewards.

3.2 Formal acknowledgements

- Monthly/termly award for excellent attendance/punctuality.
- Formal awards for academic achievement e.g. award at Leaving Certificate, Student of the Year awards, Sisters of Mercy Special Merit Award, Meitheal Leaders Recognition, Subject Awards, Sports awards (Players of the Year) etc
- Presentation of medals/trophies to sports teams at Awards Ceremony.

3.3 Restorative Approach

During the course of all interactions, the school endeavours to employ a restorative approach to promote positive behaviour. Approaching behaviour restoratively allows students to reflect on their behaviour and how it has affected them or others.

It creates an ethos of respect, equity and inclusion and gives students the opportunity to be accountable and take responsibility for their behaviour.

4. GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE RUNNING OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Students and their parents/guardians need to be aware of the following information, and follow all guidelines contained in this section to ensure the efficient and safe running of the school for the whole school community.

4.1 Classroom Code

- Pupils are expected to attend class promptly and in full uniform.
- Each pupil must occupy the seat in class assigned by the teacher.
- Pupils are expected to have all necessary books and materials/homework when coming to class.
- All classwork must be completed by each pupil in accordance with the direction of the teacher.
- Students should obtain permission of the teacher to speak in class and not interrupt the conduct of the class.
- Journals must be used to record homework.
- Pupils must be respectful to teachers when being corrected
- Students must have permission from the teacher to leave the class during class time with a signed note in their journal by the teacher.
- Unauthorised entry to classrooms, practical rooms, PE changing rooms, library and gym is prohibited.
- The use of offensive/foul/obscene language is absolutely forbidden.
- Students are not permitted to chew gum during class and on the school grounds.
- School bags to be kept under desks during class time (except for practical classes) and school bags should be packed and left in classrooms at breaktime.
- Mobile phones are not allowed on the school grounds and or during school activities/trips. Please refer to the mobile phone policy for subsequent information.

AROUND THE SCHOOL

Students should behave appropriately when attending school, showing respect for themselves, others and to the school.

Lockers:

- Lockers are available for students to keep their belongings, a padlock must be used. The school accepts no responsibility for the personal property of students.
- During PE/practical subjects and school trips/activities students must store their Chromebooks and any other valuables in their locker. Lockers are liable for inspection at any time and the privilege may be withdrawn. Lockers should not be used between classes.
- The cost of replacing lost keys/locks is the responsibility of the student.

4.1.1 School Journal

Each student will be provided with a school journal. The journal should be used to record all homework. It should be brought to all classes, be available to all members of staff on request and should be kept neat and free of graffiti.

It serves the following functions:

- Regularly creating a list and recording tasks in the journal can help you track your short-term goals, encourage good time management practices and increase productivity.

- Record all homework and check relevant homework on google classroom when instructed by the classroom teacher.
- Record of important notices, upcoming deadlines and school events.
- Students must have the journal in school at all times. The school has the right to inspect these journals at any time.
- Replacement cost of lost/defaced journals must be borne by the students.

4.2 Health & Safety

Under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, parents and students should be aware that smoking is illegal in schools. Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited anywhere on the school grounds, during school activities or at any time during school hours. The possession of lighters/matches/cigarettes vapes and e-cigarettes is prohibited.

- Any student found either in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or other mood-altering substances, either in school, on a school activity, or while representing the school is liable to serious sanction up to and including expulsion.
- If a student is suspected of being in possession either of a prohibited and or illegal item/s or of the property of another, management are entitled to investigate. Appropriate sanctions will apply up to and including expulsion. will apply. The Gardai may be informed.
- Students are not allowed to share cubicles in the toilets. In addition, students are not allowed to congregate in groups in toilets. Students must use their designated toilets for their year group.

4.3 Attendance and Punctuality

Students must attend school every day. Students must arrive on time in the morning, after lunch and for all classes.

- All appointments should be outside of the school hours where possible.
- When a student is late for school, this must be documented on VSware by the parent/guardian, and the student must sign in with the principal or deputy principal. Where a student is signing out early, this must also be documented on VSware with a valid reason. The student must sign out with the Principal/ Deputy Principals before leaving the school grounds. Parents/ guardians should have a valid reason for all these incidents.
- A medical certificate should be provided to the school should there be significant absence due to illness. This medical cert will be uploaded to the students profile on VSware.
- It is not acceptable for parents/guardians to remove students during the school academic year for family holidays/holidays.

