



*LORETO SECONDARY SCHOOL*

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# School Policies Booklet

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

***As a Catholic school in the Loreto tradition, we aim to create a warm and caring community.***

***In an atmosphere of respect and fairness, through support and friendship, we affirm each person's self-worth and dignity.***

***We aim to provide a student-centered education that nurtures the talents and potential of all.***

***In co-operation with parents and guardians, we work towards the spiritual, moral, social and academic development of each student.***

***Our wish is that our students will grow into happy, confident and responsible adults.***

# **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The principal and Board of Management support teachers in their efforts to create a positive teaching and learning environment in the school.

The school seeks to promote partnership and communication between home and school, through home visits, information sessions and meeting with parents or guardians.

The needs of students are assessed and support is provided as required.

All students are encouraged to participate in extra curricular activities so that they may feel a sense of belonging to the school, develop socially and build positive relationships with students and teachers alike.

## **PASTORAL STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE**

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‘Pastoral Care’ describes a philosophy of caring for the overall welfare of the student and it permeates all interactions between students and staff.

### **Class Teacher**

Class teachers advise students how to behave properly in order to maximise teaching and learning in the classroom.

### **Tutor**

Each class group has a Tutor who takes a pastoral interest in their students and monitors academic progress and attendance.

### **Year Head**

The Year Head monitors student behaviour, academic progress and attendance.

### **Guidance Counsellor**

The Guidance Counsellors have a supportive role for all students who may be experiencing personal or school related difficulties.

### **Home School Liaison Officer**

The Home School Liaison Officer acts in a supportive role by forging links between school, parents/guardians and support services.

### **Peer Support and Education**

Senior students help and support younger students through the Senior Prefect system and Cara programme. During S.P.H.E. classes senior students deliver an educational programme on anti-bullying and drugs education. The Student Council provides a forum through which student issues may be addressed.

## **Our positive code of discipline is multi-stranded –**

- **Our values**
- **Our classroom rules**
- **Our around school rules**
- **Specifics**
- **Rewards**
- **Discipline Procedures and Sanctions**
- **Appendices**

### **Our Values**

In Loreto we aspire to be guided by the following six values :

1. Respect for God
2. Respect for self
3. Respect for others
4. Respect for our school
5. Respect for the environment
6. Respect for the law

Our expectations of students under the values are as follows :

1. Respect for God
  - (a) To respect the Catholic ethos of our school
  - (b) To respect religious areas, ceremonies, symbols and icons
  - (c) To respect together all denominations and traditions
2. Respect for self
  - (a) To strive for excellence in all areas of school life
  - (b) To be punctual for class, in full uniform and properly prepared with school journal and all other books and equipment
  - (c) To be responsible for one's own property
3. Respect for others
  - (a) To be courteous and helpful to all members of the school community staff, students and parents
  - (b) To follow the school's anti-bullying policy
4. Respect for our school
  - (a) To follow all school approved policies
  - (b) To be ambassadors for our school, by wearing our uniform with pride and behaving in a mannerly and respectful way on all school related activities and in town at lunchtime (as applicable)
5. Respect for the environment
  - (a) To show respect for school property and for the school environment
  - (b) To follow the Green Schools Initiative and dispose of litter carefully in the bins provided
  - (c) To follow the school's Health and Safety Statement and Fire Drill

6. Respect for the law
  - (a) To abide by the law
  - (b) To act as a responsible citizen

### **School Rules**

#### **I will...**

1. be in full uniform each day going to, in and from school.
2. be on time for all my classes each day.
3. have what I need to work in school each day.
4. behave myself properly in school and follow teachers' instructions.

### **Classroom Rules**

#### **I will...**

1. be on time and enter and leave the classroom in an orderly fashion.
2. sit at assigned desk and take out journal, materials, books etc.
3. do my work to the best of my ability and allow others to do the same.
4. work quietly and listen to the person speaking at any one time.
5. raise my hand and wait for teacher's attention if I have a question or comment.
6. do as asked immediately.
7. respect everyone and their property.
8. leave the classroom clean and tidy.

### **Out of Class Behaviour**

#### **I will...**

1. follow school rules as written in my journal.
2. do as all staff ask immediately.
3. remain on school premises at all times. I may only leave the school with the permission of my Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.  
I must sign OUT at the office and sign IN on return.
4. follow all break-time and lunchtime regulations.
5. keep the school tidy by placing litter in the bins provided.
6. be polite, walk at all times and observe the one-way system, when moving around the school
7. accept that name calling and bullying will not be tolerated.

### **Specifics**

#### 1. Attendance

All absences require a note in journal from parent/guardian. A note in advance is required for medical appointments (see Attendance Policy for more details).

#### 2. Punctuality

All students must swipe in twice daily – before 8.50am and at lunchtime. Any student who presents herself late to school must report to the front door of the school, sign in, swipe in and get a note signed as appropriate. **THREE LATES MERIT DETENTION.**

### 3 School Journal

The journal is the official means of communication between parents/guardians and the school authorities. Students must have the journal at all times in school and use it appropriately. It may be reviewed by a staff member at any time and parents/guardians are requested to monitor it on a regular basis.

### 4. Uniform and Appearance

The school uniform as listed must be worn at all times, including going to and from school. All items should be clearly labelled.

