



**St. Patrick's College**  
Lacken Cross, Killala - Co. Mayo

## CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Draft

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## Contents

1. Our School
  - 1.1 St Patrick's College Lacken Cross Mission Statement
  - 1.2 Introduction
  - 1.3 Outlook
  - 1.4. Goals of Code of Positive Behaviour
2. Policy Content
  - 2.1 Whole School and Curriculum Support for Positive Behaviour
  - 2.2 Promoting Good Behaviour
  - 2.3 Rewards and Recognition
3. Policy Content
  - 3.1. Understanding Behaviour
  - 3.2. Influences on Behaviour
  - 3.3. Setting Standards of Behaviour
  - 3.4. Whole School Approach
4. School Expectations
  - 4.1. Attendance and Punctuality
  - 4.2. Bullying and Harassment
  - 4.3. Concerns, Complaints about a Behaviour
  - 4.4. Implementing the Code
  - 4.5. Whole School Approach
  - 4.6. Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour
  - 4.7. Use of Sanctions
  - 4.8. Sanctions
  - 4.9. Ladder of Intervention
  - 4.10. Records
  - 4.11. Stages in the Ladder of Intervention.
  - 4.12. Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities
5. Suspensions and Expulsions
  - 5.1. Grounds for Suspension and Exclusion
  - 5.2. Behaviours that will usually result in a Suspension

5.3. Forms of Suspension

5.4. Suspension Procedures and Implementation

5.5. Appeals against Suspensions

5.6. Expulsion, Exclusion Procedures, and Implementation

5.7. Appeals

5.8. The Appeals Process

5.9. Review of the use of expulsion

5.10 Communication, Involvement and Dissemination

6. Evaluation

6.1. Review and Development

## **1. Our School**

St. Patrick's College is a co-educational school which aims to provide a broad education designed to help each pupil achieve their potential. Administrators and teachers see themselves as supporting the parents and guardians who are the primary educators of their children. The broad education offered strives towards not only academic achievements but the complete development of each pupil.

### **1.1. School Mission Statement**

*We believe we can make a difference by providing quality education to our students in a caring and respectful environment. We value respect, fair play, and everyone's right to be himself or herself. We aim to help our students to develop a sense of their own unique worth, to become their best selves and to respect the rights of others. We strive for good relationships between our students, our staff, and our parents. We educate our students not only for now but also for life.*

### **1.2. Introduction**

'The code of behaviour (conduct) is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that altogether form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well.'

*Student Guidelines for the code of behaviour. NEWB Guidelines*

The previous policy was audited by all staff and reviewed in consultation with other partners e.g., Student Council, Parents Association, and the Board of Management.

The expectations for behaviour in this code apply to all students in the college during school time, on the school bus, in attendance at a school activity/extracurricular activity and on school tours both at home and abroad.

### **1.3. Outlook**

This policy applies to students at St. Patrick's College and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. This policy outlines that if a student is recognisable as a student at our school (i.e., wearing the St. Patrick's College uniform, at a school event, or outside sporting event, for example, then the school will be involved in the resolution of the issue so as it can, at all times, reserve the right to safeguard its good name. The code requires that all interactions between school staff and parents/guardians will respect the normal protocols per Dignity in The Workplace.

#### **1.4. Aims of the Positive Code of Behaviour**

- Encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour, to allow the students at St. Patrick's College mature into responsible participating citizens.
- Ensure all relationships within our school are ones of mutual respect and support.
- Establish an environment in St Patrick's College whereby all students, staff and members of our school community feel safe and respected within a secure learning environment.
- Implement effective procedures which allow for the day-to-day running of the school, and which meet the demands of current legislation.
- Promote good behaviour and self-discipline to ensure all our students understand what is expected of them.
- Facilitate the appropriate involvement of all school personnel.
- Ensure understanding by the parents/guardians, students, staff, and management of the code of conduct and the reasons for it.
- Outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions that will be used in response to negative behaviour. All students will be treated equally within our school.
- Outline the interventions to be used when a student repeatedly misbehaves. This will allow staff and students to have clear procedures in place so as students are aware of the consequences their actions may have.
- Encourage the participation of all members of the school community in promoting appropriate behaviour.

#### **2. Policy Content**

##### **2.1. Whole School and Curriculum Support for Positive Behaviour**

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

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

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

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

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

3. School expectations and the reasons for these are discussed as part of the school's pastoral care programme. A synopsis of the expectations and a student contract is included in the school journal and must be signed on an annual basis by the student and their parents/guardians.

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

4. The notion of tolerance for others, self-control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are discussed as part of the school's SPHE, CSPE, and Wellbeing programmes.

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

5. Issues such as bullying, racism, sexism, harassment, violence, substance misuse...etc. are discussed with the students during their time in our school using SPHE, CSPE, current affairs and/or outside speakers.

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

6. The Student Support Team, Guidance team, Year Head and class tutor system are in place to support students who need additional guidance in behaviour management.

