

Mulroy College
Milford
Roll Number: 712200



Code of Behaviour
Policy

MULROY COLLEGE
Coláiste na Maoile Ruaidhe



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Mulroy College embodies mutual respect in a caring environment while enabling students to achieve personal success and move with confidence into a world of endless opportunities.

This Code of Behaviour was drawn up in accordance with relevant education legislation:

The Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 23

Equality Act 2004

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

The National Education Welfare Board Guidelines 2008

A copy of the Code of Behaviour is printed in each student's journal and staff handbook.

Aims of the Code

1. To clarify for all members of the college community the principles and values to which we aspire.
2. To foster a culture of respect for self and others
3. To clarify standards of behaviour to be observed by each student.
4. To inform students and parents of procedures for dealing with misbehaviour and infringement of college rules.

5. To support the moral, social and emotional development of each student.
6. To foster respect for the property of the college and the general environment.

The code will be included in the student journal where it can be seen by both parents and students. Time will be devoted by class tutors and year heads to explain aspects of the code, especially at the beginning of the academic year to all students with particular emphasis on first years. Assemblies will be devoted to explanation of aspects of the code throughout the year.

This code reflects the ethos of Mulroy College as outlined in the mission statement:

- The College promotes a positive approach to behaviour management by embracing the principles of Restorative Practices. This approach helps young people to understand how their behaviour affects others and brings people together when conflict occurs. It helps repair and restore relationships.
- The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that there is a clear and effective code of behaviour.
- The fair implementation of the Code and the maintenance of good conduct in and out of the classroom is the responsibility of all members of staff.
- The principal has particular responsibility to ensure that the implementation of sanctions is fair and proportionate.
- By enrolling in the college, students and their parent(s)/ guardian(s) formally accept to support the school code of behaviour.
- Every member of the College community should be clear on the expectations of all.
- Consideration will be given to the difficulties faced by students with special needs, especially in situations where their behaviour is affected by their learning difficulties.
- Each student is expected to have a clear understanding of the rules and procedures which are necessary for the college to be a happy and safe environment for all students.

Our Code of Behaviour which is embedded within the school ethos emphasises the importance of positive relationships and good communication. We assist our school community in maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, we use various strategies to encourage students and staff to look at behaviour and its effects on others and the wider school community, based on the principles of **Restorative Practices**.

Through this approach students get the opportunity to learn more about their behaviour and how best to work through issues. We bring people together in a structured and agreed way to discuss concerns as they arise. In this way everyone is heard, valued equally and relationships are strengthened. Some of the strategies used involve;

- listening approaches
- restorative questioning
- circle time and
- impromptu conferencing.

Manners and Courtesy

All members of the college community are expected to treat others with respect. The use of improper or offensive language must be avoided at all times.

Mulroy College is a place where communication and relationships are based on mutual respect and cooperation

Inappropriate Behaviour/Bullying

Every person has the right to be safe and to enjoy the environment they work or learn in. The positive approach to discipline in the College aims to foster understanding about the importance of establishing open relationships based on tolerance and respect. This approach follows the principles of Restorative Practices. Therefore, bullying behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated.

It is essential that anyone who becomes aware of, or suspects, such behaviour, must inform the Class Teacher, Year Head or any appropriate person in authority. Parents/guardians who may be concerned about bullying behaviour are requested to inform the College immediately so that appropriate action may be taken.

See: '**Anti-Bullying Policy**' for more detail.

Classroom Behaviour

Each student has the right to learn. Each teacher has the right to teach. Students take responsibility for arriving to class on time, organising books and class materials, completing homework and assignments. Students may go to their lockers each morning, at break times, lunch time and at the end of the school day. All students are expected to comply with the classroom/subject teacher rules and contribute to a positive teaching and learning environment.

Out-of-class Behaviour

All members of the school community are expected to take a pride in the college environment. Any form of behaviour which may result in damage to property is a serious breach of the code. Students are reminded that the code of behaviour applies at all times in relation to all out-of-school activities i.e school tours abroad, day trips, overnight trips. The. Students may not leave the College grounds without parental permission at any time during the school day. Students must sign in/out at the main

office as necessary. Students who live locally may sign a lunchtime exemption form. College takes no responsibility for vehicles parked. The college car park is for staff and visitors only. We have no facility for student parking within the grounds of Mulroy College or in the bus parking area.

