



DOMINICAN COLLEGE

CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Dominican College, Taylor's Hill, is a Catholic voluntary secondary school under the trusteeship Le Chéile. The school is committed to the provision of high quality education in an environment which is conducive to effective learning, teaching and discipline. Dominican College has as its objective the development of the personal, spiritual, physical and academic potential of each student in its care. The uniqueness and dignity of each individual are values enshrined in the Dominican philosophy of education. The Board of Management seeks to create an ethos in the school in which truth, justice, compassion and understanding are evident at every level.

1.2 Dominican College is committed to educating the whole person to her full potential in a caring, supportive and happy environment. In accordance with the Vision and Mission Statements of the school, each student is directed and helped to become the best person she is capable of becoming. In order to undertake this task, the Board of Management has set out this Code of Positive Behaviour to present students, staff and parents/guardians with the norms of behaviour and relationships that are necessary to meet the aspirations of our Mission Statement.

1.3 This code sets out the programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn effectively. It outlines the standard of behaviour expected of all students and the procedure to be followed when the student fails or refuses to observe the Code of Positive Behaviour.

1.4 This Code of Positive Behaviour was developed in collaboration with students, staff and parents/guardians and seeks to translate the expectations of these groups into practical arrangements that will help to ensure effective learning and teaching.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 This policy is compliant with relevant sections of the:

- Education Act 1998
- Education Welfare Act 2000
- Equal Status Act 2000
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004
- Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007
- Ombudsman for Children Act 2002

- Disability Act 2005
- Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997
- Age of Majority Act 1985
- Health & Safety Legislation
- Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003

2.2 This policy has been developed in compliance with the *Developing a Code of Positive Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* document produced by the NEWB.

3. AIMS OF THE CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

3.1 The aims of the Code of Positive Behaviour are as follows:

- a) to provide a framework for reasonable and responsible behaviour by all concerned
- b) to facilitate the creation of a caring and respectful environment within the school which allows effective learning and teaching to take place
- c) to ensure that every reasonable effort is made to accommodate the individuality of each pupil while acknowledging the right of each pupil to education in a relatively disruption-free environment
- d) to provide a mechanism for encouraging and rewarding high standards of behaviour which will facilitate students achieving their potential
- e) to make the school a place where students and staff can expect to be treated with respect at all times
- f) to develop a sense of personal responsibility on the part of students and staff
- g) to minimise disruption within the classroom
- h) to ensure the orderly running of the school
- i) to ensure that all stakeholders are clear about their expectations and responsibilities
- j) to ensure that the good reputation of the school is maintained and enhanced
- k) to maintain a clean and orderly environment
- l) to ensure the safety of all students and staff within the school

- m) to ensure students, parents and staff are aware of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- n) to establish a balance between the interests of the individual student and the general welfare of the wider school community

4. POLICY CONTENT

4.1 In accordance with Section 23(2) of *The Education (Welfare) Act 2000* this policy on Code of Positive Behaviour specifies:

- a) the standards of behaviour expected from each student attending Dominican College
- b) the measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- c) the plan for promoting good behaviour
- d) procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school
- e) the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student
- f) the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

5. EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

5.1 Parents/guardians have a vital role to play in the promotion of good behaviour in school. Hence, the home-school link is very important and the school has the right to expect that parents/guardians give their full support to the management and staff of the school in the implementation of this Code of Positive Behaviour. In relation to the expectations of parents:

- a) parents have a statutory right, through their representatives, to be consulted, regarding the drafting and evaluation of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- b) on the enrolment of a student who has not reached the age of 18 years, the parents/guardians and students must sign a declaration that the Code is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with said Code. The Code of Positive Behaviour will be available from the school website or upon request from the school office.
- c) students who have reached the age of 18 years shall be subject to the rights and responsibilities as outlined at b) above.
- d) parents/guardians have a responsibility to actively support the staff of the school in the fair application of the Code of Positive Behaviour.

- e) parents/guardians who have enrolled students in Dominican College shall be encouraged to involve themselves in positive participation in school life in order to facilitate the development of mutually beneficial links between school and home and enhance the education of their children.
- f) parents have a responsibility to ensure excellent attendance and punctuality and to inform the school promptly about any reason for absence.
- g) parents are expected to encourage and support their children with their school work.
- h) parents are expected to attend Parent/Teacher meetings and school functions in which their children may be involved, and attend any special appointments if requested.
- i) parents will do their utmost to ensure that all homework is completed.
- j) parents sign any notes sent by teachers.
- k) parents will provide their children with the required textbooks and accessories.
- l) parents will provide all necessary and relevant reports/documents necessary for the school to apply for relevant assistance from DES.

6. EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL

6.1 The overall day to day responsibility for discipline within Dominican College rests with the Principal subject to the authority of the Board of Management.

6.2 The Principal shall ensure that the Code of Positive Behaviour is administered in a fair and consistent manner.

6.3 The Principal shall encourage a sense of collective responsibility among staff and a sense of commitment to the school among staff, students and parents/guardians.

6.4 The Principal shall provide guidance, leadership and support to staff, students and parents/guardians in the application of the Code of Positive Behaviour and in disciplinary matters in general.

6.5 The Principal may at his/her discretion delegate duties regarding behaviour to other professionals working in the school.

6.6 The Principal has responsibility for ensuring that there is good governance of the school and that the policies of the school are implemented in a fair, transparent and consistent

manner. Where there is a breach of these policies or an incidence of behaviour that is inconsistent with established standards in the school, the Principal is obliged to:

- a) Carry out, or cause to be carried out, an investigation into the incident. S/he must be satisfied that the matter is investigated in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- b) Having carried out an investigation, s/he is obliged to come to reasonable conclusions. These conclusions must again be consistent with established standards in the school and in accordance with relevant policies and legislation.
- c) Having reached such conclusions, s/he is expected to act to redress any matters that may arise as a result of the investigation and to take appropriate action.

7. EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

7.1 The staff of Dominican College shall be responsible at all times for dealing with the behaviour of students within sight or sound of them and they shall respond appropriately to any instance of unacceptable behaviour.

7.2 Teachers bear responsibility for discipline in the classroom and in so doing should:

- a. be present in the classroom with students as far as is reasonable and practical
- b. employ stimulating methods of teaching
- c. have positive expectations of students
- d. demand honest effort and high standards in terms of work and behaviour
- e. seek to create a stimulating and attractive classroom environment
- f. have positive regard for all students.

7.3 In dealing with students teachers should take cognisance of the students' social, environmental and cultural context.

7.4 In dealing with students teachers should take cognisance of the students' emotional needs, psychological needs or specific learning needs.

7.5 Staff will recognise that each student is a unique individual with her own special context and situation which may need to be taken into account when dealing with that student.

7.6 Staff have the right to teach and carry out their professional duties unhindered and in an atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning.

7.7 Staff will maintain a professional relationship with students at all times. Such professionalism is characterised by behaviour that shows respect for the interests and welfare

of students. It implies competence, responsibility, integrity, impartiality, punctuality, a dedication to the education of students and a clear recognition of the role of the teacher in relation to that of the student.

7.8 Staff will always speak to students in a respectful and appropriate manner. Staff will not use language which demeans students.

8. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR EXPECTED OF STUDENTS

8.1 The Board of Management of Dominican College affirms that students attending the school have the right to learn unhindered in an atmosphere that is positive and conducive to learning and teaching. It also affirms that all students have a responsibility to make a positive contribution to the life of the school in terms of work, behaviour and relationships. In light of this responsibility, all students are expected to:

8.2 RESPECT FOR OTHER PERSONS

- a) Treat each person in the school with respect at all times – students, staff and visitors.
- b) Always interact with others in a pleasant and friendly manner.
- c) Respect the authority of all staff and cooperate with them at all times. Students must follow instructions immediately and speak in an appropriate and respectful manner to staff. Use of aggressive, threatening or inappropriate language to members of staff will be taken most seriously.
- d) Only use appropriate and respectful language when speaking to other students, staff or visitors to the school.
- e) Refrain from behaviour that affects the wellbeing of other students such as bullying (mental or physical), fighting or behaviour which disrupts the work of other students. Such behaviour is not acceptable and may result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including expulsion. *See Anti-Bullying Policy.*
- f) Online media may not be used to cause distress or humiliation to members of staff or students. Where such instances occur, the student's parents will be contacted and the matter may be brought before the Board of Management. Disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion may result from such actions.

8.3 RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

- a) Students are expected to respect school property and the property of others. School equipment and materials must be used properly and under the supervision

and guidance of teachers at all times. The property of other students and staff must be treated with respect. The loss or damage to school property or that of others must be made good.

- b) Writing on school walls, desks, any school property or other students' books or belongings is not permitted.
- c) Students are expected to be mindful of the school environment and refrain from dropping litter within the school or on school grounds. In order to maintain a clean and pleasant environment, each student is expected to participate fully in classroom and corridor cleaning rotas.
- d) Students are strongly advised not to bring valuable property to school as the school cannot be held responsible for the loss of pupils' personal property.
- e) Students should not leave any valuables unattended at any time and should use the lockers provided to store their belongings when necessary. These lockers should be kept locked at all times.
- f) Large sums of money should be handed into the school office for safe keeping.

8.4 ATTENDANCE

- a) Students should not be absent from school except when it is absolutely necessary.
- b) Teachers will record student attendance during each lesson. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they are present when the roll is marked.
- c) Phone calls or text message notification may be made/sent to the parents/guardians of students who are marked absent for the morning roll call and have not contacted the school to notify it of the student's absence. The school will endeavour to send text messages to the parents/guardians of students marked absent in the morning but we cannot guarantee that such text messages will be sent each day. It is the primary responsibility of parents to ensure that their daughters are present at school.
- d) Upon returning to school following an absence a signed note must be presented to the student's Class Tutor.
- e) The school authorities are obliged to report absences aggregating 20 days to the National Educational Welfare Board.

- f) Medical/dental appointments should be arranged so as not to impinge on class time.
- g) Unauthorised absence from school (truancy) is a serious breach of discipline and will result in disciplinary sanctions being imposed.
- h) Students may not leave school during normal school hours without the permission of the school authority and written permission from parents/guardians. Students who have appointments during school hours must sign out at the school office and be collected by a parent from the school office. Upon return to school they must sign in.
- i) The Board of Management will not accept responsibility for students who absent themselves from school for any purpose without prior permission.
- j) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Year students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during lunch time. Transition Year, 5th Year and 6th Year students may leave the school during lunch time but must return to school at least five minutes before class begins.

8.5 PUNCTUALITY

- a) Students are expected to arrive to class punctually on all occasions.
- b) Students should not arrive late for school in the morning. If they do arrive after 9am they must sign in at the school office to ensure that they will be marked present.
- c) If a student arrives late to school they must present a note from a parent explaining the reason for their lack of punctuality.

8.6 APPEARANCE

- a) Pupils should always wear their uniforms cleanly, tidily and with pride. Shirts should be tucked in, shoes should be polished and pupils should take pride in their appearance. Hair should be worn neatly and tidily.
- b) Students must arrive at and leave the school in full school uniform.
- c) Students who are not in full uniform may not be allowed go to class.