- . Navy uniform school jacket (reversible, fleece/waterproof with hood)  
The school tracksuits are worn only to matches
- . Royal blue skirt (compulsory)
- . Blue uniform trousers (optional)
- . Grey jumper with blue stripes and Loreto Crest
- . Specific white uniform blouse
- . P.E. polo shirt (compulsory for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> year students)
- . Black, navy or grey socks or **plain** tights
- . Navy or black shoes (flat or with low heel) White soled shoes may **not** be worn for choir exams

**Note :** In winter a white T-shirt may be worn under the shirt

For formal occasions- Choir exams, prize giving and school masses, students must wear matching coloured tights and socks

### Uniform Regulations

#### ***Jewellery :***

- . Maximum of two pairs of neat earrings that comply with Health & Safety Regulations
- . One watch
- . Two rings
- . One bracelet

*Note : Facial and tongue studs, badges and necklaces will not be accepted at any time*

***Non specified jewellery will be confiscated and returned at the end of term.***

Jackets, scarves or hats must not be worn in school, in class or on corridors.

Excess make-up is not acceptable and eye make-up is prohibited

Unconventional hair colouring is not acceptable.

Students wear P.E. uniform for P.E. only i.e. they change into P.E. uniform at start of P.E. class and back to school uniform at end of P.E. class. Students may wear P.E. uniform to and from school only if P.E. class is timetabled for Period 1 or Period 9.

#### ***Match days :***

- . If match is in the morning after breaktime, change at morning break
- . If match is in the afternoon, change at lunchtime
- . For after school training change at end of day

Note :

*Students not in full uniform will be provided with same.*

5. Prohibited Items

- |                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| (a) Chewing Gum | (d) Tobacco                |
| (b) Tippex      | (e) Alcohol                |
| (c) Aerosols    | (f) All illegal substances |

Note in relation to smoking

- . Detention on first offence
- . Suspension within school on a subsequent offence
- . Continued breach of the rule may result in suspension outside school  
(for more details see Substance Misuse Policy)

6. Breaktime/Lunchtime

- . Food is to be consumed only in social areas and the canteen
- . Eating is forbidden on corridors or in classrooms
- . Bottled water only may be consumed in all areas of the school building

***Students are not allowed at the back of the Mary Ward building or on the lane between the camogie pitch and the convent or at the back of the sports hall. Rooms 35, 36 and 37 and the area around them are also out of bounds at breaktime and lunchtime. Breach of this rule will result in detention.***

- . Only 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students are allowed to go to town at lunchtime.
- . Students with written permission from parents/guardians may go home or go to a designated address given to the school. An 'L' will be placed on swipe cards to identify such students.
- . 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students have lunch in own social areas.
- . 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students have lunch in the canteen.
- . No food to be eaten at the front of school or around the astro turf pitch
- . Follow the Green School Initiative and use bins appropriately. Stack stools/chairs
- . Clean up starts at 1pm. Failure to report for clean up rota is recorded and sanctions are applied.

General Points re Health & Safety

- . In the canteen eating is forbidden on the steps to room 21 and stools should not block entrances to any rooms of the school.
- . Do not sit or lean against radiators.
- . Leave some classroom doors open during lunch and breaktime as instructed by staff members



7. Mobile Phones and multi media equipment  
The use of mobile phones, ipods, discmans or any other multimedia equipment is **banned** in the school and the grounds of the school between 8.50 and 4.00pm (3.30 Mondays and 2.40 Fridays). If a student is seen with any of these items, she is presumed to be using it and will have it confiscated immediately. **The phone, ipod or discman may be reclaimed from the Principal or Deputy Principal's office after a period of seven days.**
8. School Internet Usage  
Summary – See Policy
9. Leaving Class  
In exceptional circumstances students may be allowed to leave class with a **note** from the teacher.
10. Student Property  
Students are responsible for their own property and must provide locks for their lockers. The school does not accept responsibility for articles lost, stolen or damaged in school.

### **Rewards**

- . Praise by Teacher, Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal
- . Positive note in diary/positive letter home
- . Certificates
- . Reduced homework/night off homework
- . Subject related games
- . Trips, outings, films, videos
- . Class prizes
- . Work exhibited
- . Announcements
- . Recognition of achievement in assemblies and/or Awards ceremony
- . Vouchers

### **Discipline Procedures**

The administration of discipline is based upon a graduated system.

We promote in a positive manner our values and expectations of our students in Loreto. However, when breaches occur, a graduated system of discipline referral is adopted.

The system draws upon the pastoral system within the school. Central to its success is the consistent use of the Student Journal. Absences, behaviour, punctuality, Teacher comments and parent's comments are all recorded here.

We support the concept of parental partnership as outlined in the Education Act 1998 and taken cognisance of the D.E.S. Circular M33/91.

Examples of sanctions that may be used in response to breaches of discipline are listed below :

- . Verbal warning
- . Note in journal
- . Temporary confiscation of property
- . Penalty sheet or additional educational assignments given
- . Reassignment of the student class place
- . Assisting in the maintenance of the school environment
- . Removal of privileges
- . Letter to parent/guardian
- . Meeting with parent/guardian
- . Detention
- . Being placed on report
- . Being placed on an attendance/punctuality report
- . Removal from school representative fora (e.g. student council)
- . In-house suspension
- . Suspension
- . Exclusion

The system is graduated as follows :

1. If a student misbehaves, her SUBJECT TEACHER will correct her in the first instance.
2. If the misbehaviour continues, the teacher will report the student to the CLASS TUTOR using a referral form. The tutor will meet the student to try to resolve the situation and ensure that the punishment applied by the subject teacher is completed.
3. If the student is reported to the Class Tutor a third time (3 REFERRAL FORMS), she will be required to do DETENTION on Friday for one hour or on the afternoon of

school meetings. The Parents/Guardians will be notified by LETTER and a NOTE IN THE DIARY. Failure to report for DETENTION is regarded as a serious breach of discipline and may result in suspension within school.

