



Coachford College Code of Behaviour



1. General

1.1 Scope

This code was drawn up in consultation with all school partners. It applies to students of the school at the following times:

1. During school time, including before and after class and at break-times.
2. While representing the school.
3. While travelling to or from school using school transport.
4. While on school trips, tours, exchanges, field trips etc.
5. While supporting school teams or activities.
6. On any occasion when accompanied by school personnel.

1.2 Relationship to the school's mission and core values

The school's Mission Statement reads *Coachford College is a community. Together we share mutual respect in a positive environment. We develop individual potential in all fields.* The mission statement sets out the school's vision for positive relationships and the creation of a positive, safe and ordered environment conducive to the highest standards of achievement, with student wellbeing at its core.

As an inclusive post-primary school under the patronage of Cork Education and Training Board, strong emphasis is placed in this code on the ETB core values:

- Care
- Community
- Equality
- Excellence in Education
- Respect

The code expresses the mission and values of the school.

1.3 Context

The Code is informed by the requirements of the Education Act (1998), Education (Welfare) Act (2000) and is guided by Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB). The Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safety Statement, Wellbeing Plan, Whole School Guidance Plan, School Outings Policy, Anti-Bullying Bí Cineálta Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement/Risk Assessment, Additional Educational Needs Policy, Attendance Policy, School Uniform Policy, Smoke-Free Policy, Substance Abuse Policy, Acceptable

Use of Technology Policy, Digital Learning Plan, Homework Policy, Data Protection Policy (CETB), Dignity in the Workplace Charter, Blended Learning Policy, Social Media Policy (CETB), and the Suspensions and Expulsions Policy. The Policy serves to support the school's vision for excellence in teaching and learning as set out in Looking at our School: A Quality Framework 2022, in the vision for Junior Cycle and in the NCCA's Guidelines for Wellbeing at Junior Cycle, 2021 and Senior Cycle Reform 2025.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1. To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
2. To create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.
3. To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents.
3. To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour.
4. To help young people to mature into responsible participating citizens.
5. To ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all members of the school community are widely known and understood.

1.4 Rationale

The Code of Behaviour assists the school community to promote the school ethos, positive relationships, policies, procedures, and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. This Code of Behaviour assists teachers, other members of staff, students and parents/guardians to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected, promoted and supported. To this end, the Code of Behaviour is seen as a working document, informing everyday school life, and reflecting the voices of our students, staff, parents/guardians, Board of Management, as well as the legislative requirements to which we are bound. By involving all our stakeholders in this document, we are inviting all members of our school community to take ownership of the atmosphere and environment in our school.

2. Role and Responsibilities

2.1. Students

Students have been widely consulted in the development of this code. The school appreciates their views and has used their voice to shape this code. Students must adhere to this Code of Behaviour at all times.

2.2 Parents and Guardians

Parents have been widely consulted in the development of this code. The school appreciates their views and has used their voice to shape this code. The school expects them to support the code and encourage students to uphold it.

2.3 Teachers

The staff has been widely consulted in the development of his code. The school appreciates their views and has used their voice to shape this code. The school also recognises and appreciates their role in the implementation of this code.

2.4 Ancillary Staff

The school appreciates the contribution of ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school and therefore in the successful operation of the Code of Behaviour.

2.5 Board of Management

The school acknowledges the role of the Board of Management in the development, operation and oversight of our Code of Behaviour.

3.0 Standards of Behaviour and Rules

The school's standards of behaviour describe the behaviour expected of all students.

1. Attend school and be punctual.

We expect that;

1. Students attend on each school day.
2. Students are on time for school and classes.
3. Students who are absent or signing in/out adhere to the school's procedures as set out in the school journal and in the school's Attendance Strategy.
4. If a student feels sick, they must tell their teacher and their parents/guardians will be contacted via the school office.
5. Students do not go to the toilets between or during classes without their teacher's permission.
6. Students do not leave the school grounds.

These are expectations in our school because;

- Ongoing attendance is important to help students realise their full potential.
- Being late for class can be disruptive to learning and teaching.
- All absences must be explained as the school is legally obliged to report on student attendance.
- The school needs to know the whereabouts of all students throughout the school day for their personal safety.

2. Show care and respect for self & others.

We expect that:

1. Students treat all members of the school community with kindness and respect.
2. Students follow the instructions of all members of staff.
3. Students do not use inappropriate and offensive language.
4. Students do not engage in any form of bullying behaviour.
5. Students understand that substance misuse is strictly forbidden.

These are expectations in our school because;

- All members of the school community are entitled to feel safe and respected in our school.
- Staff are endeavouring to promote a safe school environment where effective learning and teaching can take place.
- Learning and teaching are important activities in our school and a positive classroom atmosphere makes that easier.
- Inappropriate, offensive language and/or bullying is harmful and hurtful.