4.4 Morning Break

- Students must not, under any circumstances, leave the school grounds during the morning break without permission.
- Chewing gum fizzy/energy drinks are forbidden on school grounds.

4.5 Lunchtime Break

- 1st & 2nd year students have no permission to leave the school grounds during lunch time break.
- Students of other years may leave the school grounds during the lunch break. These students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for their school and their local

community while out at lunch, and be mindful that they are representing Ardscoil Rath Iomghain with dignity and responsibility.

- Students are expected to keep lunch areas clean and tidy. Litter bins must be used for the disposal of litter. All who study and work in the school have a role to play in keeping it tidy and clean.
- Students should collect all materials for class from lockers when the first bell rings and be at their classroom by the second bell.
- Students are not allowed to be on school grounds outside school hours unless they are with a teacher or management.
- Chewing gum fizzy/energy drinks are forbidden on school grounds.

4.6 Outside of School

- Students are expected to behave in a proper manner when travelling to and from school.
- The code of behaviour applies to all students travelling on school activities. The school uniform must be worn on all school activities unless told otherwise by the teacher/management. Students without full uniform will not be permitted to attend.
- In relation to school activities, the students' participation/attendance will be determined by their overall school records. Students may forfeit any monies paid in line with this.

4.7 At the End of the School Day

- Students should collect their required belongings from their locker and promptly and respectfully leave the building.

5. RESPONSES TO INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

5.1 Level 1- Inappropriate Behaviour

Incidents where classroom expectations are not met.

5.1.2 Role of the Classroom Teacher at Level 1

Classroom teachers will take and record the following steps when classroom expectations are not met by student/s.

5.1.3 Recording of Incidents:

Classroom teachers outline the expectation/s not met and provide a brief description of the incident.

5.1.4 Interventions/Management of Inappropriate Behaviour

The classroom teacher will address inappropriate behaviour within the classroom in a variety of ways up to and including detention to ensure that teaching and learning is not interrupted.

The classroom teacher may use the following steps below to help their student/s succeed in meeting expectations. Using the options outlined below, the classroom teacher will provide the student with a new opportunity to meet the relevant expectation.

- Restorative conversation.
- Seating plan revision.
- Liaise with Year Head. The classroom teacher will work with the Year Head and the student to resolve the situation.
- If the classroom expectations are not met the classroom teacher may issue an appropriate sanction.

Interventions and actions are recorded digitally on VSware by the classroom teacher and assigned to the relevant year head.

5.1.5 Role of the Teacher at Level 1 Incidents of Inappropriate Behaviour on the School Grounds, School Trips/Activities

The teacher will address inappropriate behaviour in a variety of ways up to and including detention.

- Restorative conversation.
- Liaise with Year Head. The teacher will work with the Year Head and the student to resolve the situation.
- If expectations are not met the teacher may issue an appropriate sanction.

Interventions and actions are recorded digitally on VSware by the teacher and assigned to the relevant year head.

5.1.6 Role of the Year Head at Level 1

A restorative approach and pastoral support are at the core of the year's head role.

Following receipt of a level 1 referral, the year head may:

- Review and seek a pastoral and restorative conversation with the student.
- Seek to support the student in restoring relationships and in finding ways to repair harm.

- Liaise with the referring teacher and the student to seek to restore the relationship.
- They will encourage the student to take ownership of the situation and will facilitate the student finding their own solutions.

If there is a concern that a pattern is emerging, the Year Head may:

- Phone home to discuss student progress and/ or schedule a meeting.
- Incorporate further interventions, supports and/or possible sanctions.
- Behavioural Target Card for a specific period of time to track students' behaviour.

Possible Support Interventions:

- Further interventions and support could include supports such as-support from Guidance Department, School Counsellor, Home School Community Liaison, School Completion Programme, Pastoral Care Team, Mentoring Team, AEN Co-ordinator, Psychological Support Services, Community Counsellor etc.
- If a Year Head believes there is a concern or a pattern emerging, they may seek a digital 'Progress Report Form' to be completed by all teachers of the student, the results of which will be reviewed and discussed with parents. This form will be uploaded to VShare.
- Year Heads may directly refer any care/wellbeing concerns directly to the Pastoral Care Team.
- Interventions and actions are recorded digitally on VShare by the Year Head and/ or the relevant deputy principal.

