



# School Code of Conduct

## A Policy for the Promotion of Good Behaviour

The aspiration of our school is to allow every student to learn to the best of their ability and to be able to do so without harassment or intimidation. It is also a function of this school to teach and encourage all students to respect themselves, their peers, property, teachers and all members of the school staff.

As a consequence of this, we believe that all students will be empowered to do themselves justice in examinations, find rewarding careers and develop into young citizens who will make a contribution to their society in terms of integrity, honesty and respect for all.

The aims of our Code of Conduct

- The central purpose of our code is to promote and encourage good behaviour
- To provide a school environment where students can develop and staff can perform their duties effectively
- The code must be applied consistently by all staff and the effectiveness of the code reviewed regularly

All of us must recognise that everyone in the community of O'Carolan College has both **Responsibilities and Rights**.

In order to protect the rights of all and to ensure a safe environment in the school, it is important to observe the **Regulations** of the school and practice certain **Routines** for proper behaviour.



When students fail to observe these regulations and routines they are damaging and undermining all that we are trying to achieve. This behaviour is normally selfish and demanding and directly infringes on the rights of others studying and teaching in O'Carolan College. Where students fail to observe these regulations and routines, sanctions will be imposed.

It is important for students to realise that the code of conduct set out in this document applies to students when they are in school uniform, on school outings, at school sporting events and when representing their school.

**Students should make special note of the following:**

- Teachers want to cover the syllabus as prescribed.
- They want to teach students in an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- They will respect and listen to the views of students in the context of the subject being taught.
- Teachers understand that, at times, they may have to be firm and strongly censor student behaviour, but they will always endeavour to be fair and maintain mutual respect.
- In all disciplinary situations, students will have the opportunity to explain their point of view. This will be balanced by the teacher's opinion of the situation.
- Teachers will always be receptive to problems a student may be encountering. However, it must be taken into account that the teachers' primary responsibility is to their class.



# Regulations, Responsibilities, Rights and Routines

The following are lists of Regulations, Responsibilities, Rights and Routines, for the students attending O'Carolan College.

## **Regulations**

- To allow every student the right to come to school to pursue his/her education without interference, bullying and intimidation.
- To respect and co-operate with, in every way, the teachers and other members of staff, both inside and outside school.
- To act in a way that will not damage or destroy school or others property.
- To attend school on a regular basis and to have a **written explanation for any enforced absence.**
- To be on time for school and class and sign in if you arrive late and sign out if you leave early.
- To be fully prepared, with books, copies, pens and any specialised equipment, for every class.
- Homework assigned must always be completed in full and to the highest possible standards.
- To wear the school uniform at all times.
- Smoking is not allowed in school or while wearing the school uniform.
- To conform to the general ethos in manners and dress as decided by Principal, Staff, Parents and Students.
- To have the school diary in your possession at all times and to produce it when requested by your teachers and/or your parent/guardian.
- To contribute positively to your school at all times and in particular by a reasonable involvement in extra-curricular activities of interest to you.
- To remain on the premises throughout the day.



<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Rights</b>
To allow every student the right to learn and their teachers to teach	To come to school and be allowed to learn and study without interference from other students.
To create a safe environment for everybody in the school.	To come to school without fear of being threatened, bullied or intimidated in any way.
To be tolerant, understanding and fair to everyone in the school	To have your views and opinions respected.
To ensure that your actions and behaviour never impinge on the rights of others.	To be listened to and able to put forward your point of view.
To respect the environment and property of the school.	To a clean and pleasant environment.
To work for and create a community spirit in the school	That students are able to seek help when required.

## **Routines**

### **In Class**

Diary and Journal on the top right hand corner of the desk. If you have a diary sheet it must be given to teacher at the beginning of the class.

Books, copies and equipment on the desk without delay.

Adhere to the seating plan as decided by your teacher and never leave your assigned place without a teacher's permission.

Always sit on your chair in a safe and proper manner.

Schoolbags should be left under the desk.

P.E. bags should be stored in specified area.

Students are never to touch windows, blinds, whiteboards or equipment in classrooms without the specific instruction from their teacher. Particular care is required in practical rooms.

Chewing gum is prohibited in the school at all times.

Never use tippex or permanent markers in school.



Students are never to eat or drink in a classroom. Mobile phones may only be used in class with the permission of the teacher.

Ensure that your space is tidy and free of litter before you leave the class.

