

Code of Behaviour

June 2023

Catherine Mc Auley School
Ashbourne Avenue,
S.C.R.,
Limerick City
(18692-1)

Code of Behaviour

Catherine Mc Auley School

Catherine McAuley School is a designated school committed to the holistic education of the child who presents with Mild or Borderline Mild General Disabilities. It is a co-educational school which presently caters for two hundred and thirty pupils. The aim is to provide a learning environment, in which each individual is happy, secure, motivated, sensitively challenged, appreciated and fulfilled. The school is committed to promoting a child-centred approach to education where a child's worth is validated but not measured by academic attainments alone. Referrals for entry to the school come from the parents of pupils in both primary and secondary mainstream schools residing in Limerick city and county, east Clare, north Cork and north Tipperary. The school has witnessed a greater intake of pupils from post primary schools while a fall in the number of referrals from the primary sector is symptomatic of the recent changes in provision. The school still enjoys an equitable balance of pupils from both urban and rural backgrounds.

Vision Statement

We endeavour to educate our pupils to appreciate the dignity of the human being, to develop good personal and social attitudes, to experience a sense of belonging, sharing and community and to take a meaningful and fulfilling role in their own communities.

Characteristics of a mild general learning disability

The most recognisable learning characteristic of children with mild general learning disabilities is their difficulty in mastering academic content, particularly in relation to literacy and Numeracy. In addition, these students frequently have difficulty with social behaviours and in finding appropriate work once their formal education is completed. Often individuals with MLD will display one or more of the following characteristics:

- Delayed conceptual development
- Limited ability to abstract and generalise
- Difficulties with memory
- Slow speech and language development
- Limited social skills
- Inappropriate or immature personal behaviour
- Limited attention span and poor retention ability
- Decreased motivation
- Poor self-concept
- Low self-esteem
- General clumsiness
- Lack of coordination and of gross and fine motor skills

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- Emotional disturbance
 - A minority may also have varying degrees of hearing or visual impairment.
 - Co-occurrent other recognised conditions including ADD, ADHD, EBD and ASD, to mention but a few.

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Catherine Mc Auley School has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008

POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

- I. Our existing Code of Behaviour was audited in October 2009 and the staff undertook a more detailed review and revision of particular areas identified in the audit.
- II. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available on the school website and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- III. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils suggestions to the Principal.
- IV. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.
- V. The finalised draft of the policy was submitted for the Patron's Approval.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- 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 and respect for the school environment (physical)
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community

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- To assist school staff, 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.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by, the Principal, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code. Co-operation between home and school is very important as together we try to provide clear guidelines and pointers as to what is expected of those who attend our school.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- do his/her best both in school and for homework.
- be honest at all times
- wear full school uniform at all times

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking
- work – to the best of his/her ability
- value – school property and the belongings of fellow pupils.
- follow – the direction of his/her teacher and all staff
- obtain – his/her teacher's permission to leave the classroom
- respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

Playground (Including the Astro-Turf Pitch) Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

- play – safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- follow – the directions of the playground supervisor(s)
- remain – on school grounds at all times
- respect – the yard supervisor and fellow pupils
- avoid – swearing, fighting or name calling

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

- walk – in the school corridors. All pupils must carry a corridor pass with them when leaving their classroom on designated messages. Failure to present a pass will result in pupil being escorted back to the classroom immediately.
- follow all safety guidelines in all practical classes with regard to health and safety as explained by the subject teacher

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

The school's Code of Behaviour applies to all school related activities and trips e.g. swimming, sports trips, class outings etc.

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow – his/her teacher's and/or staff directions at all times
- remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
- observe – the rules of general good behaviour

Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year and on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. Use the relevant section of the School Journal to remind pupils of the school rules.
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom.
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is supervision at all times.
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition.
- Inform pupils when instances of misbehaviour on their part are being recorded.
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive Behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

Parents must make themselves available to visit the school when contacted.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavor to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive Behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good Behaviour but also improvement in Behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive Behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include;

- 'Congratulations' and 'Good News' postcards sent to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Personalised letters to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Acknowledging and celebrating pupils achievements at regular school assemblies
- Special privileges – awarding of class certificates for good behaviour, golden time, selection on school teams for sports activities, dvd's, small prizes, homework off vouchers, golden ticket prizes for good behaviour, trips to Crescent, McDonald's
- Class of the Week / Term awards
- Class Certificates leading to awarding of Pizza at end of term.
- Other suitable practices to encourage good behaviour.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers including non completion of homework
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone, or manner towards each other and/or staff
- Ignoring staff requests
- Bullying (unwanted negative behavior)
- Non wearing of full school uniform