Outings and Tours

Outings and tours offer students other learning experiences. The success of such events depends, to a great extent, on responsible behaviour, co-operation and a willingness to participate. Students are reminded that the Code of Behaviour applies at all times in relation to any out-of-school activities i.e school tours abroad, day trips, overnight trips. Any student who seriously misbehaves on an outing may be sent home early at the parents/guardians expense and he/she may not be permitted to participate in future outings/tours. This decision will be at the discretion of the staff member in charge, following consultation with college management. See *Outing and Tours Policy*

Homework/ college journal

Homework is an opportunity to review and reinforce class work. It is an essential element of the learning process. Homework should be recorded in the journal. Parents/guardians are asked to check the journals to ensure that work is completed each night. The journal acts as an invaluable part of communication between home and school, it should be maintained in good condition and maximum use should be made of it.

Teachers are responsible for correcting homework and giving feedback to ensure continued development. Teachers are responsible for ensuring students are clear on homework tasks and following the college literacy plan, homework details are given at the start of classes where possible. Homework should be assigned appropriate to ability levels and completed to the best of student ability.

Attendance and Punctuality

Monthly attendance meetings are held to review and encourage higher attendance and data is given to year heads and class teachers. Where students are absent phone calls will be made and letters are also sent out regards being late, absenteeism and evening absences. Students must be on time for each class and attend registration each day.

Reporting of student's attendance is made to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) in accordance with the Education Welfare Act (2000). In accordance with the Education Welfare Act (2000) parents are responsible for their child's attendance at school each day.

Attendance certificates from NEWB are given out to students each term and at the end of the year to help encourage full and improved attendance. Students should not be taken out of school during term time for the purpose of holidays.

Whenever a student is absent from school the onus is on him/her to catch up on work missed. Students must remain on the school premises for the full duration of the school day and are not permitted to go down town in the morning or during break/lunchtime.

Uniform and Appearance

The full uniform is: college jumper, white/grey shirt, grey/ navy trousers, tie, college jacket and black shoes. Students will be given items to wear if they present without full uniform. Full uniform must also be worn on all outings, including college jacket, unless otherwise instructed.

The College reserves the right, for health and safety reasons, to specify what is considered appropriate jewellery. Facial piercings are not permitted.

The College reserves the right to specify what is appropriate hairstyle and colour. Unnatural hair colours (E.G. blue/green) are considered inappropriate. The co-operation of parents is necessary to successfully implement the uniform policy.

Illegal Drugs/Alcohol/Smoking/Dangerous Objects

Students are aware that it is strictly forbidden to be in possession of:

1. Illegal drugs or substances
2. Dangerous objects, weapons or harmful substances

In line with current legislation, smoking, including e/cigarettes is forbidden in the building and in the college grounds. Parents are asked to assist the college authorities in implementing this regulation.

See: '**Substance Use Policy**' for more detail

Mobile Phones

Students are not allowed to bring mobile phones, ipods or electrical devices to the college. If a student's mobile phone, ipod or electrical devices is confiscated, contact will be made with home and a parent or another adult may collect it at the office. A letter will be sent out to parents informing them.

Please note that the College will not accept any responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of a student's electrical device.

Rewards

The College recognises, encourages and rewards positive behaviour e.g. helpfulness, good manners, achievements, sporting accomplishments and extra curricular success.

- Praise privately or in public such as assembly
- An affirmative note in student's journal
- A positive letter/card/official commendation card/ certificates/ JCSP target cards
- Annual Prize Giving
- Parent teacher meetings
- College outings
- End of term Report
- Student of the month awards
- Recognised on college website/ Mulroy herald/ local media/ screen in canteen/ class teacher

Pastoral Care:

The College provides a range of pastoral care supports in order to address student needs and to encourage good behaviour. Each staff member takes an active role in encouraging good behaviour. Each class is assigned a class teacher. The ten minutes registration each morning gives the class teacher the opportunity to meet with his/her class daily. The ten minute slot offers a huge potential for setting a positive tone to the day for both the students and the teacher.