7. The emphasis on student voice and leadership motivates students to maintain high standards of behaviour and to aspire to be good role models.

## **2.2. Promoting Good Behaviour**

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

Strategies to promote good behaviour include:

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

- Specific teachers are available to offer support for students that may need them.

### **2.3. Rewards and Recognition**

The teachers at St Patrick's College will use the following methods to reward students for meeting expectations for positive behaviour and or to mark noticeable efforts at improving their behaviour.

- Verbal praise to student in class or privately.
- Acknowledgement at assembly.
- Recording a positive note in school journal.
- Positive phone call home.
- Positive comment by class tutor or year head.
- Positive notes in the school journal.
- Recognition on school website and other social media platforms.
- Recording a positive note on the student's VS Ware system.
- Movie class with treats for students.
- Display of students' work.
- Leadership roles given to students e.g., class representative on Student Council, peer mentor or prefect.
- Other class-based rewards e.g., cinema trips, Canteen vouchers
- End of year award ceremony.

### **3. Policy Content**

The code of behaviour is divided into the following subsections:

1. Understanding behaviour.
2. Setting standards of behaviour.
3. Whole School Approach.
4. The school expectations
5. Promoting good behaviour.
6. Responding to inappropriate behaviour.
  - 6.1 Preventative measures.
  - 6.2 Use of sanctions.
  - 6.3 List of sanctions.
  - 6.4 Ladder of referral.

7 Implementing the code of behaviour.

8 Clearly defined roles.

9 Suspensions and expulsions.

### 3.1. Understanding Behaviour

Knowledge about what shapes the behaviour of children and young people, as individuals and as groups, enables teachers and other school staff to:

- Plan and implement a team approach to help students behave well.
- Develop ways of responding to unacceptable behaviour that are more likely to work and avoid responding in ways that may escalate the problem.
- Avoid an individualised or personal stance about the behaviour of students.

Parents must realise that home values and parental attitudes can help or hinder a student's behaviour and learning in school.

Students also need to be given an insight into their own and other's behaviour, thus building their capacity to take responsibility for their behaviour and to help each other to behave appropriately.

Learning, relationships, and behaviour are inextricably linked.

Good behaviour is an outcome of effective learning and good relationships. Good behaviour is also an influence on how students learn.

Behaviour has meaning. It is not random. Behaviour can be learned. This means it also has the potential to change.

What teachers, other adults and other students do in response to a student's behaviour is critical in influencing the choices students make about how they behave. Effective teaching and learning are linked to good behaviour.

### 3.2. Influences on Behaviour

It is useful to think about influences on behaviour in terms of factors primarily within the person and those that are external or interpersonal.

Within the person influences	External or interpersonal influences
Age & stage of development Personality & temperament Personal history & experience Physical, sensory, or medical characteristics Skills, ability to learn Beliefs about self and others Resilience & self-efficacy	Parental & family patterns & relationships Social networks, including friends & peer groups Neighbourhood & community factors The status & standing of different groups in society School factors Time, opportunity & support for personal /social development



Knowledge surrounding the influence of groups and the relationships within and between the many groups and subgroups in the school environment is an important part of the understanding of behaviour. School life is fundamentally social, and individual students and teachers are part of many groups and subgroups over 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.

### **3.2. Setting standards of behaviour**

The school's standards of behaviour express the kinds of behaviour and relationships that will create a positive environment for teaching and learning in St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross. St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross 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. St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross standards of behaviour reflect 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.
- Attending school regularly and punctually.
- Doing one's best in class.
- Taking responsibility for one's work.
- Keeping the rules.
- Helping to create a safe, positive environment.
- Respecting staff.
- Respecting other students and their learning.
- Participating in school activities.

The standards of behaviour also signal to the members of St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross school community the kinds of behaviour that are not acceptable in our school, for example:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation).
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning.
- Threats or physical hurt to another person.
- Damage to property.
- Theft.

### **3.3. Whole School Approach**

Schools need to define and teach the behaviours they expect from students. Schools can foster in students' skills to manage their own behaviour and to respond appropriately to the behaviour of others. In this way, schools equip students with essential life skills, while also creating the conditions for effective teaching and learning. It is essential that as a school community, elements that

can impact on behaviour are identified and agreed on. Having cemented in place what is considered as inappropriate, the whole school community can identify and deal with incidents accordingly and consistently across school life. When taken as a single entity the code of behaviour cannot sculpt the environment and atmosphere that is required for our students to learn and behave accordingly.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to ensure that our students behave well.

Aspects of our whole school approach to behaviour include:

- Implementing our ethos, policies and practices that work together to create a positive environment.
- Working together side by side to ensure continuity in our approach to behaviour.
- Ensuring excellent classroom management and detailed curricular planning among subject departments.
- Being open to the community and remaining inclusive within it.
- Ensuring that break times are well monitored, both in terms of timekeeping and behaviour.
- Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are given the time and energy to be beneficial to the students while upholding the code of conduct and the reputation of the school when being represented off campus.

