

## St. Canice's Boys' School Code of Behaviour

### Introductory Statement:

This policy was reviewed in the period December 2023 to January 2024. The redraft was considered and amended by the School Senior Management Team in January 2024. It was considered by the Board of Management at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.

### Rationale

It is necessary to review our Code of Behaviour at this time for the following reasons

- To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school.
- To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.

### Relationship To Characteristic Spirit of the School

Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community and seeks to foster the potential for growth and development in each child, so that he may live a full and happy life.

Our school endeavours to ensure that each child will be treated in a manner that is meaningful to that child. We understand that some children within our school community may require more help than others to behave in a manner that is acceptable to the entire school community; in that context, we are committed to making all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of such children.

Through co-operation between staff, parents and pupils we strive to create a school environment where everybody's opinion is valued, where everybody is treated with respect and tolerance, where everybody feels safe and where everybody can be secure in the knowledge that they will always be treated in a fair and just manner.

### Aims

The aims of St. Canice's Boys' School Code of Behaviour are:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others where all members of the school community feel safe.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

### Policy Content:

The policy is addressed under the following headings in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*.

1. Behaviour in the school.
  - School Rules.
  - Dress code.

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- Communication.
  - Dissemination of Code of Behaviour.
2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour.
    - Staff.
    - Children with Special Education Needs.
    - Role of SPHE curriculum.
    - Board of Management.
    - Parents.
    - Pupils.
  3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour
    - Classroom.
    - Playground.
    - Other areas in the school.
    - School related activities.
  4. Rewards and sanctions.
    - Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour.
    - Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour.
    - Involving parents in management of problem behaviour.
    - Managing aggressive or violent behaviour.
  5. Suspension / Expulsion.
    - Suspension.
    - Expulsion.
    - Appeals.
  6. Keeping records.
    - Class.
    - Playground.
    - School records.
  7. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school.
  8. Reference to other policies.
  9. Roles & Responsibilities
  10. Timetable for review.
  11. Implementation date.

### **School Rules:**

- 5 School Rules displayed in each classroom : Safety Rule, Learning Rule, Respect Rule, Environment Rule and Communication Rule.
- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults.
- Each pupil is expected to accept the direction, correction and guidance of all members of staff.
- Each pupil is expected to respect himself, adults, other pupils and their learning.
- Each pupil is expected to help create a safe and positive school environment.
- Each pupil is expected to facilitate and co-operate with good order throughout the school.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of, the school, staff, visitors, other children and their own belongings.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
- Each pupil is expected to do his best both in school and at homework.

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Teachers and SNAs shall ensure that the standards and rules are communicated in a way that children with special needs and children of different ethnicity can understand.

Adults in the school are expected to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other.

### **Dress Code & Conduct:**

Pupils are expected to wear their school uniform at all times except on days when they have P.E., when the wearing of their school tracksuit is acceptable.

All items of uniform and other possessions should be clearly marked with the owner's name. The school and its staff do not accept responsibility for items of clothing or other possessions mislaid or lost by pupils.

Pupils may wear a watch at school. The wearing of jewellery is not permitted at school.

Chewing gum is not permitted.

All forms of body piercing including earrings is not permitted. Those children wearing earrings, will not be allowed participate in PE, will not be allowed out to the playground, and will not be allowed on school trips/tours, on health and safety grounds.

Smoking, the possession, distribution or consumption of alcohol, the possession, distribution or consumption of drugs by pupils is strictly forbidden on the school premises and when pupils are involved in school related activities.

### **Communication:**

The use of communication devices is addressed in the Mobile Phone/Handheld Device Policy and the Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

The use of mobile phones and all forms of electronic recording devices by pupils is not permitted in the school building and grounds at any time the pupils are under the care and supervision of the school except where such use has been approved by a member of staff for a specific purpose.

Pupil mobile phones must be **switched off** at all times in both the school building and school grounds while pupils are under the care and supervision of the school.

Telephone calls to parents/guardians can be made on behalf of pupils from Reception when necessary. Telephone calls or messages from parents/guardians to pupils must come through Reception.

Parents/Guardians will be informed by phone call, text, email or letter where: punctuality, absenteeism, homework, uniform, are a cause of concern.