Leave your chair under your desk when leaving class. Move promptly onto next class.

After the last class of the day, put your chair/stool on the desk.

### **Out of Class**

If you are absent from school for any reason, you must not return to class without presenting a note of explanation from your parents/guardians.

Always present notes for absences to the attendance office.

If you are late for school you must sign in at the attendance office.

Never go to class unless you are in full uniform and have your diary. If you are missing your diary or have the incorrect footwear for any reason, you must report to the office.

No pushing or shoving on corridors and all students should walk on the left hand side of the corridor.

Students may only access lockers at designated times, **not** between classes.

Students may only enter the classroom when accompanied by a teacher.

The use of make up and jewellery are decided upon in consultation with the staff of the school and student council, in line with the uniform policy. Facial and tongue piercings are not permitted. Students will not be allowed to have plastic retainers or to cover the piercing with plasters.

If you are ill during the day and are unable to attend a class, you must inform the teacher who will note it in your diary and then report to the main office.

If for any reason you are unable to attend a class during the day (meeting with Tutor/Guidance Councillor, for instance) you must inform your teacher and get a note in your diary.

If you are involved in an extra curricular activity, **it is your responsibility to complete homework for the time you missed.**

Visitors to the school who need assistance should be helped in a polite and courteous manner.

All mobile phones must be switched off at all times during school day except break and lunch times. Phones seen at any other time will be confiscated and may be held for up to one month. The camera/video function on phones cannot be used without the expressed permission from those being photographed.



## The Ladder of Referral

Students who fail to adhere to the Regulations, Routines, Responsibilities and Rights may incur sanctions. The sanctions are scaled so as to take account of the nature of the incident, the situation leading up to the incident.

- When poor behaviour occurs the **subject teacher deals with it in the first instance**. He/she may give a punishment exercise, detention, record it in the diary and/or phone home.
- When **repeated poor behaviour** is reported in the **diary**:
  - The **Tutor** will speak with the student and decide on a sanction.
  - Failure to make improvement – the **Year Head** then puts the student on report for **one week** and the **Year Head** phones home and explains the implications of being on report and arranges a meeting with parent/guardian **after the term on report has concluded**. This allows room for improvement and a more positive outcome for all.
  - **Persistent failure** to improve will warrant meeting of parent/guardian and Deputy Principal. Suspension may be sanctioned. Arrangements may be made for **Home School-Liaison Officer** to call to student's home.
  - Tutor and Year Head meet with student on his/her return from suspension. Written apology is submitted.
  - **Senior Students** whose misbehaviour incurs suspension will have to negotiate their own return to school and **give a written undertaking on future responsibility for their actions and progress**.

If a student still does not respond, he/she is deemed to be in serious breach of school discipline.



# Suspension From School

This is an extremely serious sanction. It is making a statement to the student that is his/her behaviour and refusal to respond to the requests and encouragement of the Tutor and teachers have placed the student outside the community of the school. This shows that he/she does not wish to be associated with the Responsibilities and Rights of all who study and teach in O'Carolan College.

## **Suspension can be used as a sanction in the following circumstance:**

- Where a Tutor and Year Head has exhausted the process outlined above in relation to a student's behaviour and application in class.
- Bullying or threatening another student.
- Verbal abuse of a teacher/student or any member of school staff.
- Physical or verbal assault of any person in the school.
- Smoking on school grounds or while in school uniform.
- Stealing from or interfering with the property of the school, another student or staff.
- Being absent from school without parent's permission.
- Having drugs, illegal substances, alcohol or dangerous weapons in the school or while on school related activity.
- For any behaviour that brings the school into disrepute.



# Exclusion from School

Where the Principal considers a student should be excluded from the school, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for decision.

In the case of exclusion, parents/guardians have the right of appeal to the Board of Management and L.M.E.T.B.

A student can be recommended for exclusion in the following circumstances:

- Where there is an on-going refusal by a student to abide by the regulations of the school and the Principal, in consultation with the Board of Management, has, in their considered judgement, exhausted all reasonable options.
- Having drugs, illegal substances or dangerous weapons in the school and/or selling or distributing same at any time.
- Serious physical or verbal assault of any person in the school community.
- Wilful and serious damage to school property.
- Breaking the Law of the Land while at school or engaged in school activity.

**Success of the code is measured in terms of the students who show improvement and not the number punished. We strive never to give up on a student.**