- d) The school office will have spare items of uniform. If students arrive without a particular item of uniform and their parent is unable to bring it in for them they may be given a loan of an item of uniform which they will be required to wear. The student may be asked to hand in their mobile phone which will be returned to them at the end of the day when they return the item of uniform.
- e) Within the school no non-uniform jackets, hoodies or other non-uniform items may be worn. Where such items are worn they may be confiscated and returned after a period of time as determined by the Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Head. The school does not accept responsibility for confiscated items.
- f) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Year students may wear the official Dominican College Physical Education uniform on those days on which they have PE class. If any student does not have the full correct PE uniform, she must wear her normal uniform to school and change into sportswear before the PE class and back into their uniform after PE class.
- g) TY, 5th & 6th Year students may not wear the PE uniform during the school day other than in PE class.
- h) Only navy coloured socks or black/navy tights may be worn. Patterned tights are not to be worn.
- i) Plain black or navy shoes without any patterns are to be worn. Runners and boots are not permitted. Canvas shoes are not encouraged as they do not provide adequate protection for students during wet weather.
- j) Only the following jewellery is allowed:
- One small/discrete ear-ring/stud at the bottom of each ear.
 - Necklaces worn under the shirt.
 - A discrete bracelet.
 - A watch.
- No facial piercings are allowed. No badges may be worn on the jumper apart from school badges e.g. prefect badges.
- k) Students may wear subtle makeup. Makeup should not be particularly noticeable. Teachers will be the ultimate judge of this. No bright or garish lipstick, eye liner/shadow or nail varnish colours should be worn. Makeup should not be applied at school. If found doing so, the makeup will be confiscated.
- l) No body-art should be visible on students at any time.

- m) Only natural hair colours are allowed. Teachers will be the ultimate judge of whether or not a colour can be deemed natural. Students with unnatural hair colours will be expected to return their hair to a natural colour before returning to school.
- n) Patterns or lettering should not be shaved/cut/dyed into the hair.
- o) Students who arrive in school out of correct uniform may be sent home or not allowed to go to class until their parents bring them in their correct uniform, or given correct school uniform to wear if available.
- p) If any parents have financial issues in relation to the provision of the correct school uniform they should inform the Principal immediately.
- q) Some students, for religious reasons, may be required to wear scarves covering their heads. When this is the case the student's face must always be visible and the scarf must be navy in colour.

8.7 BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE SCHOOL, WITHIN THE VICINITY OF THE SCHOOL AND WHILE WEARING THE SCHOOL UNIFORM

Students are expected to:

- a) Do nothing inside or outside school that will bring the school community into disrepute.
- b) Complete all homework – written and oral – set by teachers to the best of their ability and bring it to class each day. See *Homework Policy*.
- c) Have all books, equipment and school journal as required for lessons.
- d) Behave in a manner which is conducive to good learning taking place in the classroom and in no way impinges on the rights of other students to learn effectively or teachers to teach effectively.
- e) Work and play in a safe and responsible manner. School and classroom rules must be obeyed in order to ensure that the health and safety of students, staff and visitors is not put at risk.
- f) Always display a positive attitude towards the school, others and school work.
- g) Always obey instructions given by staff without argument at all times.

- h) Students should walk in an orderly manner at all times. Students should line up in an orderly manner outside the classroom until admitted by the teacher.
- i) When students come into class they should sit down immediately unless directed otherwise by a member of staff.
- j) No student is allowed to leave the school without permission from the Principal, Deputy Principal or relevant Year Head. A written request to leave the school for an appointment etc. should be made by the parent/guardian in the student's journal. A student who has been granted permission to leave by the Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Head must sign out in the office before leaving and sign in on her return.
- k) At morning break, students may not leave the school grounds.
- l) Smoking is strictly prohibited. The sale and/or supply of cigarettes is prohibited.
- m) Chewing gum is strictly prohibited.
- n) Food and drink may only be consumed in designated areas and only at break times.
- o) Mobile phones if brought to school must be switched off at all times while in school. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in the phone being confiscated until a parent calls to the school to collect it from the Principal's office. See *Mobile Communication Technologies Policy*.
- p) Mobile phones or other communication/recording devices must not be used to photograph, video or otherwise record other students, members of staff or visitors to the school. The breach of this rule is very serious and may result in suspension or expulsion from school. See *Mobile Communication Technologies Policy*.
- q) Students should at all times be well behaved in the vicinity of the school.
- r) Possession or supply and/ or abuse of illegal substances and associated paraphernalia, is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary proceedings up to and including expulsion and referral to an Garda Síochána.
- s) The possession, supply or consumption of alcohol before or during the school day is prohibited and may result in disciplinary proceedings up to and including expulsion.
- t) Any student who misbehaves in a serious manner before sitting the Junior or Leaving Certificate Examinations will face sanctions which may include not being allowed to sit the examination in the school and having to make arrangements with an alternative

school. This sanction will only be approved by the Board of Management and should only be used where:

- a. there is a threat to the good order in the conduct of the examination
- b. there is a threat to the safety of other students and personnel
- c. there is a threat to the right of the other students to do their examination in a calm atmosphere.

9. THE PLAN FOR PROMOTING GOOD BEHAVIOUR

9.1 It is the policy of Dominican College to encourage and promote positive behaviour.

Positive behaviour, genuine effort and achievements are recognised in the following ways:

- verbal and non-verbal praise
- rewarding good behaviour with House points
- personal recognition from the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Tutors and subject teachers
- positive comments on school reports
- positive comments in the student's homework journal
- where appropriate, letters and phone calls to parents/guardians
- special awards during the year
- awarding of certificates for attendance
- acknowledgement of good behaviour, effort or achievement at school assemblies

10. SUPPORT STRUCTURES

10.1 The Board of Management affirms that pastoral care structures, which will ensure a caring and positive approach to the diverse needs of students, will be put in place in order to provide students, as far as possible, with the supports needed to facilitate their good behaviour in school.