### **Dissemination of Code of Behaviour:**

In accordance with Section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act (2000) the principal teacher shall, prior to registering a child, provide the parents of the child with a copy of the school's code of behaviour. It is also available on the school website or on request from the office. The principal shall ascertain if the parent/guardian needs assistance, for language or other reasons, in order to understand the content of the policy and shall make provision for same where necessary. The principal shall, as a condition of registering such child, require his parents to confirm in writing on the Enrolment Application Form that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.

### **2. Whole School Approach in Promoting Positive Behaviour:**

This code of behaviour, on its own, cannot create the environment that makes it possible for pupils to learn and behave well. Our school climate, values, policies, practices and relationships support our code of behaviour. For this reason we as a school community have adopted a whole-school approach to behaviour, the elements of which are as follows:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony.

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- A teamwork approach to behaviour.
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management.
- An inclusive and involved school community.
- A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy.

### **Staff:**

Staff members as a team have opportunities to confirm that all school policies and practices support the objectives of the code of behaviour. These opportunities are provided as follows at Staff Meetings, Curriculum Planning Meetings, School Planning Days and Policy Review Meetings.

The code of behaviour is considered annually at a Staff Meeting. Teachers/SNAs are invited to raise matters of concern at this time.

All new and temporary staff members are given a copy of the code of behaviour. The principal and deputy principal shall oversee its implementation and provide support for new and temporary staff in order to ensure consistent implementation of the code of behaviour.

All staff members are reminded each term to ensure that they are familiar with the contents of the code of behaviour.

The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed annually by staff, the Board of Management and the Parent's Association.

### **Children with Special Education Needs:**

Children with special education needs are monitored by the class teacher in order to ensure that they comply with the code of behaviour. Where it is established that a child presents with behavioural difficulties arising from his special education needs the relevant issues will be addressed in the child's IEP in consultation with the class teacher, SET teacher and parents.

### **The Role of the Social Physical Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum:**

The school's SPHE curriculum supports the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

- Teachers are required to teach the SPHE Curriculum in accordance with our school SPHE Policy. Teachers are required to record their SPHE lessons in fortnightly schemes and note what has been taught in the Cúntas Míosúil.
- The SPHE Co-ordinator supports all new teachers in the delivery of the SPHE curriculum.
- Parents of newly enrolled children are furnished with a copy of the SPHE curriculum prior to enrolment. They are advised that the successful delivery of the curriculum depends on them supporting it wholeheartedly.
- Circle Time, Drama and Role Play are used to develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving and conflict resolution skills.

### **Board of Management:**

The code of behaviour is considered annually in detail at the October Board of Management meeting and at other meetings as the need arises.

- The Board of Management supports the code of behaviour in the school on an ongoing basis by ensuring that adequate copies are available, reviewing it annually, amending it if and when necessary and dealing promptly and fairly with serious breaches of behaviour.
- The Board of Management supports the staff in implementing the code of behaviour by providing opportunities and funding for staff development and by supporting staff who wish to conduct research in this area.

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### **Parents:**

Teachers are requested to bring matters of concern regarding pupils to the immediate attention of their parents. Parents are encouraged to respond promptly to requests from the school to meet staff if and when a problem arises.

- Parents are encouraged to bring issues of concern to the attention of the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- The Principal, Deputy Principal and designated members of staff formulate the Draft Policy and/or amendments to same and circulate these to parents and staff for their consideration.
- They then circulate the Draft Code of Behaviour to parents and invite their suggestions for amendments. The final authority rests with the board of management in accepting or rejecting such amendments.
- Parents are given a copy of the code of behaviour prior their application for the enrolment of their child and they are invited to read it. They are advised that when they sign the Enrolment Application Form they are indicating that they accept the terms of the code of behaviour. The code of behaviour is also available on the school website.
- Parents support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour in the following ways:
  1. Parents ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
  2. Parents encourage their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work and behaviour.
  3. Parents make themselves aware of, and co-operate with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions.
  4. Parents attend meetings at the school if requested.
  5. Parents help their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
  6. Parents ensure their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
  7. Parents ensure that their children are collected from school on time.

### **Pupils:**

- Pupils in the context of SPHE are invited to suggest issues that they would like to see addressed in code of behaviour. They may suggest rewards/sanctions that might be employed to address these issues.
- Pupils are reminded about the school rules on a regular basis.
- Pupils take part in assemblies where achievement and positive behaviour are celebrated publicly.
- Pupils, through their teachers, are invited to submit comments on matters that they perceive are working/not working. They are also invited to suggest changes for inclusion in the code of behaviour.