→ Substance misuse is harmful, and in some instances, unlawful.

3. Show care and respect for our school community.

We expect that:

1. Students wear their school uniform (as documented in school journal) in school at all times.

This is an expectation in our school because;

- Equality is a core value in our school, a uniform removes the social pressure to conform to trends, which can be costly and exclusionary.
- The uniform contributes to a sense of community and pride in our school.

4. Show care and respect for our school environment & school property.

We expect that:

1. Students dispose of their litter in the bins.
2. Students recognise that vandalism, graffiti, theft and damage to school property are deemed serious breaches of our school's rules.
3. Students do not move classroom furniture around, unless requested to do so by a teacher/s.
4. Students do not congregate in bathrooms, nor do they cubicle share.
5. Students know that chewing gum is forbidden.

These are expectations in our school because;

- Our caretaking and cleaning staff work hard to take care of our school environment and deserve our cooperation.
- We have a collective global responsibility to keep our school clean and tidy and respect our environment.
- Organised classrooms help learning and teaching.
- Students need access to the toilets. Students may feel intimidated if they see groups loitering in bathrooms and might be less inclined to use the bathroom during their assigned breaks.
- Discarded chewing gum is unhygienic and removing it creates additional work for our cleaning staff.

5. Engage with your learning positively and to the best of your ability.

We expect that:

1. Students bring the appropriate equipment and materials to each class.
2. Students engage positively with learning and teaching in their class.
3. Students bring their homework journal to each class and document their homework in it.
4. Students complete homework to the best of their ability.
5. Students keep books and materials in good condition.

These are expectations in our school because;

- Materials are necessary in class for effective learning and teaching.
- Behaviour that disrupts learning and teaching cannot be tolerated.
- Homework journals help you to be better organised.
- Homework is assigned to help you progress your learning.

6. Ensure your mobile phone is not seen or heard.

We expect that:

1. Students ensure that if they have a mobile phone in school, the device is powered off / on silent and stored safely.
2. Students never use a mobile phone in school unless on the instruction of a teacher.

These are expectations in our school because;

- Mobile phones are distracting and can negatively impact learning and teaching.
- It counteracts the possibilities of cyberbullying.
- It is important on health and safety grounds that if you feel sick, you report it to a staff member.

7. Ensure no banned items are brought into school. Note: A banned item is anything deemed a health and safety risk.

We expect that:

1. Students do not bring banned items into school.

This is an expectation in our school because;

- Such items pose a health and safety risk.

8. Parking

Parking is provided on the school grounds for staff only. However in the event that more spaces are available than required, those spaces may be allocated to student parking.

In such cases, we expect that:

1. Students adhere to all relevant school policies and procedures.

This is an expectation in our school because;

- Failure to comply with procedures regarding driving, parking or use of cars poses a health and safety risk.

4.0 Promoting Positive Behaviour

Promoting positive behaviour is a main goal of this code.

Strategies used in our school to promote positive behaviour include;

- Expectations / rules are communicated clearly at the start of and throughout the school year. This is to ensure that students, staff and parents understand what our expectations / rules and procedures are;
- Positive everyday interactions between staff and students are conducive to building healthy relationships;
- Acknowledge and affirm good behaviour;
- Displaying of student work / achievements in school and/or on social media/ICT displays
- Use of Restorative Practice;
- The co-creation of 'Respect Agreements';
- Junior Cycle students can partake in RP modules 'Friendship Champions' and 'Friendship Masters';
- Weekly Check and Connect, a relational exercise;

- When conflict arises between students, they are invited and encouraged to partake in restorative meetings where a solution is sought;
- School Awards Ceremony and the inclusion of Values Awards;
- Recognition of curricular / co curricular / extracurricular activities / achievements;
- Our Wellbeing Programme explores topics and modules like FUSE, Bystander etc.
- Student Voice initiatives such as Student Council, SPOTLITE.
- Acknowledgement of effort and achievement at Board of Management meetings.

5.0 Sanctions and Interventions

The purpose of a sanction is to help students to:

- Reflect on their behaviour and recognise its effect on their selves and others;
- Take responsibility for their behaviour

Sanctions and interventions may include;

- Verbal instruction;
- Adjustment of seating plan;
- Extra work given (relating to the subject);
- Teacher detention/year head detention;
- Contact with parent/guardians, note in journal / email / phone call;
- Withdrawal of privileges;
- Confiscation of banned item/s;
- Confiscation of mobile phone/s for one week;
- Placement on a Student Review Card (Organisational / Behavioural)
- Referral to Year Head/Deputy Principal/Behavioural Support Team/Principal;
- Referral to Student Support Team;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion;
- Other measures which the class teacher/Year Head/ Deputy Principal/Principal/Behavioural Support Team may deem appropriate.

This list is not exhaustive and is not necessarily in a particular order.