Each year group has a Year Head. The role of the Year Head is to support the Class teacher, the subject teacher and also the student and parents. Corridor supervision by staff during break and lunch time encourages all staff to look out for students and staff. Parents are encouraged to address concerns via the class teacher and /or the Year Head. In turn these concerns may be brought to the attention of the Deputy and/or the Principal by the Year Head. Monthly Year Head meetings take place.

The Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator in the college offers support to parents. Home visits and/or appointments to meet with students and/or parents by appointment. Guidance and counselling is also available within and out of the school through outside agencies.

There are weekly pastoral care meetings with the pastoral care team to support all students and identify needs.

The student council is a representative structure which students are elected onto, it provides an opportunity to become actively involved in the affairs of the college, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents.

Each first year student has been paired with a senior student as a mentor to help support and talk to students during the settling in year. A Head boy and Head girl, Deputy Head boy and girl are elected annually from 6th year to promote the positive ethos of the school and set example for all students. A breakfast club works each morning

Sanctions

All students are expected to comply with the Code so as to ensure a safe and happy environment conducive to teaching and learning. When necessary, the College will apply sanctions for breaches of discipline in a fair and consistent manner. Parents may be notified through the school journal.

- Detention, during break or lunchtime, with sufficient notice is a decision for an individual teacher
- In-House Suspension
- Extra written work
- Daily Report Sheet
- Exclusion from College activities
- Suspension - in the case of a serious breach of discipline, the student will be suspended
- Expulsion – in an extreme case of unacceptable behaviour the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion

Procedures relating to Suspension and Expulsion

Procedures in relation to Suspension

Suspension is defined as “requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the College for a specified, limited period of school day”

Suspension in Mulroy College will be a proportionate response to behaviour that is causing concern, as defined by the school’s Code of Behaviour. In considering to suspend a student the following factors will be taken into consideration

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

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

Where a preliminary investigation confirms behaviour that could lead to suspension the following procedures will apply:

- A student will normally be suspended for three days or less. In exceptional circumstances the Principal is authorized by the Board of Management to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in order to achieve a particular objective.

- Suspensions can be appealed to the Board of Management of Mulroy College in writing within 21 days of the issue of the suspension.
- Where possible, inform the student and parents, by phone or in writing, about the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in suspension
- Where possible, parents and students should be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made.
- Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Parents will be notified and arrangements will be made with them for the student to be collected.
- The Principal should notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend.

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in Mulroy College at regular intervals to ensure that it is appropriate and effective within the College's Code of Behaviour.

Procedures in relation to Expulsion

A student is expelled from school when the 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.

The Board of Management of Mulroy College recognizes that expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The College will normally have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, where appropriate:

- Meeting with parents/guardians and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour
- Ensuring that all other options have been tried
- Seeking the assistance of outside support agencies where appropriate.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension with the key difference being that where expulsion is considered the school management and staff, having tried a series of interventions and supports, has exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

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

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

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction, the Board of Management will undertake a detailed review of the incident or incidents

The Steps taken towards expulsion of a student

The Board of Management of Mulroy College will follow the Guidelines laid down in the NEWB booklet on Developing a Code of Behaviour in respect of expulsion of a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Full contact with parents and the student involved will be established and maintained throughout the process so that at all times they are given every opportunity to respond to any complaints of alleged misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

In particular parents and the student will be informed that the Board is considering expulsion, will be given records of the allegations against the student and details of the grounds on which these allegations are based.

Parents will be notified of the Board's hearing and will be invited to that hearing. They will be advised that they can make a written or oral submission to the Board and they will have adequate time to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Full details of how the investigation is carried out, how parents will be kept informed, how the hearing is arranged and the steps that are taken if a student is going to be

expelled are included in the NEWB Guidelines and will form the basis of the Board's procedures.

A parent or a student over the age of 18 may appeal a decision to expel to the Donegal ETB. Where such an appeal has been concluded a further appeal may be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion in Mulroy College at regular intervals to ensure that it is appropriate and effective within the school's Code of Behaviour.