### **3. Positive Strategies For Managing Behaviour:**

#### **Classroom:**

The following strategies are used to encourage positive behaviour in the classroom:

- Involve pupils in discussing our 5 rules which form part of our DFL programme.
- Remind pupils of classroom rules regularly.
- Catch pupils being good.
- Praise positive behaviour
- Reward positive behaviour with "Golden Time".
- Never take back a reward.
- Give clear instructions.
- Plan for routines and transitions from task to task.
- Employ a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation

#### **Pupil Behaviour in the Playground:**

1. Stay in your own part of the playground and always use appropriate and respectful language.

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2. Never use threatening, insulting or disrespectful gestures/body language.
3. You must have permission to leave the playground.
4. Obey all supervisors in the playground.
5. Play safely, showing consideration for others.
6. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
7. Be honest and helpful if there is a problem.
8. Do not climb on roof or railings.
9. Do not throw stones or other objects.
10. Keep the playground safe and tidy.
11. When the bell rings the children should freeze on the spot and then when the whistle blows the children will walk to their lines and stand quietly.

### **Role Of Staff In The Playgrounds:**

- Teachers/SNAs are required to re-acquaint themselves with playground rules at the September Staff Meeting each year.
- Teachers are required to remind pupils of the playground rules regularly.
- Pupils are invited to suggest amendments to the playground rules every September and on other occasions as the need arises.
- Rules are displayed in all classrooms.
- One teacher is assigned to each playground during break times.
- SNAs monitor the pupils they have been assigned to but also intervene if and when they observe breaches of acceptable behaviour by others.
- SNAs intervene and alert the teacher on duty if and when they observe breaches of acceptable behaviour.
- Individual pupils and or groups that consistently breach acceptable behaviour are restricted to specific areas of the playground where they can be observed easily.
- All pupils must be visible at all times.
- Pupils who need to use the toilet during play time must get a green pass from the supervising teacher and give it back when they return to the playground.
- Pupils must be accompanied to and from the playground by their teachers at reception and dismissal time, before and after breaks and for all other playground based activities.

### **Wet Days:**

On wet days the following procedures apply:

- Supervising teachers patrol the corridors.
- All pupils are required to remain seated and adhere to all classroom rules.
- Special Needs pupils who require SNA support may have access to an SNA.

### **Other Areas In The School:**

- Pupils are expected to walk in the corridors.
- Pupils are expected to behave responsibly in toilets and cloakrooms and have consideration for others.
- Pupils are expected to leave toilets/cloakroom fit for use by others.
- Pupils are expected to treat their own property, the property of others and school property with respect.
- Teachers are required to remind pupils of these rules regularly.

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### School Related Activities:

Pupils are expected to comply with all school rules in the code of behaviour while participating in school related activities such as school tours, games, extracurricular activities and all other school-linked events.

### 4. Rewards and Sanctions:

Good behaviour is acknowledged in the following ways:

- Golden Time
- Attendance certificates.
- Pupil of the week.
- Praise
- Good behaviour certificates.
- Class rewards such as extra PE session, library time, trip to all-weather facility, etc.

Good behaviour and achievement is acknowledged publicly by:

- Announcement on the school public address system.
- Announcement at assemblies.
- Announcements at end of year presentations/prize giving.
- Announcements in School Newsletter.

### Strategies For Responding To Inappropriate Behaviour:

Sanctions are employed as a response to in-appropriate behaviour, they are a form of positive intervention but, on their own, they are unlikely to alter behaviour.

Sanctions are used in a respectful way that helps students to understand the consequences of their in-appropriate behaviour and encourages them to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Sanctions are required to:

- Defuse and not escalate a situation.
- Preserve the dignity of all parties.
- Be applied in a fair and consistent manner.
- Be timely
- Be proportionate
- Be appropriate.

### Classroom:

- **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR – Persistent misconduct will be treated using the following steps:**

- Step 1 - Verbal Warning
- Step 2 - Written Warning – name on **yellow** card.
- Step 3 - Name moved to **orange** card and 5mins golden time lost.
- Step 4 - Name moved to **red** card and **yard exclusion**.
- Step 5 - Removal from class and child given **CODE**.