Students' behaviour is strongly influenced by their teachers' classroom management and methods. The classroom is where boundaries, as well as expectations, are formed; it is here that behaviour norms for the broader community can be realised. The teacher's skill, experience and training are essential when recognising and preventing problems.

Parents' support for the school when a behavioural problem arises can greatly minimise potential disruption and ensure there is little chance of a repeat of this behaviour.

The Board of Management ensures that there are structures in place to support positive behaviour and an effective learning environment.

#### **4. School Expectations**

##### **1. That you come to school every day, arrive on time, and attend all classes.**

###### ***This means that:***

1.1 You arrive on time for school and be punctual for all remaining classes. First class begins at 8.55 a.m., but all students are expected to be in school before 8.50 a.m.

1.2 All absences must be explained by note in the journal from parents/guardians to the class tutor or the Year Head.

1.3 If you must leave St. Patrick's College, during the day, you bring in a note to your tutor or the office to get permission to leave.

1.4 You must also be signed out in the school's record book at the office on departure and be collected by a responsible adult.

1.5 You must have signed permission from your teacher to be out of class.

###### ***Because:***

- Attendance, good communication, with the school and being on time shows respect for your teachers and fellow students.
- Good attendance and good timekeeping help everyone to do well at school. Time missed is hard to make up.
- St. Patrick's College is responsible for your Health and Safety during school time.

##### **2. That you come to St. Patrick's College well-presented and in full uniform.**

Students at St Patrick's College, Lacken Cross must always wear the full school uniform, unless they have permission from their Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.

###### ***This means that:***

2.1 You always wear the St. Patrick's College uniform at school. The school uniform is unique to our school. It should be worn with pride and respect with no alterations.

2.2 Jewellery should be confined to the ears and kept to a minimum. Chains should not be worn outside the uniform.

2.3 Visible tattoos are not permitted.

2.4 A high standard of personal hygiene is expected. Excessive make-up and fake tan are not permitted.

**Because:**

- This is the uniform agreed by parents/guardians, students, and St. Patrick's College Board of Management.
- Health and Safety in St. Patrick's College is an important issue. These rules apply even if students are given permission not to wear their school uniform, e.g., non-uniform days, school trips or extra-curricular activities.

**3. That you come in prepared for your subjects.**

Students at St. Patrick's College should be prepared for all their classes, including non-examination classes.

**This means that:**

3.1 You have correct books, any special materials and equipment required, student journal, completed homework, pens and copies with you in class.

3.2 You do not go to the lockers between class without the specific permission of your teacher.

3.3 That you get all your project work for your subjects presented on time. This includes Classroom Based Assessments, Junior Cycle Project work, Leaving Certificate Project work and L.C.V.P. assignments and any other project set by the teacher or the State Exam Commission.

**Because:**

- You cannot participate fully in class without the correct books and equipment.
- The teacher cannot teach, and you cannot learn if you are not prepared for class.
- If you are not prepared for class, you can interfere in the teaching and learning of others.
- The school is not obliged to accept late projects, unless under exceptional circumstances.

**4. That you co-operate in the classroom and always try your best with classwork, homework, and all timetabled/curricular activities.**

**This means that:**

4.1 You listen to your teachers and do not disturb the class.

4.2 You follow each teacher's specific classroom rules.

4.3 That you stay in the place assigned to you by the teacher and do not move about the classroom without the teacher's permission.

4.4 You always carry your school journal and always enter your homework in it.

4.5 You show respect and co-operate fully with teachers and other St. Patrick's College staff.

4.6 You participate in all timetabled curricular activities unless you have a note from parents/guardians for once off occurrences and a medical cert for ongoing occurrences.

4.7 You only access computers and the internet under the direct supervision of teaching staff.

**Because:**

- The teacher has a right to teach, and all students have right to learn.
- Homework builds on the work done in class.
- The school has high expectations for participation in all classes.
- Students and their parents/guardians have agreed to follow the Internet A.U.P.

**5. That you co-operate and always try you best when participating in extra-curricular activities.**

This means that:

5.1 Representing the school as a player or a supporter is a privilege. Students with poor attendance or poor academic or disciplinary records may not be allowed to participate in some activities.

5.2 You represent the school to the best of your abilities whether playing or supporting.

5.3 You follow the instructions of the coach or supervising teacher always.

**Because:**

- St Patrick's College is committed to the development of the full range of each student's talents and aptitudes. Students are invited and encouraged to participate in as wide a range of sports and other activities as possible outside the regular school timetable.
- The organisation of these activities takes a lot of effort and teachers who give generously of their time and expertise in the promotion of these activities on a voluntary basis.
- St Patrick's College reserves the right to always protect its good name and reputation.