10.2 The Board of Management affirms that where appropriate, in consultation with parents, it will make every reasonable effort to have students who display worrying behaviour patterns referred, without delay, for counselling and/or psychological assessment, and subject to the functions of the Minister pursuant to section 7 (1) of the Education Act 1998.

11 STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH MISBEHAVIOUR

11.1 Dominican College adopts a three part response to issues of misbehaviour:

- a) The development of a whole school behaviour policy in collaboration with teachers, parents and students.

- b) The development of classroom management strategies in consultation with teachers.
- c) Strategies for dealing with students who are consistently difficult to manage, such as:
- In-school support
 - Out of school support
 - Personal behaviour plan
 - Report system

11.2 Written records will be maintained by the school with regard to serious student behaviour/misbehaviour.

11.3 Where appropriate, parents will be kept informed from the outset of instances of misbehaviour on the part of their children and that their co-operation in finding a resolution should be sought as early as possible.

11.4 Praise, encouragement and reward will be used as mechanisms for the formation of good behaviour and academic excellence.

11.5 The following are among the strategies that may be used to promote good behaviour;

- a) communication with parents
- b) the rewarding of students regarding positive behaviour
- c) early identification of at risk students regarding behaviour
- d) establishment of a care team for the purpose of identifying and supporting at risk students
- e) establishment of close links with the parents of at risk students
- f) fostering, promoting and establishing contacts by the school with other relevant agencies
- g) the development of programmes of activities, designed to encourage positive behaviour and personal responsibility in students
- h) the development of whole school structures in a positive and pro-active attempt to deal with the issues of attendance and behaviour

- i) regular evaluation of the school's operation as it relates to attendance and behaviour issues, with a view to encouraging an atmosphere of positive behaviour in the school
- j) reasoning with the student
- k) reprimand, including advice on how to improve
- l) temporary separation from peers, friends and others
- m) loss of privileges
- n) restitution
- o) detention during breaks or outside of school hours
- p) prescribed additional work
- q) internal suspension from class
- r) suspension from school on a temporary basis
- s) expulsion
- t) any other strategy that may be of relevance to the needs or circumstances of individual students.

11.6 Dominican College affirms that good behaviour in school is dependent on the good example of all – parents, staff and students.

11.7 When deemed necessary and appropriate, parents may be requested to meet with subject teachers, Class Tutors, Year Heads, Deputy Principal, Principal or the Board of Management to discuss student behaviour and progress.

12. SANCTIONS

12.1 The Board of Management accepts that there is a need for sanctions with regard to non-compliance with the Code of Positive Behaviour in order to register disapproval and to inculcate values of responsibility and positive discipline among students.

12.2 Students will be made aware of the distinction between minor and more serious misbehaviour and of the sanctions applied thereto.

12.3 The basic rules of natural justice as set out hereunder will apply in the context of dealing with student misbehaviour:

- *Audi alteram partem* - the duty to give persons affected by a decision a reasonable opportunity for presenting their case.
- *Nemo iudex in causa sua debet esse* – One cannot be a judge in one's own case and the duty to reach a decision untainted by bias.

12.4 In cases of serious misbehaviour, disobedience or disruption, students may be removed from a lesson. In such instances the class teacher must call for the assistance of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head or other member of staff. The student must not be left unsupervised. Subject teachers are responsible for students allocated to them on the timetable and they have a duty of care to those students.

12.5 Sanctions imposed upon students for misbehaviour may include:

- Note in journal
- A verbal disciplining
- Receiving points for their misbehaviour (see below)
- Being put on report card
- A telephone call to parents/guardians
- Detention
- A meeting with parents
- Punishment essay - thought provoking work e.g. the importance of good behaviour
- Subject related written work
- Completion of punishment work sheets
- Letter of apology
- Referral to Tutor/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal in line with our discipline structure
- Removal from the classroom as per 12.4.
- Exclusion from a favoured activity as deemed appropriate by Year Heads, Deputy Principal or Principal
- Exclusion from school during non-contact times such as lunch time etc.
- In-house suspension
- Suspension (in accordance with the guidelines specified in this policy document)
- Expulsion (in accordance with the guidelines specified in this policy document)

The following points may be given to students for:

Offence

Points

Inattentive	2
Unprepared-books, pens etc.	2
Talking/Distracting others	5
Late for class	5
At locker at the wrong time	5
Failure to show for cleaning rota duty	5
No diary	5
No homework	5
Disruptive	10
Incorrect uniform	10
Defiance/Refusal to take correction/rudeness/bad language	10
Copying/doing homework in one class for another class	10
Constantly interrupting the teacher	10
Makes 'smart alec'/irrelevant remarks	10
Pushes and shoves others	10
Ignores teacher requests to stay behind	10
Refuses to do class-work	10

When points are accumulated by students the following sanctions will apply:

- 30 points: The Class Tutor or Year Head will put the student's name on the list for lunchtime detention and send a letter to her parents informing them of the detention.
- 50 points: The student is referred to the Year Head. After-school detention and an in-school meeting the parents
- 80 points: The student is put on a Green report card and an after-school detention.
- 110 points: The student is put on an Orange report card and an after-school detention.
- 140 points: the student is put on a Red Report Card and an after-school detention.

Students will remain on a report card for a period to time to be determined by the Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Year Head. The duration of this period will be influenced by the student's level of improvement while on the report card or what is deemed appropriate for that student by the Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Year Head.

If a student accrues further points the matter will be referred to the Deputy Principal or Principal and the student may be suspended.

Accrued points will be recorded until the end of the school year in which they were assigned. These points will be removed from the student's record at the end of that school year.