4. If a student continues to misbehave she will then be PUT ON REPORT and parents/guardians informed by letter and invited to meet with the school authorities. The student will be required to do further detention.
5. If a student is put ON REPORT A SECOND TIME in the school year the Parent/Guardian will be invited to meet with the relevant school authorities. SUSPENSION within school may be considered at this stage.
6. If a student has been suspended within school a SECOND time the Parent/Guardian will be invited to meet with the school authorities. SUSPENSION outside school may be considered at this stage
7. If a matter is sufficiently serious the PRINCIPAL (or Deputy Principal in her absence) has the right to impose any sanction up to and including suspension of pupil at any time without going through the above procedures.
8. The BOARD OF MANAGEMENT may be obliged to resort to PERMANENT EXPULSION in the most extreme cases of indiscipline after all pastoral resources available within and to the school have been utilised, every other sanction has been exhausted and due procedure has been followed in accordance with legislation.

**Note :**

1. In cases of unacceptable behaviour a YEAR HEAD may place a student on detention, on report or in-house suspension at the time of the incident.
2. ON REPORT – The student presents the report form to the teacher at the start of class and the class teacher completes a report on the student's behaviour and parents/guardians sign the report each evening.
3. Students who break School Rules may be DENIED PRIVILEGES at the discretion of the PRINCIPAL.
4. While most breaches of the Code of Behaviour will be dealt with through the graduated system, there are some cases where students will be immediately suspended either in school or at home. These include :
  - . Extreme defiance to a teacher
  - . Verbal abuse to a teacher
  - . Bullying, fighting or physical abuse to any member of the school community
  - . Truancy
  - . Interfering with the fire alarm
  - . Vandalism and theft - which may be reported to the Gardai
  - . Possession, use or supply of alcohol and/or any illegal drugs on school premises and on school related activities – which may be reported to the Gardai in accordance with the Policy on Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use.
  - . Possession of offensive weapons which may be reported to the appropriate authorities

**NOTE:**

When pupils are being interviewed in relation to wrongdoing by others, it is the policy of the school that brief notes are taken.

## **POLICY ON SUSPENSION & EXPULSION**

In certain circumstances of unacceptable behaviour it is necessary in the best interests of the whole school community for the student to be suspended or expelled.

In applying sanctions of suspension and expulsion Loreto Secondary School, Kilkenny will give due consideration to the rights and responsibilities underpinned in the Education Act 1998, The Education Welfare Act (2000), the Equal Status Act 2000 and the principles of fairness and natural justice.

### **SUSPENSION**

Continuous breaches of school rules or serious breaches of the code of behaviour or a serious once off incident of misbehaviour may warrant suspension outside of school.

Suspension outside of school is only sanctioned by the Principal (or Deputy Principal in her/his absence).

Suspension from school for three days is at the discretion of the Principal. Suspension for longer periods must have the approval of the Board of Management.

Where a student is suspended for 6 days or more the Principal will inform the local Education Welfare Officer.

Where a student is suspended for a cumulative total of 20 days or more the Principal will inform the local Education Welfare Officer.

#### **Possible grounds for suspension**

- Disrespect or continuous defiance towards or harassment or intimidation of any staff member or the harassment/ bullying of any member of the school community. This includes use of obscene , abusive or inappropriate language
- Possession, use or supply of prohibited substances e.g alcohol, drugs in the school or on school related activities. cf. policy on alcohol, tobacco and drug use.
- Vandalism or destruction of school property or the property of another member of the school community.
- Continuous disruption of learning, having a negative effect on other students.
- Truancy
- Damaging the good name and reputation of the school
- Stealing
- Fighting, or possession of offensive weapons ( which may also be reported to the appropriate authorities

Suspension will be used after the Principal is satisfied :

- that all other disciplinary/remedial options under the code of behaviour have been applied and documented.
- that appropriate support has been given to the student .
- that discussion has taken place with parents/guardians in relation to the student's behavior.
- that a formal written warning has been notified to the student and his or her parents, except in case of serious breach of the code of behaviour which may warrant immediate suspension.
- that all actions taken have been documented.
- that copies of all correspondence are available.

### **Procedure**

The Principal (or Deputy Principal in her/his absence) makes a decision to suspend a student based on the written records maintained of all action taken in accordance with the schools code of behaviour

The student is informed of this decision and the grounds for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond.

Parents are notified in advance of the reasons for, dates and duration of the suspension outside school and where possible invited to discuss the matter further with the Principal in accordance with the relevant legislation

If the suspension is to be immediate Parents/Guardians may be informed by phone, with a written follow up.

Students will not be sent home during a school day unless collected by a parent/guardian or some other suitable arrangement is made.

### **The formal letter of notification of suspension will include**

*Notice of the suspension*

*Effective date and duration of suspension*

*Reasons for suspension*

*Expectations of student while on suspension*

*Importance of parents/guardians assistance in the matter,*

*Notice that the student is under the care of parents/guardians during the suspension*

*Notice that the Principal informs the Board of Management of any such suspension.*

*Notice of right to appeal the decision of the Principal to the Board of Management.*

*Notice that the suspension will be notified to the local Education Welfare Officer ( If it exceeds 6 days or more or for a cumulative total of 20 days)*

*Notice of right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and the Education Welfare Act*

### **Longer term suspension**

Before a longer term of suspension is applied it must be sanctioned by the Board of Management.