- Extra-curricular activities help to build teamwork, social skills and friendship, teamwork, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

**6. That you show respect, consideration, and good manners always in your dealings with everyone. This includes fellow students, teachers, other staff members, parents, visitors to the school and the local community.**

**This means that:**

6.1 You do not pick on, victimise, or bully others and that you report any incidents of bullying to a member of staff or your parents/guardians.

6.2 You do not engage in aggressive behaviour, e.g., fighting or threatening to fight, inside or outside of St. Patrick's College.

6.3 You show courtesy, consideration, and good manners to all members of the school community.

6.4 You carry out instructions in a co-operative manner.

6.5 You do not loiter in classrooms, toilets or changing rooms.

6.6 You use entrance/exit assigned when entering and leaving the College building. Emergency doors are to be used for emergencies only.

**Because:**

- You would like to be shown respect and consideration by others.
- Bullying, homophobic bullying and victimisation can cause fear, hurt, misery and illness. We want our school to be a safe space.
- Aggressive behaviour could cause serious injury or accidents and has no place in the wider school community.
- Teachers are entitled to teach without interruptions.
- The Office phone is available if you need to make an essential call or if your parent/guardian need to contact you during school hours.

**7. That you show respect, consideration, and good manners always in your online dealings and activities.**

**This means that:**

7.1 You do not engage in 'Cyber-Bullying' by using social media, texting messaging, email, instant messaging or any other medium.

7.2 This includes the posting of harsh or offensive messages or threats, the uploading of manipulated images or official school logos or symbols without consent or the use of personal information to damage or hurt a member of the school community, their good name or reputation.

7.3 The setting up or membership of a profile page, blog or any account that can damage or hurt a member of the school community, their good name or reputation is forbidden.

7.4 You keep your phone/non approved electronic devices always switched off unless you are allowed to do so by your teacher in accordance with the school's Mobile Phone Policy.

7.5 All students and their parents/guardians sign St. Patrick's College Acceptable User Policy as part of St. Patrick's College rules.

**Because:**

- You would like to be shown respect and consideration by others when online.
- The use of digital video/photos and other recording devices can lead to an invasion of privacy.
- Use of electronic devices during break time can lead to isolation and limit the opportunity for socialisation.
- The use of electronic devices can increase peer pressure to have the latest model.
- Mutual respect and positive behaviour help to create a safe and welcoming experience for everyone.
- The school has an Acceptable Usage Policy and an Anti-Bullying Policy which all students and their parents agree to follow.

**8. That you respect school property of others and the environment.**

**This means that:**

8.1 All students' belongings must be labelled and kept in their lockers. Lockers must be locked when not in use. Lockers remain the property of St. Patrick's College and are subject to search as per the school's locker policy/agreement.

8.2 Personal property such as valuables, and money is entirely the responsibility of the student. Students should only bring what is necessary to school each day.

8.3 All books, school bags, copies and diaries must be maintained in good condition, properly covered and without graffiti.

8.4 School property, walls, toilets etc., must be free from graffiti.

8.5 You contribute to keeping the school clean and free of litter.

8.6 All food and drink must be consumed in the canteen area only.

8.7 You do not interfere with or damage any school equipment.

8.8 You do not return to St. Patrick's College grounds outside of school hours without explicit permission from the school.

**Because:**

- Everyone benefits from working in a safe, pleasant, and clean environment.
- We are all responsible for maintaining a clean school.
- St. Patrick's College is private property.

**9. That you respect everybody's right to be safe from harm and injury.**

**This mean that:**

9.1 You do not bring or facilitate the bringing on to St. Patrick's College campus, or on any St. Patrick's College related activity, any object, or substances likely to cause injury. St Patrick's College has the right to determine which objects or substances are likely to cause an injury.

9.2 You do not remove equipment from any room that can be used to cause harm or injury.

9.3 You do not target, victimise, or bully others and you report any incidents of bullying to a member of school staff or to your parent/guardian.

9.4 You do not use, distribute, or sell alcohol, stimulating or any illegal drinks/substances/solvents/aerosols or cigarettes or e-cigarettes/vapes at any time on St. Patrick's College campus or during St. Patrick's College related activities.

9.5 You abide by Health and Safety regulations set out within each practical subject environment.

**Because:**

- Certain objects can present a serious threat to the Health and Safety of the school community and in some instances they may be illegal.
- Bullying and victimisation cause fear, hurt, misery and illness. We want our school to be a safe space.
- The use and sale of addictive substances is a legal and a Health and Safety issue.
- It is illegal and is forbidden – If anyone is found in possession of illegal substances, parent/guardians and Gardai will be contacted immediately. This is a serious breach of our school's Code of Conduct.



- The reputation and good standing of St Patrick's College in the community is a vital consideration for doing the right thing and in not engaging in behaviour that might endanger others.