A student on a Green or Orange Report Card may not take part in any school outings/matches for the duration of the report card. A student on a Red Report Card may not take part in any school outings/matches for the rest of the school year. In exceptional circumstances this may be over-ruled by school management.

12.6 Students may be placed on detention for the accrual of penalty points or for once off or repeated offences which are deemed by the Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Year Head as warranting either a lunchtime or an after-school detention.

12.7 The duration of any given after-school detention will be decided upon by the Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Year Head depending on the nature of the infringement resulting in the sanction. Lunchtime detentions last for the 40 minutes of the lunch break. Students will be allowed to eat lunch during the lunchtime detention period.

12.8 When placing a student on detention the procedure is as follows:

- a) After school detention takes place on Wednesday afternoons.
- b) Letter home informing and giving notice of an after-school detention. This letter should be sent by the school no later than the Friday prior to the detention.
- c) The student is responsible for the completion of appropriate work.
- d) Failure to show for detention will result in referral to Year Head and may result in suspension.
- e) A student who receives two after-school detentions will be referred to Principal/Deputy for possible suspension if their behaviour does not improve immediately.
- f) Students must do the work set by the supervising teacher in detention.
- g) A student who is late for detention should complete that day's detention and be scheduled for the following week's detention also.
- h) Any student who refuses to co-operate with the teacher in charge, should be sent to the Principal/Deputy and not allowed to remain in the detention room. This student is liable for a suspension at the discretion of the Principal.
- i) Repeated detentions for any reason may require the further sanction of suspension.

12.9 Where detention outside of school hours is used as a sanction, parents will be advised of such detention, in advance, and they should be given precise details of when and where the sanction is to be imposed and for what period. This is without prejudice to the rights of the school authority to take appropriate and/or immediate disciplinary action in the interests of the good management of the school.

12.10 Students attending detention must wear their full school uniform, arrive promptly and behave acceptably. Failure to adhere to this will result in the student having to repeat the detention and/or other further sanctions.

12.11 In exceptional circumstances where there is a continual and ongoing issue with regard to a student's effort, attitude or behaviour it will be requested that the parents/guardians and student agree to put in place an arrangement whereby the student will attend afternoon detention on each day on which the particular inappropriate behaviour occurs. If the student is required to do detention, the parents/guardians will be notified by telephone. It will be the responsibility of parents to arrange transport for students where necessary.

12.12 It is the responsibility of parents to make transport arrangements for students doing after-school detention.

12.13 Failure to attend detention may result in further sanctions including suspension.

13. SUSPENSION

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

13.2 When all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension can allow students time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour which led to the suspension and to accept responsibility for changing their behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future. It can also allow time for school personnel to plan appropriate support for the student to assist with successful re-entry.

13.3 Suspensions may occur after the Principal has:

- a) ensured, where appropriate, that all discipline options under the Code of Positive Behaviour have been applied and documented
- b) ensured that all appropriate support personnel have been involved
- c) ensured that discussion has occurred with the student and parent/s regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable, and which may lead to suspension
- d) recorded all actions taken.

13.4 Students attending Dominican College may be suspended as follows pending investigation and/or discussion with parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- a) for serious misbehaviour
- b) for an unacceptable level of repeated misdemeanours
- c) for bullying, insulting, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards others in the school, or when identifiable with the school
- d) for the supply, possession or use of alcohol and or illegal drugs
- e) for the supply, possession or use of weapons or dangerous materials or substances
- f) for behaviour that may be a danger to self or others, under the terms of the Health and Safety Act 1989
- g) for racist behaviour and/or the supply/possession/use of racist material
- h) for behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act 2000
- i) for sexual harassment and/or the possession/supply/use of pornographic material.

13.5 Pursuant to subsections 6.1 and 13.4 above, the Board of Management, affirms the right of the Principal to suspend a student or students with immediate effect if the relevant incident is of a serious nature or if the student's continuing presence in the school may pose a risk to health and safety, school discipline or the effective running of the school.

13.6 The Principal has the right to suspend a student or students for breaches of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour for a maximum of 5 consecutive school days without recourse to the Board of Management.

13.7 All suspensions must be notified to the Board of Management at the earliest opportunity.

13.8 Where there are repeated instances of misbehaviour, the parents shall be requested to attend the school for discussion. If the parents and/or the student/s do not give an undertaking that the student will behave in an acceptable way in the future, the student may be suspended for a period to be determined by the Principal or the Board of Management, as appropriate.

13.9 The parents of students enrolled in Dominican College shall be informed of their right to appeal all suspensions to the Board of Management.

13.10 The formal letter of notification of suspension to parents should be understandable to the student and to the parent/s and should include:

- a) notice of suspension
- b) effective date of suspension
- c) duration of suspension
- d) reasons for suspension
- e) expectations of student while on suspension (study programme may be attached)
- f) importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter
- g) a statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parent/s while on suspension
- h) a statement that the Educational Welfare Board has been informed (if the suspension is of 6 days or more duration, or if the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date)
- i) information on appeal rights
- j) requirements which need to be in place when the student returns
- k) if consideration is being given to proceeding to expulsion.

13.11 The Educational Welfare Officer will be informed of suspensions as follows:

- a) where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive school days
- b) where the aggregate number of days on which a student who is below 16 years of age or has not completed three years of post-primary education has been suspended/absent in any school year is 20 or more days.

13.12 Dominican College will comply with Section 23 (2) d of the Education Act 1998 by informing parents and students of the grounds for removing a suspension. Such grounds may include:

- a) successful appeal

- b) the Principal/Board of Management may agree that another sanction may be applied after discussion with the parent/guardian
- c) when and if new circumstances come to light
- d) other relevant factors.