Parents will have had notification that the matter will be discussed at a Board Meeting and offered the right of reply.

A meeting will have taken place with the Parents/Guardians, the Principal and Deputy Principal and where necessary other pastoral support personnel in the school to help resolve the situation.

Parents will be informed of their right to appeal any decision on suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and the Education Welfare Act.

During the period of long term suspension the school may insist that the student remain at home while an appeal on a suspension is in process.

Where an appeal is successful any period of suspension served in relation to the appeal will be removed from the student's file.

### **Procedure for re-introduction following suspension**

Where possible parents are requested to accompany the student on her return to school following suspension.

On her return parents and student may be requested to sign an agreed contract renewing her commitment to the Code of Behaviour.

Parents may at any time be advised or requested to agree to certain procedures to assist in the student's rehabilitation e.g. refer the student for psychological assessment, counselling or other pastoral support services.

### **Grounds for removal of a suspension**

The Principal and/or BOM may agree that a sanction other than suspension be applied following discussion with parents/guardians

Following a successful appeal to the BOM

Following a successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act

Where new circumstances come to light

## **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is the ultimate sanction imposed by the school and is exercised by the BOM in extreme cases of indiscipline.

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

### **Possible Grounds for Expulsion**

Where breaches of the code of behaviour continue following repeated suspensions the Principal may recommend exclusion to the Board of Management and inform the parents of her recommendation.

Exclusion may be recommended where the behaviour of the student is seriously disrupting learning and having a negative effect on other students.

Exclusion may be recommended where there is serious disrespect, harassment or abuse of others.

Gross insubordination.

Exclusion may be recommended where the student has no respect for or is not amenable to any form of school authority.

Exclusion may also be recommended for certain breaches of policy in relation to substance abuse, one example would be trafficking in drugs.

Exclusion may be recommended where there is serious concern for the safety of others.

Where contracts of behaviour following repeated suspensions are not being kept.

Serious assault.

Serious theft.

Causing major damage to school property.

Possession of or brandishing an offensive weapon.

*These examples are not exclusive.*

### **Principal's Role re Expulsion**

*The Principal will always refer to the BOM in matters of expulsion. However the Principal may suspend a student immediately in some circumstances e.g. violence, threats of violence, illegal drugs, pending a referral to the BOM with a recommendation of expulsion. An offense of gross misconduct by a student may warrant immediate expulsion.*

Exclusion by the BOM will be considered after the Principal is satisfied

- that all other disciplinary/remedial options under the code of behaviour have been applied and documented.
- that appropriate support has been given to the student eg Diagnostic assessments where appropriate and counseling.
- that discussion has taken place with parents/guardians in relation to the student's behaviour in relation to specific incidences which may have lead to suspension and now lead to expulsion.
- that formal written warnings had been notified to the student and his or her parents, in relation to serious breaches of the code of behavior.
- that formal written expectations of behaviour have been notified to both student and parent e.g. contracts showing commitment to the school code of behaviour.
- That the parents have been made aware of any reports of suspension to the BOM.
- That the parents have been made aware of formal reports to the BOM in relation to behaviour of the student and invited to respond to or attend any BOM meeting.
- That parents are informed of the BOM meeting where there is an intention to recommend suspension or expulsion and they have been invited to attend such meeting.
- that all actions taken have been documented.
- that copies of all correspondence are available.

## **ROLE of BOM**

Expulsion can only occur after the BOM has followed the following procedures

- Heard the Principal's case against the student ( in the presence of the parents where possible)
- Heard the parents response
- Examined all the documentation which has been given to the parents
- Considered the students record in the school
- Taken legal/expert advice where necessary
- Ensured that the Principal is not present for the Boards discussion and decision on the matter
- Discussed the case in detail
- Considered all matters having regard to the Boards responsibilities to the whole school community, the ethos of the school and the principles of natural justice
- Made a final decision to expel
- Communicated the decision to the Parents formally through the Secretary to the BOM
- Informed the education welfare officer
- Informed parents of their right to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act



## **The formal letter of notification will include**

*Notice of intent to expel*

*Reasons for expulsion*

*Effective date of expulsion including a statement that the student will stand suspended for 20 school days after receipt of notification by the Education Welfare Officer when the final decision to expel will be made by the Board and become effective.*

*A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been notified*

*Information and documentation on appeal rights under Section 29 of the Education Act*

## ***Appeals***

There is a right to appeal an expulsion under the Education Welfare Act

An appeal may be made to the Secretary General under Section 29 of the Education act 1998

## **Principles of Natural Justice**

### Procedural Fairness

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All communities have a legitimate expectation that schools (Boards, principals, deputy principals and teaching staff ) will follow these principles in all circumstance , particularly when dealing with suspensions and expulsions.

Procedural Fairness is generally recognised as having two elements

1. The right to be heard which includes:

- The right to know why the action is happening.
- The right to know the way in which the issues will be determined.
- The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account.
- The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations.
- The right to an appeal.

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision which includes:

- The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker

# POLICY TO COUNTER BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School Kilkenny recognises that all students have the right to a school free from bullying/harassment and is fully committed to ensuring that all students enjoy that right.