**10. That you keep your schoolbooks in good order and always take proper care of the books on loan to you.**

**This means that:**

10.1 That you handle your schoolbooks with care and treat them with respect.

10.2 That you replace the protective covers on your book if they become damaged.

10.3 That you do not graffiti or write on your books.

10.4 That you return your books at the end of the year to the teacher in charge of the book rental scheme.

10.5 That you sign the Book Rental Scheme agreement form and get your parents to sign the form also.

**Because:**

- The Book Rental Scheme benefits everyone and damaged books cost money to replace.
- The smooth running of the Book Rental Scheme requires that everyone respects the books that the school loans to them.

**11. That you abide by all the school's policies of St. Patrick's College including the following:**

- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Anti-bullying policy
- Child Protection policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy.
- Uniform Policy
- Transition Year Policy

#### **4.1. Attendance and Punctuality**

The school's Attendance Strategy acknowledges the link between attendance, learning and behaviour. It is vital that the school is informed of a child's absence in order to protect, in conjunction with all other aspects of school life, the care and welfare of the students.

St Patrick's College is obliged under the Education (Welfare) Act to make annual reports to the appropriate authorities (Tusla/EWO).

The following are the procedures to be followed by parents when they are notifying the school about a child's absence:

1. Provide a written explanation for the student's absence in the student journal to the Class Tutor on the first day of return to school or by telephoning the school office.
2. To inform the school in advance of any planned absences from school.
3. A doctors' certificate should be provided for significant absences due to illness.
4. Students who leave the school during the day due to illness or appointments must be collected by a parent/guardian at School Reception and must then sign out. The signing out is inputted to VS Ware by the school secretary.
5. To acknowledge and, where necessary, reply to communications from the school in relation to attendance issues. Failure to provide a reason for absence as outlined above may result in a sanction being imposed on the student.
6. Persistent late arrival causes interruption to class and is a breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
7. Students arriving late must report to the school office before they go to class. Students who are late shall have their time of arrival recorded in their journal and in the late book.
8. Students must present a written explanation for lateness, signed by their Parent/Guardian. The school reserves the right not to permit students to attend class until an explanation has been furnished.
9. Students who arrive late on more than two occasions per week and who do not present a written explanation for their lateness shall be required to attend an after-school detention on the Friday of the week they are late.

#### **4.2. Bullying and Harassment**

Bullying and harassment are prohibited at St Patrick's College. Every student has the right to a safe learning environment and St Patrick's College fully endeavour to provide this at all times.

The school's Anti Bullying Policy provides clear guidelines for responding to bullying behaviour, is reviewed, and ratified by the schools Board of Management and can be viewed on the school website.

### **4.3. Concerns/complaints about a behaviour matter**

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

### **4.4. Implementing the Code**

The implementation of the Code of Conduct for St Patrick's College will include the following:

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

### **4.5. Whole School Approach**

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

The main elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

1. An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony to create a positive school environment.
2. A teamwork and consistent approach to behaviour.
3. Effective classroom management and good curricular planning.
4. An inclusive and involved school community.

Classroom management and teaching methods have a strong influence on students' behaviour. The classroom environment, like the wider school community, gives students clear messages about teachers' expectations and creates boundaries. The skills of the teacher in managing a routine engagement with students are critical in preventing problems.

In addition, the supervision of students at break times also helps to ensure the school creates and maintains a positive school environment for all members of the school community.

#### **4.6. Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour.**

It is the responsibility of the school to maintain a classroom and school environment which is supportive of the learning of every student, and which ensures continuity of instruction. Despite the best efforts of the school, inappropriate behaviour happens.

Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning and potentially has a detrimental effect on the health and safety of other students, school authorities must weigh the needs of that student with the needs of other students and staff. The school expects the support of the families of students when it must respond to inappropriate behaviour.

##### Preventative Measures

- An information meeting is held for the parents/guardians of all new entrants at which the code of behaviour is explained.
- Students and their parents/guardians are obliged to read and sign their agreement with the school code of behaviour and their support and cooperation with it.
- A copy of the code of behaviour is provided to all parents and on the school website.

The school's expectations of the pupils, as outlined in the code of behaviour.

- These behaviours, and the reasons for these are frequently discussed with the classes by their tutors.
- Assemblies are regularly held for all year groups at which the code of behaviour and any current issues/problems are discussed.
- Classes are surveyed regularly to ascertain if there are any issues such as bullying, harassment, racism etc. which contravene the code of behaviour.
- During their time in St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross concepts such as fairness, natural justice, tolerance for others, respect etc. are discussed by and with students as part of the religious education, CSPE, SPHE as well as other subjects and programmes.
- A warm respectful atmosphere exists within the school and students are encouraged to bring any problems that they may have or observe others having to a member of staff.