5.2 Level 2- Inappropriate Behaviour

- Multiple Level 1 referrals.
- Incidents of serious misconduct will be referred straight to the year head and or senior management as a level 2 referral.
- Incidents of expectations not being met outside of the classroom are managed and reviewed at level 2, e.g., on the corridor, at lunch, in the canteen, on school trips etc.
- Incidents of serious misconduct include inappropriate behaviour, avoiding class on the school grounds, refusing to follow teacher's instructions in an appropriate manner etc.

5.2.1 Role of Year Head at Level 2

The year head and or the relevant deputy principal will manage and investigate all referrals at level 2. Restoring relationships is at the core of the year head's practice.

The year head and/ or the relevant deputy principal will manage and investigate all referrals at level 2. Restoring relationships is at the core of the year head's practice. The year head will seek to support the student and the affected parties to attempt to come to mutually acceptable resolution, to repair damaged relationships, and to facilitate the repairing of harm.

- The year head will review and investigate the incident/s, may liaise with students, tutors, classroom teachers, SNAs and management in the course of their investigation.
- Interventions and actions are recorded digitally on VShare by the year head and/ or the relevant deputy principal.

5.2.2 Sanctions

The year head and/ or the relevant deputy principal may issue sanctions if necessary, equitably and as appropriate:

- Lunch time detention. Year heads record and assign the detention digitally on VShare to the student's profile.
- After-school detention. This detention takes place every day after school for 2 hours.
- May place a student on a weekly report (Behavioural Target Card).

- Year head may recommend an internal suspension or suspension in consultation with management.
- Students at repeated risk of receiving sanctions may be referred by the year head to the relevant deputy principal/principal.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from the particular lesson.
- Parents will, at the discretion of the senior management, be required to compensate the school and members of the school community for any damage caused by their son/daughter to (school property) and or personal belongings of other students and or staff members. whether accidental or otherwise.
- This list is not exhaustive.

5.2.3 Possible Support Interventions

- Further interventions and supports could include supports such as-support from Guidance Department, Home School Community Liaison, School Completion Programme. Pastoral Care Team, Mentoring Team, AEN Co-ordinator, Psychological Support Services, Community Counsellor, School Counsellor, Discipline Committee Meeting etc.

In addition to sanctions and interventions, a contract of Positive Behaviour, when required will be signed by both the student and parent/guardians.

5.2.4 Contact Home

- The year head/management may phone home or request a meeting with parents.

5.3 Level 3- Inappropriate Behaviour

Incidents of serious misconduct which pose a threat to the health, safety, and wellbeing of any member of the school community will be referred directly to senior management.

- Repeated Level 2 behaviour of concern despite interventions provided.
- Refusal to comply with the code of positive behaviour. resulting in the school being unable to adequately maintain their duty of care.

The Year Head and/ or the relevant deputy principal will manage and investigate all referrals at level 3. Restoring relationships is at the core of the year head's practice. The year head will seek to support the student and the affected parties to attempt to come to mutually acceptable resolution, to repair damaged relationships, and to facilitate the repairing of harm.

The Year Head will review and investigate the incident/s, may liaise with students, tutors, classroom teachers, SNAs and management in the course of their investigation.

5.3.1 Possible Support Interventions

Further interventions and supports could include supports such as-support from Guidance Department, School Counsellor, Home School Community Liaison, School Completion Programme. Pastoral Care Team, Mentoring Team, Discipline Committee Meeting, AEN Co-ordinator, Psychological Support Services, Community Counsellor,, etc.

In addition to sanctions and interventions, a contract of Positive Behaviour when required will be signed by both the student and parent/guardians.

5.3.2 Contact Home

The year head/management will phone home or request a meeting with parents.

5.3.3 Role of Management at Level 3

The Principal can issue a suspension of up to 3 days, except in exceptional circumstances, where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days (4-5) is necessary.

If a suspension of longer than 5 days is being proposed, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

- Year heads & Management will investigate and collaborate as the need arises regarding level 3 referrals.
- Incidents of misconduct which endanger or have the potential to endanger the health, wellbeing, and safety of one or more members of the school community can be referred directly to senior management.
- Where warranted the principal sanctions suspensions, after notifying parents/ guardians.
- A reintegration meeting will take place between the student and the relevant deputy principal/ year head to support the student before returning to class.
- Facilitation of links to the community and other non-school support services.
- To plan for effective interventions for students.
- To support teachers relating to effective behaviour management.