As part of the whole-school approach, a ladder of intervention is used to manage student behaviour. The ladder of intervention is a flexible guide.

6.0 Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

6.1. Fair Procedures

The school follows fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice.

6.2 General Principles

6.2.1. Students have a statutory obligation to attend a school up to age 16. Accordingly, students have a right to attend a school up to that age.

6.2.2 Having been enrolled in Coachford College, all students have the right to learn in an orderly and caring environment. All schools need to establish and maintain high expectations of student behaviour. All members of the school community should be aware of these expectations and participate in their development.

6.2.3 All students and teachers have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity, in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination.

6.2.4 There will be cases of unacceptable behaviour where it will be in the best interests of the school community and/or the student involved, for the student to be removed from Coachford College for a period of time or completely. Suspension and expulsion are the options available to the Board of Management (BOM) in such situations.

6.2.5 Collaboration between Board of Management, school staff, students and parents/guardians is an important feature of behaviour management. All should be fully aware of the suspension and expulsion procedures and their place in the context of the school's Code of Behaviour.

6.2.6 Suspension is only one strategy within the school's Code of Behaviour. It is most effective when it highlights the parents'/guardians' responsibility for taking an active role, in partnership with the school, to work with their student to enable a change in behaviour. The school will work with parents/guardians with a view to assisting a suspended student to rejoin the school community as quickly as possible.

6.2.7 Suspension allows students time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour which led to the suspension and accept responsibility for changing their behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future. It also allows time for school personnel to plan appropriate support for the student to assist with successful re-entry.

6.2.8 The Board of Management delegates responsibility to suspend to the Principal.

6.2.9 If, in the judgement of the Principal, a student should be expelled, the Principal shall refer the matter to the Board of Management for decision.

6.2.10 The Board of Management and the Principal will exercise this authority having regard to their responsibilities to the whole school community and to principles of natural justice.

6.2.11 In implementing these procedures, the Principal and the Board of Management will ensure that no student is discriminated against on any of the following grounds: Gender, Marital Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race, Membership of the Travelling Community.

6.2.12 The Board of Management will also ensure that the implementation of these procedures will take into account such factors as:

- The age and state of health of the student;
- Any particular circumstances unique to the student which might be sensibly taken into account in connection with the behaviour, e.g. strained or traumatic domestic situations;
- The extent to which parental, peer or other pressure may have contributed to the behaviour;
- The degree of severity of the behaviour, the frequency of its occurrence and the likelihood of its recurring;

- Whether or not the behaviour impaired or will impair the normal functioning of the student or other students in the school and/or school events;
- Whether or not the behaviour occurred on school premises or when the student was otherwise in the charge of the school staff or when the student was on the way to or from school. An important consideration in cases of doubt is the extent to which behaviour away from the school had a serious impact on the life of the school;
- The degree to which behaviour was a violation of one or more of the school rules and the relative importance of the rule(s).

6.2.12 Depending on the nature and extent of the behavioural concern, the support of other agencies such as the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) or the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) may be sought by the Board of Management.

6.2.13 The Principles of Natural Justice are fundamental to the implementation of these procedures.

6.3 Essential Elements in the Procedure for Suspension

6.3.1. The Principal, Deputy Principal or Behaviour Committee makes the decision on the basis of the reasons set out in the Code of Behaviour, and the parameters set out by the Board of Management.

6.3.2. Parents/Guardians and/or the adult students as relevant, are informed either by post or email or verbally.

6.3.3. The suspension may be immediate (e.g. in the interests of health and safety) and Parents/Guardians and/or the adult student as relevant, will be informed by phone or in person with a letter to follow.

6.3.4. The student will be supervised/in class until the suspension takes effect.

6.3.5 Students who are under 18, and/or those over 18 and consenting to share their personal data will never be sent home during the school day, unless collected by parent/ guardian (or another suitable arrangement made).

6.3.6. The notification to parents/guardians/adult students as appropriate should include:

- Notice of the suspension;
- Effective date of the suspension;
- Duration of the suspension;
- Reason/s for the suspension;
- Expectations of the student while on suspension (e.g. study programme);
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians as appropriate, while on suspension;
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed (if the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date);
- Requirements which need to be in place when the student returns (e.g. written apology, completed assignments, detentions, etc.).

6.3.7 If consideration is being given to proceeding to expulsion, then the letter must make this clear.

6.4. Procedures for the formal re-introduction of the student into the school

6.4.1. Parents/guardians may be requested to attend with the student, as appropriate, on the day of his/her return to the school.

6.4.2. Undertakings of good behaviour may be requested in writing.

6.4.3. Agreed conditions (e.g. counselling, referral to NEPS, other pastoral supports) should be signed by parent/guardian/student/adult student as relevant.

6.4.4. Interview with the Deputy Principal, Principal or Behaviour Committee to review the student's reflection on their behaviour. A card and/or detention may also be issued.