13.13 Suspensions for periods of more than 5 days:

If the Principal wishes to suspend for a period of more than 5 school days the following procedure must be followed:

- a. The process of a personal hearing before the Board of Management in relation to suspensions being proposed for six or more days is considered to be in the spirit of natural justice and it applies to parents of students who have not reached the age of 18 years and to students who have reached the age of 18 years.
- b. In exceptional circumstances and in compliance with the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005, a student may be suspended pending a full hearing of the Board of Management which should be convened at the earliest opportunity.

13.14 Guiding Principles for Personal Hearings:

The main principles and procedures guiding the conduct of a personal hearing are as follows:

- a. The hearing will be attended by the Board of Management, the Principal, the student and up to two other adults who may accompany the student. In the case of students under 18 years of age at least one of these adults must be the student's parent or guardian.
- b. Any member of the Board who considers him/herself to have a conflict of interest with the matters to be considered is asked to withdraw from the proceedings.
- c. Following an investigation of the relevant incidents the Principal has the primary role of coming to reasonable conclusions, and reporting these conclusions to the Board of Management.
- d. The school Principal is responsible for making a recommendation to the Board of Management that a suspension be imposed. The Board of Management is responsible for making a final decision.
- e. With regard to a recommendation from the Principal, a Board of Management may decide to:

- i. Uphold the recommendation of the Principal;
 - ii. Reject the recommendation of the Principal;
 - iii. Modify the length or duration of the recommended suspension
- f. Under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, any decision that the Board of Management may make can be appealed by the parent of a student who has not reached the age of 18 years or by a student who has reached that age to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days.
- g. Where the Principal is outlining his or her case to the Board of Management, details identifying individuals or sources of information should not be disclosed.
- h. Parents/student must agree to treat the proceedings in a confidential manner.
- i. With regard to the case under consideration, the following procedures will apply:
 - i. The Principal will conduct a general briefing to the Board of Management in the presence of the parents.
 - ii. The Principal's report to the Board of Management will include a recommendation that a period of suspension be imposed. Parents/student will then be invited to address the Board. All parties will be given the opportunity to make a statement, to seek clarification or to reply.
 - iii. Parents/student and the Principal will then withdraw and the Board of Management will deliberate.
 - iv. The Principal will be asked to return and s/he will be informed of the Board's decision.
 - v. Parents/student and the Educational Welfare Officer, if appropriate will be informed of the decision of the Board of Management in writing as soon as is practicable.
 - vi. Where a sanction is recommended, the parent (or student over the age of 18), has the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills if the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days.

14. EXPULSION

14.1 Expulsion will only be considered in the gravest of circumstances and only after every reasonable effort at rehabilitation has failed, and every other sanction has been exhausted, but with the exception contained in subsection 14.2 below.

14.2 When an act of gross misconduct occurs, expulsion may be necessary to protect the safety and rights of others in the school or may be of such a serious nature that expulsion is

warranted without recourse to the provisions outlined at 14.1 above. The Board of Management has an obligation to provide both staff and students with a safe place to work. The principles of natural justice and fair procedure must continue to apply.

14.3 The Board affirms that the procedure outlined hereunder should be followed prior to a student being expelled from Dominican College:

- a) Where expulsion may be the outcome of a breach of the Behaviour Policy of the school, the Principal, Deputy Principal and/or other appropriate person may conduct an investigation into any reported misbehaviour or breach of school rules.
- b) A student/students may be suspended pro tempore pending a full hearing of the case, provided this does not interfere with the said students' statutory rights or with the principles of natural justice and fair procedure.
- c) During the course of any investigation, all relevant persons shall be interviewed and notes shall be taken of any such interviews.
- d) The Principal shall write to the parents of the student concerned (or to the student if she has reached the age of 18 years) informing them of the allegations and inviting them to the school, or other suitable location, for discussion.
- e) The Principal may, at his/her discretion call an emergency meeting of the Board of Management and recommend that the student be suspended pending a full hearing, if this is considered to be in the best interests of the student and/or of others in the school.
- f) The Principal may make a decision to recommend expulsion and s/he shall then notify, in writing, the parents of the student concerned (or the student if she has reached the age of 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, of the decision and that this decision is subject to the approval of the Board of Management. Copies of notes taken and statements made in the course of the investigation may, upon request, be forwarded to the parents and/or the Educational Welfare Officer. Where there may be a breach of confidentiality or data protection guidelines, a summary of notes taken and statements made shall be forwarded instead.
- g) The Principal shall notify the parents of the student concerned (or the student if she has reached the age of 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, of their right to be heard before the Board of Management. The Principal may also invite the parent/s to make a written submission in advance, of the Board meeting.

- h) A meeting of the Board of Management shall normally, be convened within 10 working days of the notification as outlined at 14.3 (f) above.

14.4 The procedure outlined hereunder should be followed in the course of a Board of Management hearing at which it is proposed to expel a student:

- a. The Principal shall present the case on behalf of the school and shall propose expulsion.
- b. The parents of the student concerned (or the student if she has reached the age of 18 years) and/or the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, shall be afforded the opportunity to respond.
- c. Members of the Board of Management shall have the right to question the Principal and/or the parents of the student concerned (or the student if she has reached the age of 18 years) or the Educational Welfare Officer as appropriate.
- d. Each side shall be afforded the opportunity to cross-examine each other through the Chair.
- e. Each side shall be afforded the opportunity to sum up, by way of final comment.
- f. The Principal, the parents of a student/s under the age of 18 years, the student, if she has reached the age of 18 years, the Educational Welfare Officer shall withdraw to enable the Board to make a decision, but shall remain available for clarification purposes if required.
- g. In the absence of the Principal, the members of Board shall elect a recording secretary from among its members.
- h. The Board may make the following decisions:
 - To expel the student from the school.
 - To suspend the student for a period to be decided by the Board.
 - To refer the matter back to the Principal for further investigation.
 - To reinstate the student in the school.