- Serious misconduct may result in a child entering step 2, 3,4 or 5 as teacher sees fit.

- **DEFIANCE: Challenge, resist or disregard**

- Child asked once to follow instruction
- Child is given the option of following teachers' instruction or his parents/guardians will be called
- Parents/Guardians called immediately to take child home with **CODE**.

- **YARD BEHAVIOUR – Persistent misconduct will be treated using the following steps:**

- Step 1 - Verbal Warning
- Step 2 - Time Out in "Sin Bin"
- Step 3 - **CODE**

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**Serious Misconduct** such as defiance, foul/abusive language, or fighting will result in a **CODE / SUSPENSION WARNING / SUSPENSION**.

All **CODES** will be recorded and counted by the class teacher on a termly basis (yard and class codes together).

- ❖ **3 CODES** – Parents called in to class teacher and child misses next treat.
- ❖ **4 CODES** – Parents called in to Principal and class teacher and child given suspension warning.
- ❖ **5 CODES** – Suspension.

### Meetings With Parents (regarding codes):

Parents will be invited by letter/telephone call to discuss their child's behaviour. At the meeting it will be explained to the parent/s that the school is grateful for their support and that it is hoped that by working together the school and parent/s will be successful in their efforts to address the problem behaviour of the child concerned.

The parent/s will be given an outline of the in-appropriate behaviour. The child will be present and asked to give his side of the story and an explanation for the behaviour. Any concerns raised by the parent/s will be noted. The child, in the presence of his parents will be requested to give an assurance that he will make determined efforts to improve his behaviour.

### Persistent Misbehaviour:

Where a pupil continues to engage in persistent misbehaviour in either classroom or playground and all previously stated strategies have been exhausted the following sanctions may apply:

1. Formal report to the Board of Management.

Where a decision has been made by the principal to make a formal report to the Board of Management the parent/s will be invited to meet with the principal before the BOM meeting. The principal shall outline to the parent/s the reasons for making the formal report and explain that this report will be recorded in the BOM minutes and that a formal record of the report will be placed on the pupil's file.

The principal shall inform the parent/s that one of the following decisions may be made by the Board of Management:

- The BOM may note the report and take no further action and advise the parent/s of the decision.
- The Chairperson may request the parents and child to attend a meeting with him and the principal. The parent/s and child shall be requested to give an undertaking that the child will behave in an acceptable manner in the future.
- The child may be suspended for a temporary period, not in excess of three consecutive school days. The details of the suspension shall be communicated in writing to the parent/s. Should the parent/s have a cause for complaint in relation to the suspension of their child an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act (1998) may be lodged

The parent/s shall be advised (in writing) of the time and date of the Board of Management meeting and that they may attend such meeting and make a case for their child before the BOM makes its decision

### Managing Aggressive/Violent Misbehaviour:

Where it is found that the aggressive or violent behaviour of a pupil cannot be managed successfully through the application of a combination of positive behaviour management strategies and sanctions and that the suspected underlying cause is emotional in nature the following steps will be taken:

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1. The parent's shall be advised by the principal that it is the considered opinion of school staff that the child may have emotional and behavioural problems.
2. The parent/s shall be advised that the child, with parental consent, should be referred to a Child & Family Clinic (HSE) for assessment.
3. With parental consent, the referral shall be made to the appropriate clinic, with the support of the family doctor.
4. While awaiting a diagnosis and the sanctioning of resources every effort will be made to manage the child's behaviour with the aid of existing resources within the school.
5. The Special Educational Needs Organiser will be furnished with all appropriate reports when they become available together with an application for recommended resources.
6. The school NEPS psychologist shall be kept informed of developments at all times.
7. The Special Education Needs team shall provide support for the child and the teacher by helping to devise individual behaviour plans.
8. The In-school Management Team will mentor Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in behaviour management techniques.
9. The Special Education Support Service (SESS) shall be requested to provide support when deemed necessary.

### **Managing Persistent Violent/Threatening Behaviour:**

Where a pupil engages in violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself or the safety of other pupils or staff the pupil shall be suspended immediately in accordance with school's procedures for suspension. Where the child engages repeatedly in this form of behaviour he may be placed on a "Shortened School Day" (Suspension) or expelled. The school has a responsibility to make every effort possible to ensure the safety of all its pupils and staff. Where deemed appropriate, following professional involvement, every effort will be made by the school to find a suitable placement for a child who behaves in this way.