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- Chewing gum

Electronic Devices to read

Mobile phones and other electronic devices may not be used under any circumstances within the school grounds. If a student is found to be using such equipment during school time, it will be confiscated and held in the Principal's office. Confiscated equipment will be returned, in the first instance, on the day that it is confiscated at the end of the school day. For a second confiscation, the equipment will be held until the parent / guardian of the pupil concerned collects the equipment in person and gives an undertaking that the device will not be brought to school again. Persistent breaches of this rule may result in further sanctions being imposed up to and including appearance before the school's School Support Team. **Where a parent/guardian makes a written request for a pupil to be permitted to carry a mobile phone to school for use after school, the mobile phone must be surrendered to the class teacher each morning and will be returned each afternoon prior to dismissal.**

Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s) followed by written record in classroom/yard incident notebook
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others – Student takes time out in another designated classroom for a set length of time (using a visual aid if necessary). If this occurs on the yard the pupil will be sent to a designated area on the yard for a set length of time.
- Prescribing additional work
- Loss of privileges –1. Golden Time / Free Time in class
- Parent contact 1st - Homework Journal 2nd - Phonecall 3rd - Parental Meeting with teacher
- Behaviour contract – pupils sign up to this at start of school year.
- Issuing of yellow cards if necessary.

All students must wear full school uniform everyday. A parental note must be provided in the event of non wearing of the uniform. Parents/Guardians will be informed by the school when a pupil does not attend in full uniform. Parents/Guardians will have one week to rectify this. Failure to address this during the specified timeframe will result in parents/guardians being invited to the school to discuss the matter.

Repeated Minor Breaches: Repeated instances of the above- Referral to the Principal.

The School Support Team

The school's School Support Team will consist of the Principal and three teachers from various sections of the school. The committee will meet weekly with a view to promoting a whole school atmosphere where positive behaviour is acknowledged and actively promoted. If a pupil receives five yellow cards the pupils parents will be informed in writing that the pupil will required to appear before the Discipline Committee School Support Team with the to discuss the behaviours that led to the five yellow cards. At the meeting the pupil will be asked to discuss the strategies that might work in the future to improve the behaviour. Sanctions such as extra age / ability appropriate work may be considered for the pupil. Parents will be informed in writing of the outcome of the meeting in writing. In

the event of a pupil receiving a second set of five yellow cards the School Support Team will request that the parents accompany the pupil to the meeting.

All pupils that have been suspended will be required to attend the next scheduled meeting of the School Support Team following their return to school. The School Support Team will award the Class Certificates for good behaviour at the weekly whole school assemblies. Class of the Week prizes, Student of the Week awards and Golden Ticket prizes will also be awarded at the assemblies via the School Support Team.

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Token Reward system, Open Circle or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. These notes to include the frequency, nature and intensity of the incidents. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting, spitting)
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Stealing
- Repeated non compliance with school uniform policy
- Use of mobile phone for contacting without permission
- Possession of cigarettes
- Use of profanity
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
- Disrespectful language or behaviour toward an member of staff or visitors
- Repeated Bullying (unwanted negative behaviours)
- Any other behaviour deemed serious to warrant yellow cards.

Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. Disciplinary actions include:

- One or more 'yellow' cards dependent on the teacher's interpretation of the issue
- Phone call to or meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Implementation of behaviour management plan in consultation with the pupil, teacher, Principal and parents using a marking scheme for each part of the day.

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- Appearance before the School Support Team for 5 yellow cards.
 - Appearance before the School Support Team with parent for another 5 yellow cards.
 - Agreed sanctions determined by the School Support Team.

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, parents / guardians and Principal.
- Referral to the School Support Team if necessary. Parents will be informed in writing prior to the pupil being referred to School Support Team. A follow up letter will be sent home outlining the agreed steps / sanctions to be followed by the pupil.
- Referral of a child displaying continuous behaviour problems for relevant assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Continuous disruption of a class by a student
- Leaving school grounds without permission or prior parental permission
- Leaving designated classroom / class activity under false pretences to meet other pupils doing something similar within the schools grounds
- Gross discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin
- Gross disrespect to any staff member, any other pupil or visitor to the school
- Smoking within the school environment
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Behaviour deemed inappropriate or liable to endanger in any manner a member of the school community.
- Possession / Supply and / or use of alcohol, cigarettes, vapes, nicotine pouches, illegal drugs and / or other harmful substances- **REFER TO SCHOOLS SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**
- Willful damage or attempted willful damage of school property, property of teachers, ancillary staff, fellow pupils or school visitors
- Possession or use of dangerous equipment that would inflict harm on any member of the school community.
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons or harmful implements
- Deliberate recording of school activities which is likely to embarrass or undermine any member of the school community.

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

As Level 3 behaviour is considered very serious, the school will take note of any additional factors which may be relevant to determining a suitable response. Factors to be considered include the student's behavioural record to date, the student's understanding of his / her action, the degree of intent involved and the health and safety of the school community. Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific Behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

- **Additional Yellow Cards:**

Additional yellow cards may be awarded up to and including 5 with subsequent referral to the School Support Team.

