

Code of Behaviour Policy



COLÁISTE NA TRÓCAIRE

Coláiste na Trócaire Code of Behaviour



Note: This policy is effective from 28th September 2022 and replaces all previous Codes of Behaviour

Introduction

The aim of the Code of Behaviour is to promote good behaviour and respect for all members of the college community. This can only be achieved when the whole college community works in partnership to promote good behaviour, which will involve regular planning and reviewing of the behaviour policy.

Principles of Managing Behaviour

- To create a climate where learning can flourish
- To protect the basic rights of safety, learning and respect
- To set the boundaries in which children can feel successful and achieve
- To teach children about socially appropriate and acceptable choices
- To develop the key life skills of self-regulation, respect for self and respect for others

Coláiste na Trócaire's Plan for Promoting Positive Behaviour

The key features of a positive approach are:

- An emphasis on positive rather than negative statements
- Regular and sustained use of praise and rewards
- Teaching children the social skills they need to be successful
- Redirecting children towards success rather than highlighting their mistakes

Standards of behaviour

Rules

1. That you come to Coláiste na Trócaire every day and arrive on time and attend all classes
2. That you come to Coláiste na Trócaire in full uniform, clean and tidy including appropriate footwear.
3. That you come to Coláiste na Trócaire properly prepared for your subjects
4. That you co-operate in the classroom and have a positive attitude to classwork, homework and all extra-curricular activities
5. That you show respect and consideration for other students
6. That you show respect, consideration and good manners in your dealings with teachers, other staff members, visitors and local residents
7. That you respect the College environment and College property
8. That you abide by Coláiste na Trócaire's mobile phone/technology policy
9. That you do not use addictive/intoxicating substances
10. That you do not bring into the College or have on your person objects likely to cause injury or harm

Rules provide a framework for reasonable and responsible behaviour.

All rules apply while in **Coláiste na Trócaire**, during examination time and while away from college on official college trips or matches.

All rules apply to all students including those who are over 18 years of age.

Expectations

1. That you come to Coláiste na Trócaire every day and arrive on time and attend all classes

This means

- That you attend every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable
- That you arrive on time for class at 9.00 a.m. each day and be punctual for all remaining classes and do not delay on the way to another class
- That absences be explained by note in the journal, Email or phone call from parents or guardians to the year head
- That if you must leave the college during the day, you bring in a note to the year head or the office to get permission to leave and sign the book at the office on departure. All students must be signed out by a parent/guardian.
- That you don't leave class to go and do something else without prior permission of the teachers involved. You must have a note in your journal to be out of class.
- That if you are late for school, you follow the sign in procedure, i.e. you sign the student sign in book and report to Principal/Deputy Principal

Because

- Time missed is hard to make up
- Attendance at assembly is essential for college communication
- Good attendance and good timekeeping helps everyone to do well
- The college must be given a written explanation for absence
- The college is responsible for you during college time
- Punctuality displays courtesy to your teachers and fellow students

2. That you come to Coláiste na Trócaire in full uniform, clean and tidy including appropriate footwear.

This means

- That you present at school and all classes in full uniform as per 'School uniform 22/23 policy'
- That you wear the college shirt tucked in and the college tie properly tied
- That you do not wear excessive jewellery e.g one pair of stud earring, no large rings
- That you do not display visibly any other piercings or tattoos
- That you do not wear non uniform tops, scarves and accessories
- The wearing of makeup and tan will be discreet and nails of natural colour and length
- That your hair is neatly groomed, a natural colour, and worn up when requested for health and safety reasons

Because

- The college uniform is agreed to by parent/guardians, students and the college authorities
- We all have a responsibility to maintain the image of the college
- We must all contribute to and maintain high standards of Health and Safety in the college

3. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects

This means

- That you arrive to class on time
- Follow school routines (queue in single file)
- That you have correct books, equipment, pens, copies and journal for every class
- That you bring any special equipment needed e.g. p.e. gear, drawing equipment etc.
- That you co-operate fully in the work of the class, do whatever homework the teachers require.
- Have completed assigned homework to best of your ability.
- That you use the place assigned to you by the teacher and should not move about the classroom without teacher's permission.
- That you enter and leave the classroom in single file and only with teacher's permission.
- That Tipp-ex is banned at all times in Coláiste na Trócaire.