#### **4.7. Use of Sanctions**

Sanctions are used not solely to punish a student, but more importantly to help the student to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable and help them to take responsibility for that behaviour. The use of sanctions will be:

- Part of a plan to modify behaviour.
- Proportionate and appropriate.
- Consistent throughout the school.
- Understood by the student and his parents/guardians to be a consequence of the behaviour.
- The school may, when appropriate, apply sanctions in response to behaviour that occurs outside the school grounds and/or the school day.

#### **4.8. Sanctions**

The following sanctions are used in our school and are scaled to take account of the nature of the incident. It is not an exhaustive list.

- Verbal correction from the teacher.
- Directing the student to move to another part of the classroom as part of a revised seating plan.
- Directing the student to complete additional work including key-word lists.
- A note home to parents/guardians in the school journal which is signed by parents to indicate receipt of the note.
- A telephone call to parents/guardians.
- Withdrawal of the student from class to work in a different location such as the classroom of a colleague by arrangement.
- Giving the student detention. Parents/guardians will be informed in advance.

##### Sanctions for more serious incidents or persistent breaches of the code of behaviour include:

- The teacher records the incident, noting action already taken; and forwarding it to the Year Head/Assistant Year Head.
- Detention during lunch time or after school, parents/guardians being informed in advance.
- A phone call to parents/guardians by the Year Head, Deputy Principal.
- Putting a student on report.
- The student being called to a meeting with the Year Head or Deputy Principal
- Assigning the student, a school community task such as picking up litter, removing graffiti etc.
- Parents/guardians and student being asked to meet with the Year Head or Deputy Principal.
- Withdrawal of school privileges such as representing the school or attending extra-curricular activities etc.
- Friday afternoon detention.

- Other suitable interventions designed to modify specific behaviours.
- Suspension from school (in accordance with the school's policy on Suspension and Exclusion).
- Exclusion from school (in accordance with the school's policy on Suspension and Exclusion).

#### **4.9. Ladder of Intervention**

The school has an agreed ladder of intervention for unacceptable behaviour within the school.

The basic principle is that the more serious the incident is the higher up the ladder it is dealt with. Interventions may be formal in nature i.e., Tutors, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellor, Pastoral Care Team etc. or more informal e.g., a teacher mentoring a student with whom they have a positive relationship.

Note that teachers may refer students for advice and support as opposed to applying a sanction.

#### **4.10 Records**

Teachers maintain their own records of incidents that occur within a classroom, any sanctions imposed and any communication with parents/guardians. More serious breaches or persistent breaches of the code are recorded and communicated to the Year Head with a record of any actions taken and communication with parents/guardians. The Deputy Principals and Principal will also keep a record of their interventions with students following unacceptable behaviour.

#### **4.11. Stages in the ladder of Intervention**

##### **Ladder of Referral**

The procedures for dealing with dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour or a breach of the school code of positive behaviour are known as the 'ladder of referral.' The more serious the incident the higher up the ladder it is dealt with.

##### **Level One**

Each teacher has direct responsibility for promoting discipline in their own classroom. The use of consistent rules and routines in class should help to alleviate any occasional minor behaviours of concern.

Subject teachers may use some of the schools' agreed sanctions. Subject teachers should record all incidents of failure to meet expectations in their own records and in the student journal where necessary.

##### **Level 2**

Each class group is assigned a Class Tutor with special responsibility for them. The Class Tutor monitors the student diaries and imposes sanctions. Class Tutors should keep records of student misconduct and can refer students to their Year Head.

##### **Level 3**

Each year group is assigned a Year Head. The Year Head has special responsibility for the year group and has a pastoral and disciplinary role to play for the students in their year group.

Year Heads usually deal with more serious offences or an accumulation of minor offences. Year Heads can impose school sanctions up to and including suspension (sanctioned by Senior Management). Year Heads should keep detailed records of student conduct.

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

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

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

***St Patrick's College, Lacken Cross, Killala - Code of Behaviour – Ladder of Referral***

	<b>Level One</b>	
Behaviours for Concern	Suggested Teacher Responses For misbehaviours	Positive Affirmations when Improving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No school diary in class</li> <li>▪ Homework incomplete</li> <li>▪ No homework</li> <li>▪ No PE gear or note</li> <li>▪ No classroom materials</li> <li>▪ Chewing Gum</li> <li>▪ Incorrect Uniform</li> <li>▪ Late for Class</li> <li>▪ Littering/Throwing paper</li> <li>▪ Avoiding Lunch time clean up</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Non-Verbal reminder</li> <li>2. Re-positioning of teacher</li> <li>3. Rule reminder</li> <li>4. Re-direction of student (task orientated)</li> <li>5. Verbal Warning</li> <li>6. Meeting after class</li> <li>7. Change to seating plan</li> <li>8. Note of concern in student journal</li> <li>9. Phone Call Home</li> <li>10. Tutor reference –verbal.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Verbal praise</li> <li>● Positive note in school journal</li> <li>● Tutor reference –verbal.</li> <li>● Phone Call Home.</li> <li>● Rewards e.g., Canteen Vouchers</li> <li>● Class Trips Away</li> </ul>

**Level One** –

Three notes in student journal –Tutor informs Year Head.