In keeping with our School Mission Statement, which promotes the personal dignity of each individual, the Board of Management is committed to providing an environment free from bullying/ harassment. It is recognised that bullying/harassment undermines the confidence and dignity of individuals.

### 1.2 Definition of Bullying

Bullying may be defined as **repeated** aggression – verbal, psychological or physical – conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

It may present itself in any of the following ways:

- Deliberately hitting, pushing, tripping, bumping
  - Taking or damaging property
  - Mocking, taunting, humiliating or pointing
  - Offensive remarks about sexual orientation, race or religion
  - Remarks about the person or personal appearance, mannerisms, dress or hygiene
  - Offensive graffiti
  - Facial expressions, which convey aggression or dislike
  - Imitating in an offensive way that a person speaks
  - Name-calling
  - Leaving a person out of a group or activity
  - Unkind or insulting text messages or phone calls or notes
  - Spreading rumours
  - Pressurising another to take part in unacceptable behaviour
  - Intimidation - making threats
  - Shouting, roaring, back-answering in class
  - Extortion
- (This list is not exhaustive)

## 2 STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION

- Creation of the best environment for learning, growth and development of each individual.
- Raise awareness of bullying, and its consequences, as an unacceptable form of behaviour throughout all aspects of the school curriculum. The development of responsible attitudes may feature across the curriculum in classes and areas such as SPHE, CSPE, Religion, Drama, Debating, English, Languages, Science, Home Economics and PE.
- Anti-bullying campaign.

- Peer Education
- All will seek opportunities to enhance the self esteem of students.
- All staff share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal to act in Preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by any member of the school community. Teachers will regularly stress the importance of reporting issues of concern to the appropriate authorities.
- Provision of ongoing support for students by Class tutors, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, Home school Liaison Teacher and Chaplains.
- Ensure that the teaching staff is kept fully informed of bullying cases, policies and programmes.
- Provision of guidelines for staff in dealing with reports of bullying.
- Provide all necessary information about bullying at meetings of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year parents, the Parents' Council, general meetings of parents.
- Supervision of students.
- Change of seating arrangement of students in class when warranted and appropriate.
- Teachers rather than students select groups avoiding pairs where possible, for project work, PE etc.
- Encourage students to be inclusive.
- Creation of an atmosphere of openness, which encourages the student who has been bullied to "tell" and so dispel the culture of secrecy in which student often feels a sense of hopelessness and futility against the power being exercised by those involved in bullying behaviour.
- Involve students through the student council, mentors and their own class charter.
- Liaison with primary schools to track any history of bullying.
- Provide all necessary support structures and financial resources to ensure that aspirations are achieved.

### **3. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS, DISCLOSURES AND SUSPICIONS OF BULLYING**

Bullies rely and thrive upon our silence. To combat the problem, it is important that all bullying behaviour be reported. Students may report such behaviour to any member of staff. The structure for dealing with cases of bullying is as follows:

- 3.1** Initially the Class Teacher/Year Head will deal with any report of bullying behaviour. S/he will investigate the report. Her/his first actions will generally be on a no blame/shared concern basis so that the perpetrator will be made aware of how hurtful her behaviour is and that it must stop. It almost always does. The Class Teacher/Year Head may consult with and/or enlist the help of a School Guidance Counsellor if s/he considers it appropriate at this stage.
- 3.2** If no improvement occurs, the matter will be referred to the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal is empowered to formally question students, to take written statements, to notify parents and to impose sanctions upon perpetrators.
- 3.3** Should a problem persist, the Deputy Principal will refer the matter to the Principal. Following further investigation and due process, the Principal may impose a term of suspension on any guilty party. Any further instances of bullying by the same guilty party will be referred by the Principal to the Board of Management.
- 3.4** Guidelines for dealing with complaints will be developed for teachers
- 3.5** An outline of these procedures and the sanctions which may be imposed is as follows:

#### **HURTFUL/OFFENSIVE/THREATENING OR BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

1. If a student is involved she will be normally be asked to stop. (the exception to this would be if the matter was very serious).
2. If she is involved a second time she will be warned to stop. A record will be opened and her behaviour monitored. Sanctions may be imposed, and parents may be informed.
3. Should bullying persist the Principal may impose a term of suspension.
4. Any further instances of bullying by the same guilty party will be referred by the Principal to the Board of Management.

As the context, nature and gravity of each case of bullying may be different, sanctions imposed must be fair and appropriate for each particular case.

Violence towards another person will always be treated as a serious breach of discipline.

Depending on the case such sanctions might include:

- A ticking off
- An apology to the student who has been bullied of the bullying behaviour
- Detention and/or withdrawal of privileges
- A written assurance that the bullying will not be repeated
- Exclusion from certain school activities for a certain period of time

- Being escorted to or from school by a parent/guardian (e.g. where bullying occurs on the way to or from school)
- A written account of the bullying incident and the student's plans to put things right with the student who has been bullied.
- Suspension within or outside of school if bullying persists or the matter is very serious.
- Where bullying persists and all other sanctions have been imposed the Board of Management may consider expulsion within the parameters of legislation.

## **4. SUPPORT**

### **4.1 Support for students who have been bullied.**

The student's self esteem/self confidence may have suffered. She may still be fearful of becoming involved in similar incidents. She may be hurt, angry and confused.