5.3.4 Sanctions

Management may issue sanctions if necessary, equitably and as appropriate in addition to a suspension:

- Lunch time detention. Management will assign the detention digitally on VShare to the student's profile.
- After-school detention. This detention takes place every day after school for 2 hours.
- May place a student on a weekly report (Behavioural Target Card).
- An internal suspension.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Withdrawal from the particular lesson.
- Parents will, at the discretion of the senior management, be required to compensate the school and members of the school community for any damage caused by their son/daughter to (school property) and or personal belongings of other students and or staff members. whether accidental or otherwise.
- This list is not exhaustive.

6. THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT IN THE CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The Board of Management is ultimately responsible for the governance and direction of the school. The board must ensure that the Code of Positive Behaviour is developed, after consultation with all the partners and is formally adopted at a Board Meeting. The Code should support the Board in their duty to provide a comprehensive and inclusive education.

The Board of Management delegates that authority to the Principal formally and in writing on an annual basis.

7. SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as “requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.”

This is an option which will be used only in the case of conduct which is considered to be a serious or continuous breach of school rules or a serious infringement on the rights of other students. Where there is persistent/serious breach of discipline by a student the matter may be referred to the Board of Management.

Suspension provides the student with time to reflect on his/her actions and their consequences. Parents/Guardians should encourage such reflection during this period.

This period of suspension should also help to develop strategies to help deal with the student’s unacceptable behaviour.. Parents and students are encouraged to meet with the school’s Counsellor.

7.1 Grounds for Suspending a Student

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such 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.

Suspension from school should always be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, danger and/or disruption to learning. The decision to consider suspending a student for a defined number of days requires serious grounds such as:

- The student’s behaviour is persistently disruptive and 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 or is potentially dangerous.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to school property.
- The student is engaged in physical fighting on the school premises.
- The student has been seriously verbally or physically abusive to staff and students.
- Bullying, after other interventions have failed.
- Repeated persistent failure to follow instructions, after other interventions have failed.
- Refusal to comply with the school policy on mobile phones and all other electronic devices capable of taking images or connecting to the internet.
- Leaving the school grounds without permission during the school day.
- Smoking, vaping, the consumption of alcohol, the use of illegal substances/mind altering substances/drugs on the school premises or grounds or while on a supervised school outing.
- The use of discriminatory language.
- Serious disrespect for all managerial, teaching and ancillary school staff.
- Bringing in to school, or in possession of, a weapon or any potentially dangerous item/material.
- Repeated breaches of the Code of Positive Behaviour
- Any other occasion that the Deputy Principal/Year Head/Discipline Committee deems appropriate.
- This list is not exhaustive.

Parents will, at the discretion of the senior management, be required to compensate the school and members of the school community for any damage caused by their son/daughter to (school

property) and or personal belongings of other students and or staff members. whether accidental or otherwise.

7.2 Factors to Consider Before Suspending a Student

Before a suspension takes place the following procedures may take place:

- Ensure that there is a precise, written account on VShare.
- Consider how persistent the unacceptable behaviour has been.
- Consider whether the behaviour has escalated, despite interventions.
- Consider how other students and staff are affected by the student's behaviour, in particular the impact on teaching and learning in the student's class.
- Consider whether a referral to counselling is appropriate or whether the support of the Guidance counsellor or school counsellor would be of assistance. Further supports could include- Home School Community Liaison, School Completion Programme, Pastoral Care Team, Mentoring Team, AEN Co-ordinator, Psychological Support Services, Community Counsellor, School Counsellor, Discipline Committee Meeting etc.

7.3 Forms of Suspension

7.3.1 During the State Examinations

Serious misbehaviour during the state examinations which is referred by the examinations superintendent to the school authority is referred by the school Principal to the State Examinations Commission. Every measure is taken to protect the integrity of the State Examinations and where appropriate a separate centre will be requested for a student who is disruptive during the state examinations.

A suspension will be used when there is:

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

7.3.2 Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, where the continued presence of a student in the school at a particular time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students, staff or any other person in the school, the Principal may decide that an immediate suspension is warranted.