Year Head gives **two** lunchtime detention (Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday)

Repeated notes – Move to Level Two -3 x Detentions – DP and Principal

Involvement (6 and 7)

<b>Level Two</b>		
Behaviours for Concern	Suggested Teacher Responses For misbehaviours	Positive Affirmations when Improving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No diary signed for agreed tutor day</li> <li>● Rough play on school grounds</li> <li>● Swearing</li> <li>● Failure to show up for teacher or Year Head detention</li> <li>● Late for school – no note</li> <li>● Interrupting Teaching and Learning</li> <li>● Disturbing other students</li> <li>● Refusal to follow teacher instructions</li> <li>● Incomplete class work</li> <li>● Defiance</li> <li>● Using classroom materials or equipment inappropriately</li> <li>● Graffiti</li> <li>● Out of class without permission</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note of concern in student journal (Teacher)</li> <li>2. Meeting with tutor and student</li> <li>3. A school community task such as picking up litter, removal of chewing gum or graffiti (Teacher and/or Tutor)</li> <li>4. Year Head referral form.</li> <li>5. On report form (Year Head)</li> <li>6. Phone Call Home</li> <li>7. Friday Afternoon Detention (DP/P/YH)</li> <li>8. Removal of privileges –sporting team membership.</li> <li>9. Referral to Pastoral Care Committee.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Verbal recognition.</li> <li>● Positive note in school journal.</li> <li>● Acknowledgement by Tutor or Year Head</li> <li>● Phone Call Home</li> <li>● Rewards</li> <li>● Class trips away</li> </ul>

**Level Two**

Three notes in student journal. Meeting with Year Head and **three** lunchtime detentions.

Year Head informs Deputy Principal and Principal at Senior Management Meeting. One or both will talk to student about their behaviour and may call parents/guardians.



<b>Level Three</b>		
Behaviours for Concern	Suggested Teacher Responses For misbehaviours	Positive Affirmations when Improving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Significant disruption of the lesson</li> <li>● Disobeying the teacher</li> <li>● Mitching class</li> <li>● Threatening behaviour</li> <li>● Physical Fighting</li> <li>● Intimidation or bullying</li> <li>● Smoking or vaping</li> <li>● Substance Abuse</li> <li>● Inappropriate use of mobile phone</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher should immediately seek advice from the Year Head and complete a Year Head Referral Form</li> <li>2. Investigate incident based on referrals.</li> <li>3. Meet/mediate with students.</li> <li>4. On report form</li> <li>5. Removal of sporting privileges/team membership</li> <li>6. Home contact</li> <li>7. Refer to Guidance/SEN/Pastoral Care team</li> <li>8. Refer to outside agencies – Gardai, Túsla, NEPS etc.</li> <li>9. Refer to HSCL</li> <li>10. Refer to Principal/Deputy Principal</li> <li>11. Refer to Board of Management</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contact with home</li> <li>● Meeting with student to offer support</li> <li>● Phone call home</li> <li>● Rewards -Canteen</li> <li>● Class outings</li> </ul>

**Level Three**

Because of their seriousness, most of these incidences warrant immediate action up to suspension and therefore should involve the Principal and the Deputy Principal.

#### **4.12. Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of the school community have roles and responsibility in ensuring that the code of behaviour is followed, ensuring a safe and secure learning environment for all students.

##### **Students**

The school expects that students will always uphold the code of behaviour.

##### **Parents/Guardians**

The school acknowledges the vital role that parents/guardians have in ensuring students uphold the code of behaviour and expects the support of parents/guardians in its implementation. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share information with the relevant school personnel in order to assist the school in understanding a student's behaviour and to plan interventions where necessary.

##### **Teachers**

The school acknowledges the role of teachers in the development and operation of the code of positive behaviour.

The school recognises that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management.

That pivotal role forms a core element of this code.

The teachers at St Patrick's College with special responsibilities for emphasising and reminding students of the code are:

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

##### **Other Staff**

The school acknowledges the importance the ancillary staff play in the day to day running of the school. They also play a part in the successful delivery of the code of behaviour by encouraging positive behaviour among students and by reporting incidents of misbehaviour and positive behaviour that they witness to school management.

## **Principal and Management Team**

The principal and management team promote positive behaviour by planning to ensure that staff, students, and parents are familiar with this code.

## **Board of Management**

The Board of Management is the decision-making body in the school. All policies are developed with the authority of the BOM and agreed by all school partners before becoming official school policy when approved by the BOM.

Serious cases of misbehaviour are brought to the attention of the BOM. The decision to suspend or not to suspend students has been delegated to the Principal by the BOM, and it is to the BOM that parents or students over 18 years of age can appeal in cases of suspension and exclusion.

