

## **GOREY COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

### **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

In Gorey Community School we are proactive in promoting positive behaviour and preventing inappropriate behaviour.

- a) Teachers set high expectations for student behaviour, have good class routines, give positive feedback about behaviour and model the behaviour that is expected from students. Teachers recognise the importance of developing mutually respectful relationships.
- b) Students are clear on the contents of the code and the standards expected of them. The students' council was involved in the formulation of the code of behaviour and a copy of the code is given formally to each student on their entry to the school. The code is in the front of the Journal and a copy is on the school website.
- c) Parental co-operation is considered fundamental to the implementation of the code. An introductory meeting for parents of new students takes place prior to entry. At this meeting the values underlining the code are explained. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the code and in so doing it is assumed that the parents accept the code and that they will make every effort to ensure that their daughter/son complies with every aspect of the code.

#### **Standards of Behaviour**

1. Gorey Community School expects students in the school to show respect in all aspects of their school life. This respect starts with the student showing self respect and students are expected to show respect for their fellow students, the school staff, and the school property itself.
2. Students are encouraged to show kindness to each other and a willingness to help.
3. Students are expected to show courtesy and good manners in dealing with all members of the school community.
4. Students are expected to show fairness and forgiveness in their daily school lives.
5. Students are expected to attend school regularly and on time.
6. Students are encouraged to do their best in class at all times and to be responsible for their work.
7. Students are expected to refrain from bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
8. Students are encouraged not to interfere in the teaching and learning process.

## **Reward Systems in Gorey Community School**

- Recognition of achievement in assemblies and Awards Ceremonies.
- Star journal – currently in place in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year.
- Praise by Teacher, Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principals or Principal.
- Positive note in the school journal.
- Positive letter home.
- Certificates.
- Subject related games.
- Trips, outings, films.
- Class prizes.
- Work exhibited.
- Announcements.
- Vouchers.
- Student achievement acknowledged on school media.

## ROLE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

Parents/Guardians are asked to:

- Support the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Attend scheduled meetings organised by the school, Parent/Teacher Meetings, Information Nights, Year Head Nights, etc.
- Students function and perform better when they have had a proper night's sleep and have a regular and balanced diet. Please encourage your child in this regard. A healthy and nutritious breakfast is always a good start to the day.
- Sign the student's journal every week.
- Work with the school to ensure that the students achieve their full potential in all aspects of school life.

## DRESS AND APPEARANCE

### School Uniform

"School Green" Jumper with red stripe at neck.  
Red and Green stripe tie (optional)  
White blouse or shirt.

**Black** shoes (not boots, runners or slippers) – Maximum heel 2"

Girls: Tartan skirt, fully lined with four knife pleats front and back.  
Black or white socks or black tights.

Optional: Grey school trousers (may be worn after Halloween Break to Easter Holidays).

Boys: Plain "School Grey" Trousers (without turn-ups).

P.E. Navy tracksuit, white T-shirt or aertex top, shoes suitable for indoor gym (non- marking sole)

- Full uniform must be worn both in school and on school outings.
- Unusual hair styles and colours (bleaches) etc. are not acceptable.
- Jewellery and make up considered inappropriate by the school authorities is not permitted.
- Hoodies are not allowed to be worn at any time except for the school TY hoodie.
- Tongue/Facial piercings are not permitted.
- P.E. gear, hoodies and jackets are not to be worn in class.
- Hats/caps are not to be worn in school
- Runners must only be worn in P.E. Classes

## **GENERAL RULES**

- Chewing gum is forbidden
- Students are allowed to the canteen /vending machines only at the following times:

Before School  
Morning Break  
Lunch Break  
After School

- Mobile phones, MP3 players or other similar personal devices must not be visible or audible on the school premises. Breaches of this rule will result in confiscation of the equipment for one week. A second offence will result in confiscation for two weeks.

## **SCHOOL PREMISES**

In the interest of safety and security, the following rules apply in the school premises:

- All parents/ visitors must report to reception.
- Only staff cars/delivery vehicles are permitted beyond the school gate
- Students must not loiter/time waste between classes.