- **Contract of Behaviour:**

The school may employ a contract of behaviour, involving pupil, parents and school, outlining agreed procedures and what may happen in the event of a behavioural issue arising

- **Voluntary Removal:**

Where necessary, due to extenuating circumstances, parents will agree to voluntarily withdraw the student from school for a fixed period of time agreed by both parents and school. This will happen, if it is determined that the action of the pupil resulted from or was affected by psychiatric or psychological needs of the pupil and where a suspension would not be deemed appropriate or of any benefit. If a parent is unavailable or uncontactable during the school day, every effort will be made to contact the parent before the end of the day to discuss the incident. In the interim the pupil will be offered a time out facility in the school until the parents can be contacted.

- **Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response may occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

- **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

- **Expulsion:**

Gross misbehaviour repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

A detailed account of the circumstances of the voluntary removal or suspension will be kept by the school. Upon return to school, the student along with the parents / guardian will undertake not to repeat the specific misbehaviour to the best of the student's ability.

Level Four

Level 4: Behaviours of Concern (see Behaviours of Concern Policy)

Behaviours of Concern can be defined as “behaviours that indicate a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the people who exhibit them or to others (Chan et al., 2012 – taken from DES Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations, Guidelines for Schools in Supporting Students, December 2024)

In our school, behaviours of concern are those behaviours that interfere with the child’s learning and/or that of others. These behaviours can be triggered by a wide variety of factors and influences, such as being a new pupil in the school, transitioning to a new teacher, or by other external events in their lives.

POSSIBLE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

It is the norm for children to seek attention which gives them praise and encouragement from parents and teachers. There is always a reason for, or purpose to behaviours of concern, such as:

- **Anxiety and Stress:** Children may become anxious for a myriad of reasons. Worries about friendships, homework, home situations etc. can be overwhelming for a child, leading to stress. While most children are able to identify the cause and put in place strategies to reduce their stress levels, some cannot.
- **Communication difficulties:** These can range from not being able to speak at all, shyness, social inhibition to being very articulate but not understanding the social variations and conventions in a conversation. Behaviours of Concern are often a substitute means of communication for such children.
- **Sensory issues:** Some children can be over- or under-sensitive to any of their senses. This is often referred to in the literature as hyper (over) or hypo (under) sensitivity.
- **Social understanding:** Not all children have the same understanding of social rules. Not all children grow up in environments with social rules similar to those in most schools.
- **Inflexible thinking:** We all adapt to routines and can find them comforting. Some children struggle with changes in routine.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

As part of the Catherine Mc Auley School's Code of Behaviour, The Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School has ensured that the school's policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension are in line with guidelines for Developing A Code of Behaviour as outlined by The National Educational Welfare Board.

Suspension

Definition of Suspension:

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

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an **'Immediate Suspension'** to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an **'Automatic Suspension'** for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. Or that the action of the pupil warrants a suspension. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Any behaviour outlined in this or other policies which is likely to endanger or has endangered the health and safety of the student/s responsible or the school population.
- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff

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- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected, where possible. In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school before the end of the school day prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board may invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure if feasible.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply;

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the School will initiate a formal investigation of the matter. Such behaviour may well be ongoing and as a result of a certified disability. The use of suspension will only be considered if all alternatives have been exhausted and if no extra provision is granted in the care of the student. The Health and Safety of the entire school community will be paramount in any such issue.

The following procedures will be observed;

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

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- ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process if feasible.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal. The school will take due cognizance of the number of days the student has also not been in school for other reasons.

Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- iii. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- iv. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than **5 school days** from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians 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
- iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that;

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board

- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely 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 pupils or staff.

e) 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 Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now precede. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provide with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Catherine Mc Auley School acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

The Role of the School Support Team

The School Support Team consists of 4 teachers including the Principal. The function of the School Support Team is to promote good behaviour in the school through positive initiatives in school and to implement the school behavioural programme of the yellow / red card system. This committee team will:

1. Devise initiatives to promote and reward good behaviour both individually and class by class in a whole school context
2. Invite teachers to fill in a weekly questionnaire online and submit answers to SST for weekly agenda.
3. Meet on a weekly basis (Friday morning to discuss and/or meet with pupils and/or staff in order to support ongoing issues
4. Monitor weekly the undesired behaviour through the card system.
5. Convene when necessary if a students receives 5 yellow cards or a red card to discuss the behaviour with the student,
6. Impose a suitable consequence in consultation with the class teacher.
7. Meet with parents if a student appears for a second time at the SST meeting.
8. Support newer and less experienced staff in promoting good behaviour,
9. Recommend to the Principal a course of action to be taken in any behavioural issue.

It will record and retain the events which brought about the meeting and the resulting outcome(s). The Committee team will advise on immediate and automatic suspensions within the remit of the Principal to impose without BOM consultation. However suspensions for longer periods and any expulsion are the responsibility of the Board of Management alone.