The student should be offered regular and consistent support by the counsellors, chaplain or other staff member whom the student trusts. Help of a different nature will be required by different kinds of students. In cases of some it might be helpful to :

- Encourage her to talk to as many people as possible -friends, parents, teachers
- Encourage her to make friends and stay with friends. Friends are a good protection against bullying
- Encourage her to become assertive gradually. Teach her to stand her ground and to Look the offender in the eye. Eye contact and positive body language (head up and shoulders back) are important aspects of being assertive. Teach the student a positive assertive Response and get her to practice it.

### **4.2 Support for the Offender**

Interventions will be offered to the student involved in bullying behaviour to enable her to make necessary attitudinal and behavioural changes. It would be useful to find out why the student is involved in bullying behaviour. However, the first step is to get the offender to realise that her behaviour is unacceptable and is causing distress.

Counselling may be necessary to help the student learn other ways of meeting her needs without violating the rights of others.

In certain cases it may be necessary to invite the assistance of local persons and formal agencies in the community such as general medical practitioners, gardai, health boards social and community workers.

*The Board of Management undertake to monitor and review this policy on a regular basis.*

# **POLICY ON ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG USE**

## **Introduction**

The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School Kilkenny recognises that exposure to alcohol, tobacco and drugs is part of the reality of the world in which we live and that all members of the school community need to be properly educated and have clear and agreed guidelines to deal with this.

Our School Mission Statement affirms the personal dignity of each individual and works towards the personal, moral and social development of each student. In keeping with this ethos the school is committed to providing an environment free from alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Within this environment use and/or abuse of such drugs is not tolerated.

The policy is prepared so that the school is in compliance with the National Drugs Strategy Building on Experience, the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, all of which are concerned with the welfare, care and protection of every young person.

## **Definition**

A drug is defined as any substance legal or illegal which changes the way the body functions, physically, mentally or emotionally e.g. alcohol, tobacco, solvents, illegal drugs.

## **Scope**

The school does not accept the possession, use or supply of drugs by any student. This applies to all students up to the completion of senior cycle education on the school premises and in the course of school related activities. The only exception is for legitimate medicinal use.

### **1. Aim**

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear concise written statement agreed by all, students, staff, parents/guardians and management, of procedures to be followed in dealing with alcohol, tobacco and drug use in the context of the ethos of the school.

### **2. Objectives**

- 2.1 Provide a programme of education for all students in alcohol, tobacco and drug use/misuse.
- 2.2 Provide for the education and training of staff and parents/guardians in alcohol, tobacco and drug use/misuse.
- 2.3 Outline a pastoral response to alcohol, tobacco and drug-related incidents.
- 2.4 Outline clear rules and procedures for dealing with alcohol, tobacco and drug-related incidents.

## **2.1 The Provision of a programme of education for all students in alcohol, tobacco and drug use**

Education will be provided primarily in Social Personal and Health Education classes.

The aims of Social Personal and Health Education classes are

- to increase student self esteem and confidence
- to equip each student with personal and social skills
- to enable each student to make informed, healthy and responsible choices
- to provide honest and age appropriate information on drugs
- to promote respect for others

In the course of these classes students and teachers will avail of the extensive range of resource material published by Department of Education & Science, Health Boards, other agencies and authors together with visiting speakers.

The development of responsible attitudes may also feature across the curriculum in other classes and areas such as Civic, Social and Political Education, Religion, Drama, Debating, English, Languages, Science, Home Economics and Physical Education.

## **2.2 The Provision of education and training for staff and parents/guardians in alcohol, tobacco and drug use/misuse**

- The Board of Management will appoint a drug co-ordinator.
- The Board of Management will provide regular in-service for staff on issues concerning drug use/misuse..
- Teachers involved in Social, Personal & Health Education will be facilitated to attend in-service courses provided by the Department of Education & Science and Health Boards.
- All staff will be offered Drug Information and Drug awareness training.
- First Aid training will be made available to all staff.
- The Board of Management will also consult with the Parent Council to make provision for the education of parents/guardians within the school.
- New staff members will be made aware of and advised of the existence of this policy by the Principal or Deputy Principal.

## **2.3 Pastoral response to alcohol, tobacco and drug-related incidents**

In dealing with any alcohol, tobacco and drug related incident the school will seek a balance between the necessary disciplinary response and an appropriate supportive and pastoral response.

Such a pastoral response may include

- In-school counselling
- Support and encouragement of staff and parents
- Referral to a support agency
- Application to Department of Education & Science and Department of Health for additional resources.

The following are some examples of drug related incidents.

- Smoking
- Possession of or use of alcohol on school premises or on a school related activity
- Intoxication
- Emergencies where the person may be unconscious due to use of drugs.
- Suspicion/rumour of drug use, possession or dealing
- Possession of a legal/illegal drug on school premises or on a school related activity.
- Advertising, selling/supplying legal/illegal drugs
- Disclosure of information relating to drugs by another person.
- Evidence of school grounds being used for drug activity.

#### 2.4 Regulations and procedures for dealing with alcohol, tobacco and drug-related incidents.

##### **2.4 1 Regulations**

Regulations are required to protect the health and safety of each individual in the whole school community.

The school does not accept the possession, use or supply of drugs by any student. This applies to all students up to the completion of senior cycle education on the school premises and in the course of school related activities. The only exception is for legitimate medicinal use.

##### (a) Smoking:

Students are forbidden to smoke in or on the school premises and all school related activities.