14.5 The Board shall not decide to recommend the expulsion of a student without first having considered the following:

- a. The age of the student.

- b. The student's previous record at the school and the degree to which the student was offered help and support in the context of her misbehaviour within the school.
- c. Any particular aspect of the social, cultural and/or environmental context of the student, which should be taken into account.
- d. The extent to which parental, peer or other pressure may have contributed to the behaviour.
- e. The gravity of the offence.
- f. The seriousness and/or frequency of the behaviour and the likelihood of it recurring.
- g. Whether or not the behaviour impaired or will impair the normal functioning of staff and/or other students in the school.
- h. Whether or not the behaviour occurred on school premises or when the student was otherwise in the charge of school staff or when the student was identifiable with the school.
- i. The degree to which the behaviour was a violation of one or more rules contained in the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and the relative importance of the rule(s).
- j. Whether the incident was perpetrated by the student on her own or as a part of a group.
- k. Whether consideration was given to seeking the support of other agencies.

14.6 The procedure outlined hereunder should be followed at the conclusion of a hearing before the Board of Management at which it is decided to recommend that the student/s be expelled or suspended from the school:

- a) Where the Board decides to recommend expulsion or suspension, parents of students who have not yet reached the age of 18 years (and students who have reached the age of 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, shall be informed in writing by the Principal of the decision of the Board of Management and of their right to appeal this decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Skills, under the terms of the Education Act 1998 Section 29. The appeal shall follow the procedures as laid down in Circular Letter M48/01. This appeal must be made within 42 calendar days of the decision being handed down.

- b) When the Board of Management is of the opinion that a student who is of compulsory school going age (or where a student has not completed 3 years of second level education) should be expelled from a school it shall notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons therefore and it shall co-operate, in as far as it practicable, with the Educational Welfare Officer in this regard. A copy of this letter shall be sent to the parent/s of a student who has not yet reached the age of 16 years.
- c) A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of 20 school days following receipt of the notification by the Educational Welfare Officer. This is without prejudice to the right of the Board of Management to take such other reasonable measures, as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured. In this instance the student will be suspended from the school for the 20 day period.
- d) Following the 20 day period, if the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the decision to expel should be formally confirmed by the Board. This task may be delegated to the Chairperson and Principal. Parents of students who have not yet reached the age of 18 years (and students who have reached the age of 18 years) should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.

15. APPEALS TO SUSPENSIONS OR EXPULSIONS

- 15.1 Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 allows an appeal to be made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills in respect of a decision by a Board of Management, or a person acting on behalf of the Board of Management; a) to refuse to enrol a student in the school; b) To permanently exclude a student from the school; or c) To suspend a student from the school for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days in any one school year. Section 29 appeal application forms are available from the Department of Education and Skills website at the following link:
<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/Appealagainst-Permanent-Exclusion-Suspension-or-Refusal-to-Enrol/>
- 15.2 An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, by the student, where she is aged 18 years or over, or by the EWS.
- 15.3 An appeal will generally not be admitted unless it is made within 42 calendar days of receipt of the Board of Management's decision. However, a longer period for making

appeals may be allowed as an exception where the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit is satisfied that circumstances did not permit the making of an appeal within the 42 day limit.

- 15.4 Appeals should be made in writing on the *Section 29 Appeals Application Form* and addressed to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. The appellant should at the same time notify the school of the appeal or, alternatively, send a copy of the completed *Section 29 Appeals Application Form* to the school. *Section 29 Appeals Application Forms* may be obtained from the school or from Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit or downloaded from the Department's website www.education.ie
- 15.5 The *Section 29 Appeals Application Form* should be completed in full, and should specify: a) the appellant/student's full name, address and, where relevant, telephone number b) the decision being appealed c) the grounds on which the decision is being appealed d) the full name and address of the school concerned e) the date that the parent or student was informed of the decision f) the outcome of any relevant appeal proceedings at school level.
- 15.6 Following the lodgement of an appeal, parents and schools are encouraged to resolve the issue of the appeal. A Section 29 facilitator will contact a parent to discuss the issues surrounding the appeal. A Section 29 facilitator is an independent person appointed to try to resolve the matter between the parents and the school. The facilitator will also make contact with the school. Normally a period of one week is provided for the facilitation process. If no resolution can be found and the parent wishes to continue with the appeal then the appeal goes to a hearing.
- 15.7 Both parties will be notified of the date and location of the appeal hearing. Both parties will also be contacted and asked to submit any final documentation in relation to the appeal hearing by a certain date. Both parties must comply with these timelines to ensure that all documents are shared between the parties and are provided to the Appeals Committee in sufficient time before the appeal hearing. Appeals are heard within a 30 day period from the date that the appeal is admitted. This period can be extended by up to 14 days in exceptional circumstances.
- 15.8 Who can attend the Appeal Hearing? The parents can attend the hearing. A student under 18 years of age cannot attend the hearing. The Board of Management of the school may designate two of its members, or one of its members and the Principal to attend the hearing on its behalf. An Educational Welfare Officer may also attend the hearing. Subject to the prior consent of the Section 29 Appeals Committee, either party to the appeal may also be accompanied at the hearing by no more than two persons nominated by them for this purpose. Persons accompanying either party to the appeal will not be permitted to make statements at the hearing, except where the Section 29 Appeals Committee gives its consent. Normally, a maximum of two people representing either party will be allowed give oral evidence at the appeal

hearing. Neither party is permitted to have legal representatives as speakers at a hearing.