In these, as in all suspensions fair procedures will apply. In such situations a parent/guardian will be contacted. The situation will be explained and written documentation uploaded to VShare.

7.4 Procedures in Respect of Suspension

The implementation of the process of suspension should always be fair and impartial. Should suspension of a student occur the following procedures are used:

- There will be a written account of the incident or behaviour on VShare.
- The student will be informed verbally that he/she will be suspended and parents/guardians will be informed by the principal.
- A photocopy of the original will be posted to the Education Welfare Officer where a suspension is for six or more consecutive days or where the aggregate number of days on which a student has been suspended/absent in any school year is twenty or more days.

- Parents/guardians will be contacted by phone/ invited in to discuss the suspension with the Principal and given an opportunity to respond to the suspension. The minutes of these discussions will be kept by the principal.
- When an immediate suspension is considered warranted by the Principal for reasons of the safety of the student, other students and/or other staff a preliminary investigation is always carried out to establish the fairness and appropriateness of the proposed suspension.
- Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin has due regard to its duty of care for the student and in no circumstances should a student be suspended without first notifying parents/ guardians so that in the case of an immediate suspension parents/ guardians may make arrangements for the student to be collected.
- The Board formally reviews any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (see 11.7 Appeals).

7.5 Implementing a Suspension

The Principal notifies the parents/guardians and the student of the decision to suspend. The following will be confirmed:

- The period of the suspension and the dates it will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- The programme of study to be followed during the suspension.

7.6 Grounds for Removing a Suspension

A suspension can be removed if the Board of Management and the DES direct that it be removed.

7.7 Re-Integration of a Student Following a Suspension

This may involve a meeting with students and parents/guardians and the signing of Contract of Positive Behaviour by both the student and the parents/guardians. All students returning to school after suspension must meet and reflect on their behaviour with the relevant deputy principal/year head. This meeting is restorative in nature and student voice is actively encouraged. This may involve a written reflection.

A student returning to school after suspension is always given the opportunity for a fresh start to restore relationships, repair harm and start afresh. The school expects the same behaviour from the returning student as from all other students.

However, it is important that the student is reminded that his/ her record is cumulative over their time in the school.

7.8 Records and Reports

Formal written records are to be kept digitally on VShare of:

- An investigation prior to the decision to suspend a student.
- The duration of the suspension and any other conditions attached to the suspension.
- As the Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with the TESS (Tusla Education Support Service) reporting guidelines a log of suspensions will be recorded on the school management information system.

7.9 Review of the Use of Suspensions

School management will monitor the use of suspensions on an annual basis to ensure that its use is fair and consistent with school policies. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to review the use of suspensions at regular intervals.

8. EXPULSION

The authority to expel a student from Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education Act 2000 belongs to DES.

8.1 Grounds for Expulsion

Expulsion is a very serious step and one that is only taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour:

- in situations where a student's behaviour poses a real and significant threat to the health, safety, and well-being of students and/or staff.
- when the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- in situations where a student is responsible for serious damage to school property.
- assault.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors, such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, school authorities will have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

In such cases the school will already have taken and recorded on VShare significant steps to address the behaviour. Such steps may have included some of the following:

- Meeting with parents to try and find ways of helping the student to change his/her behaviour.
- Explaining to the student the possible consequences of his/her behaviour.
- Further interventions and support could include supports such as support from guidance department, Home School Community Liaison, Discipline Committee Meeting, School Completion Programme, Pastoral Care Team, Mentoring Team, AEN Co-ordinator, Psychological Support Services, Community Counsellor, School Counsellor etc.
- Seeking the assistance of external support agencies.

8.2 Expulsion for a First Offence

In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management of Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin may form the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The proposal to expel on a first offence may include situations such as:

- A serious threat of violence or physical assault towards another student and/or staff member on school premises/environs or during a supervised school event.
- Continued presence of the pupil in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the pupil's own safety and well-being.
- Supplying illegal drugs, under the influence of illegal drugs and /or using illegal drugs in the school/environs or on school activities.
- Sexual assault.
- Bringing the school name into disrepute.

As expulsion is a serious sanction the Board of Management will undertake a detailed and documented review of the circumstances which led to the decision to seek expulsion.