##### Sanctions:

- Any student in breach of this regulation will face detention on a first offence
- Suspension within school on a subsequent offence.
- Continued breach of the rule may result in suspension outside school



(b) Alcohol, legal/illegal drugs

Possession, use or supply of alcohol and or legal/illegal drugs by any student is also forbidden in or on the school premises and on all school related activities.

Sanctions:

- Breaches of this regulation will result in suspension within or from school and referral to the Board of Management, which may result in exclusion.
- The incident may also be referred to the Gardai.
- In all cases of breaches of these regulations parents/guardians will be informed as appropriate.

**2.4.2 Procedures**

In all cases where there is no immediate danger to the young person(s) it is important to take time to assess the situation before responding. It is also important that all involved are treated fairly.

(a) Smoking

- Find out what happened – what was seen and who was involved.
- Note any concerns
- Report incident to Year head and complete incident report form for the Year Head
- The Year Head will investigate the incident further if necessary
- On the first offence Year Head will impose the sanction of detention.
- Second and subsequent offences will be reported to the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- In all cases the student will be advised of the dangers to health of smoking

(b) Possession, use or supply of alcohol and or legal/illegal drugs

- Find out what happened – what was seen and who was involved, note any concern.
- Report to Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Complete a drug incident report form.
- Student(s) may also be asked to complete a drug incident report form.

It is important in all suspected or confirmed drug incidences that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. The Drug Co-ordinator and Guidance counsellor(s) will be informed as necessary. All actions will be recorded and held confidentially by the Principal, who may impose an immediate sanction. The Board of Management will be informed.

Parents/Guardians will be informed and where appropriate will be offered support.

Investigation of such incidents will be conducted in an open and transparent manner. Where an allegation is made against a student she will be informed of the nature and extent of the allegation and be given an adequate opportunity to respond.

Once the matter has been investigated the Board of Management will make a decision and communicate this to all involved together with the sanction it is considering imposing. The student will be provided with an opportunity to make a submission on this. The Board will then make its final decision.

If the incident is confirmed the Principal or person designated by the Board may contact the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer depending on the nature and severity of the offence. Any illegal drugs found on the premises will be handed over to the Gardai.

- In response to all incidents pastoral support will be offered.
- If the student has a serious drug problem then referral to a drug treatment centre may be recommended.
- Parents/Guardians and staff involved in the incident will be offered support where appropriate.
- Breaches of this regulation may result in expulsion at the discretion of the Board of Management.

### **3. Confidentiality**

Teachers cannot offer full confidentiality to any young person who discloses information on drug incidences. The school recognises the need for care in this area as the student may talk to a teacher because they trust her/him and need help. The situation should be handled discretely and must remain private and only disclosed to the relevant authority on a strict “need to know” basis. In most incidences in school disclosure should be made to the Principal or Deputy Principal or in some cases the Guidance Counsellor or Drug Co-ordinator. The student should be informed about what is happening and why.

### **4. Media**

The Principal or a nominated spokesperson will handle all media queries should this situation arise. The school will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school policy and the procedures in place to manage the incident.

### **5. Monitoring of the Policy**

The Board of Management undertakes to circulate this written Policy to the whole school community. Copies will be available from The Principal’s Office, Library or on the School Web Site. It will also be given to new staff and parents

of new students as part of their induction into the school. This policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Board of Management and subject to review after two years or in the light of changing needs or information. Monitoring will involve evaluation of aspects of the policy by the Drug Co-ordinator such as

- Drug education for students, staff and parents/Guardians
- Management of drug related incidents

The results of this evaluation will be given to the Principal and the Board of Management.

*All parents and students will be asked to sign a statement to the effect that they have read this policy.*

# **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School Kilkenny recognises that all students have a right to attend school and a right to receive an education. The Board is fully committed to ensuring that all students have the best possible opportunity to enjoy that right. This is in keeping with our School Mission Statement, which promotes the personal dignity of each individual. The school wishes to work in partnership with parents/guardians and students to promote regular school attendance.

1.1 Regular attendance means that the student :

- . Attends school every day unless there is a justified reason
- . Arrives on time
- . Attends all lessons throughout the day

1.2 Regular attendance at school

- . Enables students to benefit from teaching
- . Enables students to keep up with school work
- . Enables students to develop to their full potential
- . Enhances career prospects
- . Promotes self discipline and reliability
- . Prevents social isolation
- . Reduces the risk of a student being the victim of anti social or criminal behaviour
- . Complies with legal requirements under the Education Welfare Act.

1.3 Legal requirements

When a student is absent for part of a school day, a full school day or more than a school day, parents/guardians must supply a written explanation of the reasons for the absence. This is a legal requirement under the Education Welfare Act.

If a student is absent more than 20 days on aggregate or there is persistent absenteeism, the Principal is obliged by law to notify the Education Welfare Board.

The school is also obliged to report students suspended for more than six days to the Educational Welfare Board.

## 2. Strategies to encourage attendance

- . Award for students who do not miss a day in any year
- . Over all award for any 6<sup>th</sup> year student who has never missed a day
- . Improved attendance acknowledged quietly/privately to students and parents e.g. by notes in school diary
- . Homework club
- . Pastoral care of students with a record of poor attendance
- . Care programme
- . Home School Liaison – work in partnership between home, school and the Education Welfare Officer.
- . Good liaison with Primary feeder schools
- . Anti bullying programmes
- . Endeavour to ensure that each student has access to an appropriate programme of education e.g. reduced curriculum where necessary
- . Parents are requested not to take students out of school for holidays or make medical or dental appointments during school hours as far as possible

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 Registering attendance

The “Anseo” attendance system registers attendance on computer.