## **CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Students must show care for school property and will be required to make good any damage.
- Setting off the fire alarm is a serious offence
- All coats, school bags and P.E. bags must be placed in lockers and taken home at the end of the school day.
- Gorey Community School is a green school and every effort is made to be environmentally aware. It follows that we expect you will:
  1. Be environmentally aware. Keep our school clean and use recycling bins and recycle where possible.
  2. Ensure that the school is a litter free environment.
  3. Eat in the assigned areas at lunch-time and not on corridors, in classrooms or bathrooms.

## **ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY**

We aim to provide a quality education service. This can only be achieved successfully if attendance rates are very good.

It is our policy that school attendance by students be considered in the same way as work attendance by adults. Days for trips, shopping, wet weather, part-time work or a variety of minor reasons are unacceptable.

While in school, students are expected to attend all classes punctually.

Unauthorised absence or mitching is not acceptable.

## **FORBIDDEN/ ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES**

- Smoking is forbidden in school, on the school grounds and on all school outings and events.
- The consumption, possession and supply of alcohol and illegal substances is forbidden in the school, on the school grounds and at/ prior to all school related activities.
- The misuse of aerosols poses a threat to health and safety and is forbidden.
- High level caffeine drinks are strongly discouraged.

## **ONLINE PRIVACY**

Circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with school activities including but not limited to material in relation to staff and students where such circulation undermines, humiliates or causes damage to another person is considered a serious breach of school discipline and may result in disciplinary action. As part of such disciplinary action the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a student or students where it considers the actions to warrant such sanctions.

## **MAJOR VIOLATIONS**

- a) Violent or threatening behaviour.
- b) Bullying.
- c) Malicious damage to property.
- d) Stealing.
- e) Verbal abuse. Inappropriate language.
- f) Refusal to obey instructions.
- g) Smoking on school premises.
- h) Possession and/or use of illegal substances.
- i) Sexual abuse/harassment (verbal or otherwise).
- j) Racist or sexist comments are deemed to be a major violation as all members of the school community have the right to attend school without fear of discrimination.

This list is not comprehensive and the school reserves the right to impose sanctions for other violations which it considers serious. Persistent minor violations constitute a major breach of school rules.

## **Other Violations**

Detention will also be used for breaches of the school rules. Subject Teachers and Class Tutors may place a student on a lunch time detention for breaches of classroom rules, disrespect, not doing homework or other similar misdemeanours. If such detention does not improve the student's conduct, he/she may be placed on after school detention by the Year Head, Deputy Principals or Principal. Fines will be imposed for specified misconduct such as smoking, gum chewing, littering. Students will be informed of the fine and failure to pay within the specified time may result in further sanctions including suspension. Money collected from fines will be held by the school and added to the student fund.

## **Suspension**

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

## **Authority to suspend:**

The Board of Management of the school has the right to suspend a student from school. The Board of Management has delegated this responsibility to the Principal. The Principal has the authority to suspend a student for a period of five days. In very extreme circumstances the Principal may suspend a student until an emergency Board of Management meeting can be convened to deal with the issue

## **Grounds for suspension:**

Suspension should be an appropriate response to the behaviour that is causing the problem. Normally other interventions have been tried before suspension and staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend requires serious grounds such as that:

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

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

## **Appropriateness of suspending a student:**

School Management must balance the value of a suspension, where it can provide a respite for staff and students, time for the student to reflect, and time for the staff to plan how the behaviour may be improved, against the possibility of any unwanted outcomes, such as an increased sense of alienation from school that could lead to a cycle of behavioural and academic problems.

## **Factors to consider before suspending a pupil:**

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- The interventions tried to date.
- Whether suspension is an appropriate response.
- The possible impact of a suspension.

## **Forms of suspension:**

**Immediate suspension:** In exceptional circumstances the principal may decide that the continued presence of the student in the school would represent a serious threat to the safety of others. Fair procedures must still be applied.

**Suspension during a state Examination:** This should normally be approved by the Board of management and should only be used where there is:

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

**Automatic suspension:** The Board of management has decided that certain named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

**Inappropriate suspension:** Suspension will not normally be used to punish poor academic performance, poor attendance, or minor breaches of the code of behaviour. However any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or potentially dangerous can be a serious matter.

**Rolling suspension:**

Students will not normally be suspended again soon after they return to school unless:

- They engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension
- Fair procedures are observed in full.
- The standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.