### **Suspension:**

A pupil may be suspended for the following reasons:

- Persistent misbehaviour
- Gross misbehaviour.

### **Suspension For Serious/Persistent Misbehaviour:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious/persistent misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school shall observe the following procedures:

- Inform the student and their parents about the complaint
- Give parents and student an opportunity to respond.

### **Informing the Student and Parents:**

- The student and parents shall be informed by the principal/person delegated by the principal about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension.
- Parents shall be informed by phone and in writing of the complaint. A written record of the notification of the parent/s shall be placed in the child's file.

### **Opportunity For Parental Response:**

The parent/s and student shall be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

A meeting with the student and his parent/s provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious/persistent misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It is also an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and his parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal shall write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school

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authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The principal shall record the invitations made to parents and their response, on the pupil's file.

- Where the BOM proposes to suspend a pupil for persistent misbehaviour and where all previous sanctions have been exhausted to no avail the parent/s shall be invited to the BOM meeting to speak on behalf of their child. The parent/s shall be advised (in writing) of the time and date of the BOM.
- Where the BOM decides to suspend the child, the child will be suspended for a temporary period, not in excess of three consecutive school days. The details of the suspension shall be communicated in writing to the parent/s.
- The parent/s shall be advised by the principal that should they have a cause for complaint in relation to the suspension of their child an appeal under Section 28/29 of the Education Act (1998) may be lodged.

### **Immediate Suspension for Gross Misbehaviour:**

In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board of Management shall authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension not in excess of three consecutive days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. The following shall be deemed as gross misbehaviour:

- Behaviour that represents a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person
- Behaviour that represents a serious threat to the safety of the pupil himself.
- Verbal or physical abuse of any member of the staff or other pupils.
- Disobedience and defiance of teachers.
- The use of foul and or inappropriate language.
- Vandalism to school property or property of others from the school community.
- The possession, distribution or consumption of alcohol or tobacco.
- Possession of a knife or other weapon.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the principal to be warranted for any one of the instances of gross misbehaviour outlined above, a preliminary investigation shall be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation shall immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. All of the conditions for suspension apply to immediate suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, shall be open-ended.

In the case of an immediate suspension, the parents shall be notified, and arrangements made with them for the child to be collected. The school shall have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances shall a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

### **The Period of Suspension:**

A student shall not be suspended for more than three school days, except in exceptional circumstances where the principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three school days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective.

If a suspension longer than three school days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter shall be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others the Board of Management shall authorise the principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five school days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened within three days of the incident concerned.

The Board of Management has placed a ceiling of ten school days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.

The Board of Management shall formally review any proposal to suspend a student, where the suspension would bring the number of school 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*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

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### **Appeals Against Suspension:**

The Board of Management shall offer an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student. The parent/s of the child shall be advised that they may appeal the decision of the principal or chairperson to a full meeting of the BOM. The parent/s shall be invited to the BOM meeting to speak on behalf of their child. The parent/s shall be advised in writing of the time and date of the BOM meeting.

In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, the parent/s shall be advised to make an appeal to the Patron.

### **Section 29 Appeal:**

Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student shall be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*, and shall be given information about how to lodge an appeal.

### **Implementing the Suspension:**

#### **Written Notification:**

The Principal shall notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter shall confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including a commitment by the pupil and parents to abide by the school code of behaviour.
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management where the suspension has been imposed by the Principal.
- The provision for an appeal to the Patron where the suspension has been imposed by the Board of Management.
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

The letter shall be clear and easy to understand. Particular care shall be taken in communicating with parents who may have reading difficulties, or whose first language is not the language of the school.

### **Engaging With Student & Parents:**

Where a decision to suspend has been made, the Principal or another staff member, delegated by the principal, shall meet with the parents to emphasise their responsibility in helping the student to behave well when the student returns to school and to offer help and guidance in this.

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

### **Grounds For Removing A Suspension:**

A suspension shall be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, Section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

### **After The Suspension Ends:**

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

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### **Re-integrating The Student:**

The school shall have a plan to help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed. The school shall arrange for a member of the SEN team to provide support to the student during the re-integration process if deemed appropriate.