6.5 Grounds for removing a suspension

Grounds may include:

- A successful appeal to the Board of Management under Section 29 of the Education Act;
- New circumstances come to light;
- Other grounds under general principles above.

6.6 Essential elements in the Procedure for Expulsion

6.6.1 Principal's Role

Expulsion can only occur after the Principal has:

- Ensured disciplinary interventions have been applied and documented;
- Ensured appropriate support personnel have been involved;
- Ensured that discussion has occurred with the parent/guardian/student as appropriate, regarding the specific behaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to expulsion;
- Recorded all action taken;
- Informed the parents/guardians in the case of students under 18 years and those over 18 years as relevant, of his/her intention to recommend expulsion to the Board of Management;
- Invited the parents/guardians in the case of students under 18 years and those over 18 years as relevant, to the Board of Management hearing;
- Invited the parents/guardians of students under 18 years and those over 18 years as relevant to make a written submission in advance of the Board Meeting;
- Provided the parents/guardians in the case of students under 18 years and those over 18 years as relevant with a full, written description of the allegations against the student and the case being made at the Board, together with copies of all documentation, statements etc. supporting that case, and
- Made a formal expulsion recommendation to the Board with full supporting documentation.

6.6.2 Board of Management's Role

Expulsion can only occur after the Board of Management has:

- Heard the Principal's case against the student (this case should be made in the presence of the parents or guardians);
- Heard the response of the parent/s or guardian/s, as relevant;
- Examined all the documentation;
- Considered the student's record in the school;

- Taken advice if applicable;
- Ensure the Principal is not present for the Board's discussion and decision on the matter.
- Discussed the case in detail;
- Considered all matters in GENERAL PRINCIPLES 10 above;
- Made a final decision to expel;
- Communicated the decision to the parents formally through the Secretary to the Board (via registered letter);
- Informed the Education Welfare officer under Section 24(1) of the Education Welfare Act (2000).

The formal letter of notification should include:

- Notice of the expulsion;
- Effective date of the expulsion;
- Reasons for the expulsion;
- A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed;
- A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians for the period of 20 days required by the Education Welfare Officer to examine alternative provisions for the education of the student;
- Information and documentation on Appeal rights (i.e. Section 29 Appeal).

The Board of Management shall:

- Consult with and keep the patrons informed of decisions and proposals of the Board;
- Publish, in such manner as the Board with the agreement of the patron considers appropriate, the Policy of the school concerning admission to and participation in the school, including the Policy of the school relating to expulsion and suspension of students and admission to and participation by students with disabilities or who have other educational needs;
- Ensure that as regards policy and principles of equality, the right of parents/guardians to send their children to a school of their choice are respected and such directions as may be made from time to time by the Minister, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school and the constitutional rights of all persons concerned, are complied with.
- Where the Board of Management or a "person acting on its behalf" believes that a student should be expelled it must before doing so inform the Welfare Officer of this belief and the reasons for so believing.
- The Board has the right to take such reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good discipline is maintained, and that the safety of students is secured during the period of suspension.

6.6.3 Welfare Officer's Role

The Welfare Officer must consult with the Principal (or his/her nominee), the student and his/her parents and other appropriate persons, and convene a meeting of those willing to attend.

A student may not be expelled for twenty school days after the Welfare Officer receives this notification.

6.7 Appeals

The principles of Natural Justice demand that there should be a right to appeal to a higher authority.

Suspensions of less than 20 school days may be appealed to the Board of Management via written submission only within 14 days of the suspension notice being issued. In such cases the final decision lies with the Board of Management.

A suspension which brings the cumulative suspension to twenty or more school days may be appealed to the Department of Education within 42 calendar days of the suspension notice being issued.

7.0 Implementation and Monitoring

7.1. The Code of Behaviour is available on our school website. At the start of each academic year, as part of our opening tutorial, every class is brought through the rules and procedures. Parents and guardians are required to sign an agreement to support the Code of Behaviour on enrolment at the school.

8.0 Procedures in relation to notification of a child's absence from school

8.1 Good school attendance is a key element of successful participation, experiences and outcomes at school.

8.2 Our attendance policy aims to:

- Encourage full attendance where possible
- Identify pupils at risk of poor attendance patterns
- Promote a positive learning environment
- Raise awareness of the importance of school attendance
- Use a data informed approach to monitoring attendance and attendance trends

Details of the school Attendance policy can be accessed at

http://coachfordcollege.ie/?page_id=37

Following consultation with all school partners, the school's Board of Management ratified this Code on 28/05/2025 and reviewed it on May 6th 2026.

It has been made available to all members of the school community, and is posted on the school's website. It will be reviewed on an annual basis and/or as deemed necessary.

Signed by:



Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 06.05.2026



Principal

Date: 06.05.2026