## **5. Suspensions and Expulsions**

At St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross we believe that all students have the right to learn in an orderly and caring environment and as a school, we maintain high expectations of student behaviour. All students and teachers have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity, in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination.

The school acknowledges that there may be cases of unacceptable behaviour where it will be in the best interests of the school community and/or the student involved for the student to be removed from the school for a period of time or completely. Internal suspension, Suspension and Expulsion are the options available to the principal and/or the Board of Management.

The school's Code of Behaviour outlines the expectations we have of our students and what is unacceptable behaviour. Suspension is only one strategy within the school's code of positive behaviour which can be used in response to inappropriate behaviour.

St Patrick's College recognises that when all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension allows students time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour which led to the suspension and to accept responsibility for changing their behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future.

St. Patrick's College, Lacken Cross is required under Section 23(2) of the Educational Welfare Act 2000 to include our procedures for Suspension and Exclusion in our Code of Conduct.

The school's policies and procedures for the use of Suspension and Exclusion are in line with TUSLA guidelines.

To facilitate the day to day running of the school, the decision as to whether to suspend a student has been delegated by the Board of Management to the Principal (or, in his absence, to the Deputy Principal).

The principal may suspend a student for up to and including 3 days without consulting the Board of Management.

Suspensions of longer than 5 days in duration must be sanctioned by the Board of Management.

No individual suspension may be longer than 10 days.

An accumulation of over 20 days suspension will be reported to TUSLA.

### **5.1. Grounds for Suspension/Exclusion**

Suspension/Exclusion may be imposed for serious or persistent breaches of the School Code of Behaviour. A decision to suspend or a proposal to exclude a student requires serious grounds such as that:

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

### **5.2. Behaviours that will Usually Result in Suspension**

There are several behaviours that will lead to suspension or exclusion unless the principal deems otherwise due to circumstances such as:

1. Using foul and abusive language towards a member of staff or school visitor.
2. Fighting or other physically aggressive behaviour.
3. Possession of illegal substances.
4. Smoking or vaping.
5. Extreme rudeness and/or defiance.

### **5.3. Forms of Suspension**

Part of a behaviour management plan.

Immediate suspension (only in exceptional circumstances e.g., violence or threat).

Suspension during a state examination (threat to the good order of the conduct of the state exams, should normally be approved by the Board of Management).

### **5.4. Suspension Procedures and Implementation**

- Investigation into the alleged misconduct.
- Apply fair procedures based on principles of natural justice.
- Inform student and parents of this complaint (by phone or in writing).
- Give parents and students an opportunity to respond.
- Make an objective decision based on the findings of the investigation.
- Impose the sanction (inform the parents in writing).
- Formal written records will be kept at all stages of the process and any conditions attached to the suspension.

- The principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management.
- The student will be reintegrated after suspension.
- The teachers will help the student to take responsibility for catching up on the work missed.

The school will also set an appropriate amount of work for the suspended student which they will be required to complete before returning to school. This will help the student to catch up on missed classes and work.

### **5.5. Appeals Against Suspension**

All suspensions can be appealed in writing to the Board of Management, with where the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents/guardians, or a student over 18 years may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as per the NEWB document, [Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools](#).

### **5.6. Expulsions, Exclusion Procedures and Implementation**

The procedure for Exclusion is in line with TUSLA Guidelines. A summary of the procedural steps is as follows:

- A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the principal. The investigation will follow the principles of natural justice.
- Parents/guardians and the student are informed of the procedure and kept up to date with the investigation.
- A decision is made to refer the matter to the Board of Management (free from bias).
- The Board of Management holds a hearing and considers the principal's recommendation. The student and their parents/guardians are invited to attend the hearing.
- The principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management.
- The Board of Management deliberates and makes a decision following the hearing.
- The principal and parents/guardians are notified in writing of the decision.
- Consultations are arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education.
- Confirmation of the decision to exclude will be communicated to the parents/guardians after 20 days.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel: Where the 20-day period following notification from 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.

### **5.7. 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 Skills (Education Act 1998 section 29).

An appeal may also be brought by TUSLA on behalf of a student.

### **5.8. 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 Skills).

For further details about the Appeals process, including requirements for documentation, and the steps in the process, refer to current DES guidance.

### **5.9. Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals.

### **5.10 Communication, involvement, and dissemination**

The formation of this policy was created by engaging in a process of collaboration involving the policy coordinator, and school management. It was shared with the rest of the staff, the students' council, the parents' council.

## **6. Evaluation**

St Patrick's College is committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its school policies.

Specifically important to this policy is:

- Pupil feedback
- Staff feedback
- Parental feedback Ratification

### **6.1. Review and Development**

The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed regularly. Ongoing reviews and evaluation take cognisance of changing information, changing society, legislation, ministerial/government instructions, developments in the school-based programmes and feedback from students, staff, parents/guardians, and the Board of Management/ETB.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed

Signed