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, which will usually only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school will usually have taken

significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- provide interventions to modify the student's behaviour.
- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change his/her behaviour.
 - Making sure that the student and parents/guardians understand the possible consequences of his/ her behaviour, if it should persist.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. Community services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition, factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

8.3 Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

In advance of any hearing which could result in an expulsion the school will investigate the matter in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

The student in respect of whom the expulsion is being sought, together with his/her parents/guardians has:

- The right to know that the alleged behaviour is being investigated.
- The right to know the details of the allegations.
- The right to know how the issue will be decided.
- The right to respond to an allegation.
- The right to ask questions, in the presence of the Principal and/or Deputy, or year head where there is a dispute about the facts.
- The right to be heard by the Board of Management.

The student in respect of whom expulsion is being sought, together with his/her parents/guardians has:

- The right to impartiality.
- The right to an impartial hearing.
- The right to the absence of bias.

After the preliminary hearing the following procedural steps will be taken:

- A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal/Deputy and Year Head.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
- If appropriate the Board of Management will recommend seeking expulsion.
- Parents /Guardians will be given due notice of meetings in writing and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for hearings.
- At each stage the student and his/her parents/guardians will be informed and will be given every opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before expulsion is imposed.
- If the student and his/her parents/guardians fail to attend the meeting they will be informed of the seriousness of the situation and the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting and failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the student's alleged behaviour.

8.3.1 Step 1

A recommendation for expulsion of a student to the Board of Management by the Principal.

The Principal will form a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour. The Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal should:

- inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- ensure that parents/guardians have all the records relating to the alleged offence.
- provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as were given to the parents.
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing. Invite them to that hearing.
- advise the parents that they can make an oral and/or written submission to the Board of Management.
- give adequate notice about the hearing so parties have time to prepare

8.3.2 Step 2

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

It is the responsibility in the first instance of the Board of Management of Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin to review the initial investigation and to satisfy themselves that the preliminary investigation was properly conducted.

The Board should undertake their own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. No party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case should be involved in the deliberations.

Throughout the hearing, the Board must ensure that the members are, and are seen to be, impartial.

Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this. After both sides have been heard, the Principal or parents or student, if over 18 years of age, is not permitted to be present for the Board's deliberations.

8.3.3 Step 3

Deliberations and actions following the hearing.

- Having heard 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 appropriate.
- Where the Board, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing and the reasons behind their decision. [Education Welfare Act 2000].
- The Board should refer to the TESS (Tulsa Education Support Service) reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) Receives written notification [Education Welfare Act 2000].

An appeal against an expulsion under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will automatically succeed if it is shown that the Educational Welfare Officer was not notified in accordance with section 24 or that twenty days did not elapse from the time of notification to the Educational

Welfare Officer to the implementation of the expulsion (Education Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2007).

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

8.3.4 Step 4

Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.

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

- must make reasonable efforts to hold consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student and anyone who may be of assistance.
- convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.[Education Welfare Act 2000].

The purpose of the consultations and the meeting is to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education. This may result in an agreement about an alternative intervention that could avoid expulsion. However if remaining in school is not an option, the consultation should focus on alternative educational possibilities.

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].

The Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of a student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other students and/or staff.

8.3.5 Step 5

Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Education Welfare Board has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will proceed.

A formal record should be made of the decision to expel the student.

Parents and students should be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the relevant information and documentation.

9. APPEALS

- A parent, or a student aged over the age of eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.[Education Act 1998].
- An appeal may be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board. This appeal will go on to the General Secretary of the Department of Education and Science.

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].

10. REVIEW OF USE OF EXPULSION

The Board of Management of Ardscoil Rath Iomghain will review the use of expulsion in the school regularly to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns are analysed to identify factors that are influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

11. THE PLAN FOR REVIEWING THE CODE

The Principal and staff, or a special designated group representing staff, parents and the Board of Management, will review the code of behaviour of Ardscoil Rath Iomgháin on a regular basis.

Where aspects of the school are highlighted to be reviewed or addressed, the Board of Management, together with the Principal, will prioritise these areas and develop a plan and a timeframe for doing this work.

12. FORMAL ADOPTION OF THE CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF ARDSCOIL RATH IOMGHÁIN

Signed: _____

Niall Keenan

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____

Paul Murphy

Secretary, Board of Management.

Date: _____

12/11/23