- . Each student must have a ‘swipe card’ which she uses to register her attendance. The onus is on the student to register by swiping her card in before 8.50am every morning and at lunchtime.
- . If a student is absent from school or has not swiped in a text message will be sent to a parent or guardian’s designated mobile phone during the first class of the morning.
- . If a student has a dental appointment in the morning she must report to the office with the note and swipe in to be marked present.
- . If a student is late three times in a week, forgets to swipe in three times in a week or uses the keypad instead of the swipe card three times in the week an hour’s detention is given on Friday.
- . Students are marked absent if they do not swipe in.
- . If a student keys in or swipes in for another student they will both be detained. Repeated offences may result in suspension.
- . If cards are lost they must be replaced at a cost of €20.
- . Students going away for a day trip or games early must swipe in before 8.50am. If students return before 3.30pm approximately they should swipe in on their return.
- . A list of absences is posted twice daily in the staffroom. Weekly absences will be posted in the staffroom for cross checking by teachers.

### 3.2 Monitoring attendance throughout the school day

- . Any student leaving class will have a note of consent from the class teacher.
- . Any student meeting with another teacher, guidance counsellors, Deputy Principal or Principal will have a note of consent
- . Spot checks of attendance will be carried out from time to time.

### 3.3 Notification of absences

- . When a student is absent for part of a school day, a full school day or more than a school day, parents/guardians must supply a written explanation of the reasons for the absence. This is a legal requirement under the Education Welfare Act. The student journal should be used for this purpose.
- . The student must give this note to her class tutor for signature. Failure to produce a note will result in sanctions.
- . Any student leaving the school during school hours must have a letter from her parents/guardians and permission must be sought from her class tutor, year head, Deputy Principal or Principal and then sign out at the Secretary's Office and sign in on her return.
- . Lunch hour

At the beginning of the school year Parents/Guardians sign a form indicating whether their daughter should stay in school for lunch or go home. Those students who do not stay in school must go home or to a designated address which has to be given to the school. No student may be down town, in restaurants or "take aways" without permission from parents and school. Failure to comply with this rule will result in detention.

Fifth and Sixth year students are exempt from this rule and are expected to behave always in an appropriate manner.

Any student wishing to leave at lunch time who normally stays in school for lunch must have a letter from her parents/guardians and permission must be sought from her class tutor, year head, Deputy Principal or Principal and then sign out at the Office and sign in on her return.

## 4. Truancy

- . If a student is absent without permission she may return to the school when accompanied by a parent/guardian if possible.
- . A first offence will merit detention and may merit suspension within school.

- . A second or further offence may merit suspension within school or depending on the length or seriousness of the situation may merit suspension outside school.
- . Any student who have been mitching may be denied privileges e.g. school trips etc. at the discretion of the Principal.

#### 5. Punctuality

- . All students are expected to be punctual for each class every day.
- . Students who are late for class, at 8.50am or after lunch three times in one week will be detained.
- . Students late to class at other times will be sanctioned by the class teacher.

#### 6. Procedures for students who feel unwell.

6.1 A student who feels unwell must report to the Secretary's Office, Deputy Principal or Principal, having first sought permission from her teacher. If any of the above are unavailable the student may report to any teacher.

6.2 If the student is unable to return to class :

- . Her parents will be contacted and then she then waits outside the Principal's Office.
- . When leaving school with permission she must sign out.
- . In the case of an emergency, if parents cannot be contacted, the school will call a doctor or bring the student to the hospital.

# **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR INTERNET, EMAIL AND OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's internet and other online resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP (acceptable use policy) is not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This version of the AUP was created in August 2004 and updated on December 2005 and ratified in April 2006.

## **School's Strategy**

The school will employ an number of strategies in order to maximize learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows :

### **General**

- . Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- . The school will regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage.
- . Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.
- . Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- . Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- . The use of personal floppy discs or CD-ROMs in school require a teachers' permission.
- . Students will observe good "netiquette" (i.e. etiquette on the Internet) at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

### **World Wide Web**

- . Students will not visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable material.
- . Students will use the Internet for **educational purposes only**.
- . Students will be familiar with the copyright issues relating to online learning.
- . Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- . Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

### **Email**

- . Students will be use personal email accounts and will use pre-setup non-functional class email accounts under supervision of a teacher.
- . Student will not send or receive any material that is illegal, frivolous, vulgar, abusive,



defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person. Remember the laws of the land relating to written communication apply equally to email, including laws on defamation, copyright, obscenity, fraud and discrimination.

- . Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- . Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- . Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

### **Internet Chat**

- . Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums that have been approved by the school and/or setup by the school under strict supervisory conditions.
- . Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- . Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- . Face-to-face meetings with someone organized via Internet chat will be forbidden.

### **School Website**

- . Pupils will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web via the school website.
- . The publication of student work will be co-ordinated by a teacher.
- . Pupils' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- . Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected. Parents have the right to withdraw permission for publication of photographs on the school website.
- . Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- . Pupils will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

### **Legislation**

The school will provide information on request on the following legislation relating to the use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- . Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- . Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- . Interception Act 1989
- . Video Recordings Act 1989
- . The Data Protection Act 1988

### **Support Structure**

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organizations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

## **Sanctions**

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school code of behavior. This may include written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.