**Informal or unacknowledged suspensions .**

Exclusion for part of a day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a child home from school as a sanction is a suspension.

**Open ended suspensions:**

Students should not be suspended for an indefinite period. Any such suspension would be treated as a de-facto expulsion.

**Procedures for suspension**

- The Principal makes the decision to suspend a student on the basis of the reasons set out in the Code of Behaviour and the parameters set out by the Board of Management.
- The student will be informed of the precise grounds which gave rise to the suspension.
- Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the reasons for the suspension and the duration.
- If suspension is to be immediate, Parents/Guardians may be informed by phone, with a written follow up.
- Students will not be sent home during the school day unless collected by a parent/Guardian or some other suitable arrangement is made.
- Suspensions may be appealed to the Principal in the first instance and thereafter to the Board of Management. The school may insist that the student remain at home while an appeal on a suspension is being heard.
- Where a suspension may already have been served before the appeal is heard, in cases where the appeal is successful, the record of the suspension will be removed from the student's file.

All suspensions will include a formal letter of notification to Parents/Guardians that will include the following where relevant:

- Notice of suspension.
- Effective date of suspension.
- Duration of the suspension.
- Reasons for the suspension.
- Expectations of the student while on suspension.
- Importance of Parental involvement in resolving the matter.
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the Parent/Guardian while on suspension.
- A statement that the Education welfare Board has been informed in cases where the suspension is for six or more days, or the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year.
- Information on appeal rights.
- Requirements which may need to be in place when the student returns to school.

All suspensions shall be reported to the Board of Management at the next scheduled meeting of the Board. Following a suspension the student and the Parents/Guardian may be requested to attend a meeting in the school. At this meeting students and Parents may be requested to renew their commitment to the Code of Behaviour and/or agree to certain procedures which would seek to assist in the student's rehabilitation.

## Grounds for Removing a Suspension

- The Principal/ Board of Management may agree that a sanction other than suspension be applied, after discussion with the parents.
- Following a successful appeal to the Board of Management.
- Following a successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.
- Where new circumstances come to light.

## Fair Procedures

In this school fair procedures will apply to the investigation of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to a lengthy suspension or expulsion. Fair procedures are based on the right to be heard and the right to impartiality. Parents and the student will be informed about an allegation and be given an opportunity to respond. Where possible those conducting the investigation will not have been involved in the incident and may produce a comprehensive impartial report to the Principal or the Principal may investigate the alleged incident.

## Expulsion

Expulsion is the ultimate sanction by the school and is exercised by the Board of Management in extreme cases of indiscipline.

In advance of any hearing the school will investigate the matter in accordance with the principles of Natural Justice

### Possible grounds for expulsion:

- Expulsion may be considered in cases where the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

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

### Expulsion for a first offence:

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

- A serious threat of violence against another student or a member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.

### 'Automatic' Expulsion

- The Board of management may decide that expulsion will be considered for certain named offences. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.



## **Role of the Board of Management in Expulsion**

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the board of Management shall undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a student.

Before a student is expelled the Board of Management shall consider the following.

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response.
- The possible impact of expulsion.

Expulsion should not be used as a sanction for lateness, poor academic performance or minor breaches of the code of behaviour.

## **Procedures in respect of Expulsion**

Fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the under the Education Welfare Act 2000 shall be followed by the Board of Management.

1. A detailed investigation shall be carried out under the direction of the Principal. This should involve the following:
  1. The student and Parents shall be informed, in writing, about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
  2. Parents and the student shall be given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
2. A recommendation shall be made to the Board of Management by the Principal.
  1. Where the Principal, following an investigation into the alleged misbehaviour, forms the view that expulsion may be warranted the following steps will be followed.
  2. The parents and the student will be informed that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
  3. The parents and the student will be furnished with, the allegation against the student, the grounds on which expulsion is being considered, and the investigation details.
  4. The Board of Management shall be provided with the same information.
  5. The parents and student shall be provided with the date and venue of the hearing by the Board of Management and shall be invited to attend the meeting.
  6. The Parents and student shall be informed that they may make a written and oral presentation to the Board of Management.
  7. The Parents and Student shall be given sufficient time to prepare for the meeting.