### **Clean Slate:**

When a suspension is completed, a student shall be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and the suspension imposed, once the sanction has been completed the school shall expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

### **Records & Reports:**

#### **Records of Investigation and Decision-making:**

Formal written records shall be kept of:

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

#### **Report to the Board of Management:**

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

#### **Report to NEWB:**

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

#### **Review Of Use Of Suspension:**

The Board of Management shall review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that use of suspension is appropriate and effective

### **Expulsion:**

The Board of Management of St. Canice's Boys' School reserves the right to expel a pupil in accordance with terms of *Section 24 (4) and Section 24 (5), Education Welfare Act (2000)*.

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

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The pupil persists in the possession, distribution or consumption of alcohol or illegal substances.

The grounds for expulsion are similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, the Board of Management shall have tried a series of other interventions, and believe that all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour have been exhausted.

#### **Expulsion For A First Offence:**

The Board of Management shall expel on the basis of a single breach of the code of behaviour in the case of the following:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.

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- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Possession of or supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.

### **Procedures In Respect Of Expulsion:**

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

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

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

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the principal shall:

- Inform the Pupil and their parents about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- Parents shall be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour and the proposed investigation
- Parents and the student shall have every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation, and before a sanction is imposed.
- Where expulsion may result from an investigation, a meeting with the pupil and his parent/s shall be called by the principal. The parent/s and pupil shall have an opportunity to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It shall provide an opportunity for parent/s to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parent/s how best to address the student's behaviour.
- If a student and his parent/s fail to attend a meeting, the principal shall write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school shall record the invitation issued to parent/s and any response in the pupil's file.

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

Where the principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the principal shall make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

The principal shall:

- Inform the parent/s and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that parent/s have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent/s.
- Notify the parent/s of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parent/s that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensure that parents have seven days notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

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

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

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Where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it shall hold a hearing. The Board of Management meeting for the purpose of the hearing shall be properly conducted in accordance with Board of Management procedures. At the hearing, the principal and the parent/s shall put their case to the Board of Management in each other's presence. Each party shall be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly. The meeting may also be an opportunity for parent/s to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board of Management shall take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the principal and the pupil. Parent/s may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board of Management shall facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board of Management procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board of Management shall ensure that the principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

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

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

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (*Education Welfare Act 2000*, S24(1)). The Board of Management shall refer to National Educational Welfare Board reporting procedures for proposed expulsions. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (*Education Welfare Act 2000*, s24(1)). The Board of Management shall inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents shall be told that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

### **Step 5: Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer**

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

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

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

In the interests of the educational welfare of the student, those concerned shall come together with the Educational Welfare Officer to plan for the student's future education. Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, the Board of Management shall take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (*Education Welfare Act 2000*, s24(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend the pupil during this time. Suspension shall only be considered where there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

### **Step 6: Confirmation of the Decision to Expel**

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Chairperson of the Board of Management shall formally confirm the decision to expel. Parent/s shall be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parent/s and the pupil shall be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record in the Board of Management Minutes shall be made of the decision to expel the student.

### **Appeals:**

A parent may appeal a decision to suspend or expel a pupil to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998* section 29). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a pupil. Accordingly the school shall advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent of the pupil.

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The parent/s shall be informed in writing of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to a suspension or expulsion of a pupil in the:

- Letter of notification of suspension by the principal or chairperson of the Board of Management.
- Letter of notification of expulsion by the Chairperson of the Board of Management.  
Parents will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms.

### **Review Of Use Of Expulsion:**

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

### **Record Keeping:**

All records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

### **Class Level:**

- Teachers maintain detailed individual academic, social and behaviour records on the Individual Pupil Profile Form. Teachers are required to write up detailed factual accounts of incidents of behaviour that give rise for concern. Copies of **CODES** given to pupils will be kept in the class code folder.
- Serious misbehaviour is reported to the principal as soon as possible.
- The end of year report includes a reference to both positive and negative behaviour and specifically notes improvements in behaviour. Parents are kept up to date during the year regarding behaviour issues in the pupil's Homework Journal

### **Playground:**

- Supervising staff keep a record of misbehaviour in the School Yard Book. The date of an incident is recorded against the child's name on the class list and the details of the incident and sanction are entered in the Yard Book. Class teachers are informed immediately following the breaks by the teacher on Yard Duty. The principal is informed of persistent misbehaviour and serious misbehaviour by the class teacher and where necessary by the teacher on Yard Duty.
- Teachers are reminded to apply rules consistently at staff meetings and by memo from the principal where long periods elapse between staff meetings.