- 15.9 A Section 29 Appeals Committee consists of 3 independent persons; a serving Department Inspector and 2 other persons appointed by the Minister. One of the Appeal Committee members will act as Chairperson. At the hearing, the parties (parents and school) to the appeal will be given an opportunity to present their case. Both parties will have the right to reply and each will have the right to question the other party through the Chairperson. Hearings are conducted with the minimum of formality consistent with giving all parties to the appeal a fair hearing.
- 15.10 After the hearing, the Appeals Committee consider the issues and make a decision on the appeal. This decision is notified to the Department of Education and Skills, and as soon as practicable, the Principal Officer of the Parents, Learners and Database Section of the Department, shall notify the parties to the appeal, in writing, of the determination of the independent Appeals Committee. Parties are normally notified of the decision within three weeks of the appeal hearing. Where an appeal is upheld by an independent appeals committee, the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills issues a direction, which is binding, to a school Board of Management. Where an appeal is upheld, the Board of Management is normally directed to enrol or readmit a student.
- 15.11 Public decisions, made by administration bodies and appeal bodies, such as the Section 29 Appeals Committee may be judicially reviewed by the High Court. If you wish to legally challenge the decision of the Section 29 appeals committee by way of a Judicial Review through the High Court, you will need to seek legal advice on the matter.
- 15.12 Further information on the Section 29 appeal process can be obtained by contacting the Section 29 Appeal Administration Unit of the Department of Education and Skills by telephone at 0761 108588 or by email to section29@education.gov.ie

16. CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- 16.1 The use of corporal punishment is strictly forbidden.

17. SMOKING

- 17.1 Smoking by students is prohibited in schools under The Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002 and breaches of this may have serious implications for students. Students are not permitted to smoke in the school building, on the school grounds, while on school based/related/organised activities or while wearing the school uniform outside school. Infringement of this smoking ban may result in detention or suspension at the discretion of the Principal/Deputy Principal.

18. COVID-19 AND PUBLIC HEALTH

- 18.1 The Board of Management of Dominican College has a responsibility to provide a safe workspace for all its staff and students. With this in mind, all students are expected to comply with public health guidelines and school procedures in relation to the Covid-19 public health emergency. This means that:

- Students displaying any symptoms must not attend school.
- Students identified as close contacts of confirmed cases should not attend school in accordance with the public health guidelines.
- Students who display any of the symptoms of Covid-19 while in school will be brought to one of the isolation rooms in the school and their parents will be contacted to take them home.
- Students must abide by the school's health and safety procedures at all times and the guidelines specified in the school's Covid-19 Response Plan.
- Students must not feign Covid-19 symptoms, even in jest.
- Students must wear their school uniform as normal, however, if, due to special health or family circumstances, there needs to be any deviation from this, the school will be flexible once we receive a doctor's note confirming the need for this.

The following behaviours will result in a student being removed from class and placed in the care of his parents/guardians until the school management meet with the parents/guardians and are satisfied that the student no longer poses a risk to the health and safety of herself and any member of the wider school community:

- Refusing to wear a face mask or appropriate PPE equipment as requested by the school.
- Interfering with the face mask/PPE equipment worn by another member of the school community.
- Deliberately coughing or sneezing in the direction of another member of the school community.
- Deliberately wearing the face mask/PPE equipment incorrectly.
- Misuse of sanitisers and any other sanitisation equipment on the school grounds.
- Not following the clear directions laid out by the school e.g. one way systems, sanitisation procedures and general hygiene practices on the school grounds.
- Refusal to carry out any/all reasonable requests made by staff members/management in order to prevent the spread of Covid 19 within our school community.

18.2 Failure or refusal to comply with school health and safety procedures and regulations will pose a potential hazard for fellow students and staff and may result in students being sent home and refused re-admission until they and their parents commit to following the procedures.

Appendix 1: Sample Misdemeanours and Corresponding Sample Sanctions

Verbal Reprimand	Talking during class, inattentive, distraction, incomplete or unsatisfactory Homework.
Note in Journal	No or unsatisfactory homework, persistent talking or distraction, no books/copies or other required instruments, regularly late for class.
Phone Call/Letter to Parents	Academic under-performance, poor application to work, poor homework standards, persistent unacceptable behaviour, lack of progress, concerns regarding social adjustment, poor punctuality.
Written punishments	Persistent distraction or interruption of class, poor punctuality, poor homework, inappropriate comments to fellow-students, anti-social behaviour.
Points	Persistent talking during class, inattentive, distraction, incomplete or unsatisfactory homework, unprepared for class, incorrect uniform. More serious once off disruptive behaviour in class or outside class. Unacceptable behaviour.
Meeting with parents	Physical and emotional health concerns, unsatisfactory progress, truancy, subject choices and levels, bullying or other inappropriate interactions with students, insolence, unsatisfactory results from teacher/Year Head/ Deputy Principal/Principal intervention, inappropriate behaviour.
Removal from Class	Health & Safety risk, refusal to co-operate with teacher, impeding learning and teaching.
Detention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunchtime • After-School 	Persistent interruption of classes, poor punctuality, failure to produce homework, persistently poor homework, skipping class, failure to respond adequately to verbal reprimand or other interventions.
Confiscation (may be used in conjunction with other sanctions)	Inappropriate use of mobile phone, possession of implements that could be a health & safety risk, possession of inappropriate material and items inconsistent with school life, wearing incorrect school uniform.
Suspension from School	Disrespect or disregard for authority, behaviour that endangers self or others, bullying, fighting, health & safety risk, failure to follow instructions of school personnel, failure to attend detentions, once off incidents of a serious nature, accumulation of the requisite number of yellow sheets.
Referral to Board of Management	Failure to respond to any of the above interventions, repeatedly compromises health & safety, repeatedly interferes with teaching and learning, bullying, uncontrolled aggression.

Note: This is a sample of misdemeanours and the sanctions outlined may be combined depending on the behaviour.

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of Dominican College on 17th August 2020.