**3. The Board of Management shall consider the recommendation of the Principal, and a hearing shall be held.**

1. The Board shall review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that fair procedures were followed.
2. The Board shall review all documentation and the circumstances of the case.
3. The Board shall ensure that no party who has any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.
4. A hearing shall be held to consider the case.
5. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with Board procedures
6. At the hearing the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen or over, shall put their case to the Board in each others presence.
7. Each party shall be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly.
8. The parents may use the hearing to make a case for lessening the sanction.
9. The Board shall conduct it's business impartially between the Principal and the student.
10. Parents may be accompanied at the hearing.
11. After both sides have been heard the Board shall ensure that the Principal and the parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

**4. The Board of Management deliberates and decides on a course of action.**

The Board shall decide at this stage whether the allegations are substantiated and whether expulsion is appropriate.

Where the Board of Management decides that expulsion is the outcome, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. The Board of Management will then notify the EWO and the parents and student of its opinion and give notice that the student will be expelled twenty days after the date the EWO receives this written notification.

Within this twenty days the EWO will make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student and any else that may be of assistance. The EWO will also hold a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.

When the twenty days have elapsed and the Board of Management is still of the opinion that the student should be expelled the Board should formally confirm this decision in writing to the parents/ guardian and student.

**5. Appeal Process**

Parents and the student will be told about their right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.

A parent or a student over eighteen years may appeal the decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. The National Education Welfare Board may also bring an appeal on behalf of a student.

# Guideline Sanctions

<b>Offence</b>	<b>Recommended Sanction</b>	<b>Dealt with by whom</b>
Individual minor breaches of discipline	Sanction which is appropriate to offence e.g. reprimand/note in journal/extra work/lunchtime detention etc.	Class Teacher. Dealt with at that time.
Major violations	May include suspension	Principal / Deputy Principal
Persistent interruption of teaching and learning	May include suspension	Principal/ Deputy Principal
Persistent breaches of discipline.	Detention and use of "report "system.	Class tutor, Year head must confirm the student being placed on report.
Disrespect and failure to comply with a reasonable instruction from a teacher	May include suspension	Principal / Deputy Principal
Bullying	It is necessary to investigate both sides and the sanction should be appropriate to the severity of bullying. GCS Anti Bullying Policy	All teachers, Year Head must be informed of the situation. Bullying incident report completed by teachers and given to Year Head
Smoking	First offence €10.00 fine and one after school detention. Second offence €20.00 fine and one day external suspension. Subsequent offences in the one year should be dealt with by severe sanction.	Referred to Year Head. The Year Head must refer third or subsequent offences to the Principal. Fine to be paid to Class Tutor.
Mitching	First offence in academic year: 3 days after school detention. Second offence: One day external suspension and 3 after school detentions. Third offence: 3 days external suspension plus parental contract on return.	Year Head / Principal.
Late Stamp	One after school detention after two late stamps within the one week.	Referral to class tutor. If it is a persistent offender refer to Year Head.
Improper use of school journal	€12.00 to be paid for a new journal.	Class tutor Referral to Year Head only if serious improper use.
Chewing gum/litter.	Request to place in the bin. Refusal one after school detention.	
Out of Uniform.	On the second offence in a short period the student is to be placed in internal suspension. On a third offence the home must be contacted to request that the student only return to school in full uniform.	Year Head, the Year Head must sign all uniform notes.
Unsatisfactory homework.	Class room issue.	Class teacher, if persistent may be referred to the class tutor.
Vandalism.	Cost of repair/replacement and punishment appropriate to damage and other punishments.	Depending on the severity of the vandalism, report to class tutor / year head.
Mobile Phones, i pods, etc.	To be confiscated and retained in the office for one week.	Refusal to hand over the phone, etc. will be dealt with severely by suspension.

Revised 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

**GOREY COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR ACCEPTANCE FORM**

**I have read and accept the above rules and I agree that I will do all I can to help the school enforce them.**

**Students Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(PRINT NAME)**

**Students Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**N.B.** Would **both** Parents or Guardians of each student sign this form. These will be kept as sample signatures.

**Signature of Parents/Guardians:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please detach consent form from Code of Behaviour and return immediately to Gorey Community School.**