### **School Records:**

- Each teacher retains records of individual incidents. Copies of suspensions are sent to the principal for retention in the individual pupil's file. Control of access to the records is retained by the class teacher and the principal.
- Factual reports of particular incidents, communication between school and home, with outside agencies, Board of Management are retained in the individual pupil's master file in the principal's office.
- Documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29 is retained in the individual pupil's master file in the principal's office.

### **Procedures For Notification Of Pupil Absences From School:**

Parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence (Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 18).

All absences must be explained by note/letter upon the child's return to school by the parent, a phone call is not sufficient as it is not a written record. All notes regarding absences must be signed and dated and are retained for one year by the school. Records relating to absences are retained on the school database indefinitely.

In accordance with Section 21 of the Education Welfare Act (2000), the Principal must inform the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) when a pupil has reached a total of 20 days absence or more irrespective of the reasons for such absence. These absences are reported on-line to [www.schoolreturn.ie](http://www.schoolreturn.ie). There is an attendance monitor currently in place in the school who monitors the

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attendance of children who are regularly absent from school. The monitor contacts parents/guardians of these children on a day when an absence occurs.

All children leaving school early must be signed out at Reception by a parent/guardian.

No pupil may absent himself from class at any time. Any pupil feeling unwell should report the matter to his teacher immediately who will assess the situation. If the teacher is concerned about the child s/he will send him to Reception accompanied by another child. If it is deemed necessary a parent/guardian will be contacted and advised of the situation.

### **Punctuality:**

Infant classes attend school from 8:55 a.m. until 1:40 p.m. daily Monday to Friday.

First to Sixth classes attend school from 8:55 a.m. until 2:40 p.m. daily Monday to Friday.

Please note that the Board of Management does not accept responsibility for children arriving in the school before the official opening time, or pupils who remain in the school grounds after the official closing time or any time outside school hours.

Our school is open to receive pupils at 8:55 a.m. each morning. Any pupil arriving in school after 9:15 a.m. must have a note or sign in at Reception. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children are punctual at all times as reception time provides an invaluable opportunity for children's social development. Parents are also required to collect their children on time.

### **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

St. Canice's Boys' School promotes regular attendance in the following manner:

- The attendance monitor calling to each class on a daily basis.
- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment.
- "Hip, hip, hooray, we're all in today".
- Attendance Certificates.
- Whole class rewards for full attendance.
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils.
- Adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time.
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- Providing food and drinks (milk, water) in school

### **Reference To Other Policies:**

The following policies are linked with the code of behaviour.

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment & Admissions Policy.
- Record Keeping.
- Home / School links.
- Health & Safety.
- Special Educational Needs
- Mobile Phones

### **Success Criteria:**

Some practical indicators of the success of the policy are:

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.

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**Roles & Responsibilities:**

**Board of Management:**

The Board of Management shall ensure that the resources and training necessary for the successful implementation of the school's code of behaviour are provided in a timely fashion. The Board of Management shall also ensure that the code of behaviour is reviewed on a regular basis and revised as required from time to time with the relevant stakeholders.

**Co-ordinating the Implementation of Code of Behaviour:**

The principal and deputy principal will co-ordinate the implementation of the code of behaviour.

**Principal Teachers & SNAs:**

Principal Teachers & SNAs shall ensure the consistent implementation of the school code of behaviour, review it, and propose amendments if and when necessary.

**Pupils:**

The pupils will abide by the code of behaviour and suggest changes, when appropriate, in the context of SPHE.

**Parents:**

Parents are requested to support the school in the implementation of the code of behaviour and to contribute to its review and amendment when such are required.

**Implementation Date:**

24<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**Timetable For Review:**

This policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises so any changes can be implemented as soon as possible.

**Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.

This policy was published on the school website by the Board of Management in February 2024.

*Any future amendments to this policy will be published on our school website.*