Because

- You waste class time if you do not have the items needed for class
- You cannot participate fully without them

4. That you co-operate in the classroom and have a positive attitude to classwork, homework and all extra-curricular activities

This means

- That you listen to and follow your teachers instructions
- That you do not disturb the class
- That you always carry your journal and take down homework in it
- That you do your homework each night and hand in assignments on time
- That you show respect and co-operate fully with teachers and other college staff
- That you are required to participate in all formal recreational curricular activities. Students who, for health or other reasons, are prevented from so doing must provide a note signed by his/her parent/guardian to that effect. In the event that a student is unable to participate on an on-going basis, a medical certificate is required
- That you use entrance/exit assigned to them when entering and leaving college building. Emergency doors are to be used for emergencies only.
- Cycling on any part of the college campus is not allowed for safety reasons
- That you park motorised vehicles outside of the college grounds at your own risk, and that you do not drive onto college property at any time
- That you co-operate in keeping classrooms and college grounds neat and free of litter. All litter must be placed in the correct bins
- Access to computers and the Internet is allowed only with direct supervision of teaching staff
- That you do not engage in bullying behaviour either physical, verbal or psychological
- While in the Coláiste na Trócaire uniform, or on official out of college activities (e.g. college tour) students are expected to behave in a way that will reflect positively on Coláiste na Trócaire
- That you do not prevent other students from learning

Because

- The teacher has a right to teach
- The other students have a right to learn
- It helps you to organise your homework so that you will succeed in school
- Homework builds on the work done in class

5. That you have respect and consideration for other students

This means

- That you are fair and honest with everyone
- That you help other students if they need support e.g. younger students finding a classroom
- That you do not pick on, victimise or bully others and that you report any incidents of bullying to any member of staff. Bullying is widely agreed to be behaviour that is sustained or repeated over time and which has a serious negative effect on the well-being of the victim and is generally a deliberate series of actions
- That you do not engage in Cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying refers to a situation where anyone is repeatedly tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another person using text messaging, email, instant messaging or any other type of digital technology (please refer to our Acceptable Use Policy)
- That you respect others during transit to and from school 'students have right to travel safely to School'
- That if you are engaged in a relationship with another pupil you do not engage in public displays of affection while in college or on college related activities. Students are encouraged to maintain strong friendships with a wide group of peers
- That you do not make offensive remarks
- That you do not fight or threaten to fight with another student in or out of Coláiste na Trócaire
- That you respect the property of others and that of Coláiste na Trócaire

Because

- Mutual respect and support helps to make a positive college experience for everyone
- You would like to be shown respect and consideration by others
- Bullying and victimisation can cause fear, hurt, misery and illness. We want our college to be a safe space
- Aggressive behaviour could cause serious injury or accidents
- Damaging college property is destructive and shows a lack of respect for the college community of which you are a member

6. That you have respect, consideration, and good manners in your dealings with teachers, other staff members, visitors and local residents

This means

- That you follow classroom procedures
- That you cooperate fully and willingly in the classroom
- That you are not aggressive in behaviour or language
- That you carry out instructions in a co-operative manner
- That you show courtesy, consideration and good manners in your behaviour
- Be considerate and respectful in their language to students, teachers and all other staff and visitors of Coláiste na Trócaire at all times
- That you do not leave school without permission. That you remain within the Coláiste na Trócaire campus during college hours and may only leave the college grounds with express prior permission from your year head, the deputy principal or principal.
- That you follow correct procedures for signing in and out. In the event that a student wishes to leave the college a written request written in the student's journal incorporating relevant details is required from Parents/Guardians, if a student is to be released from class or to be allowed off campus at any time. Prior to leaving the college, the student and parent/guardian are required to 'sign out' at the Secretary's Office and 'sign in' in the office and with the students' Year Head, in the case of students returning to college on the same day.

Because

- Mutual respect is important
- Positive behaviour contributes to a positive college experience for everyone
- Aggressive behaviour or language has no place in the wider college community
- The college management needs to know that all students are safe and on the college property at all times.

7. That you respect the environment of Coláiste na Trócaire

This means

- That all students' belongings must be kept in their lockers. Corridors must be kept free from students' belongings at all times. Lockers remain the property of the college and are subject to search. Opportunity will be given to student to volunteer offending materials before search, failure to do so will result in sanctions if found in possession of suspect materials.
- That lockers must be locked when not in use.
- That students will clean lockers regularly
- That personal property such as valuables and money is entirely the responsibility of the student and must be used in compliance with Coláiste na Trócaire regulations. Students should only bring what is absolutely necessary to college each day.
- That students will not damage any property
- That Coláiste na Trócaire cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage of students' property and accordingly parents/guardians are advised to ensure that each student's property be labelled.
- That all books, college bags, copies and diaries must be maintained in good condition, properly covered and without graffiti and should be stored in college lockers when not in use.
- That you contribute to keeping Coláiste na Trócaire clean and free of litter
- That you place litter in appropriate bins
- That you do not chew gum while in Coláiste na Trócaire
- That you will not graffiti

- That you do not return to the college grounds outside of college hours without the college's explicit permission
- That fizzy drinks are not allowed, with the exception of sparkling/flavoured water.
- That you do not interfere or damage any safety equipment.
- That you do not tamper with any school locks.
- That you will clean up any mess created
- That you will take responsibility for your actions

Because

- Everyone benefits from working in a safe, pleasant and clean environment
- We are all responsible for maintaining a clean college
- Disposal of gum can be unhygienic
- Coláiste na Trócaire is private property

8. That you abide by the Coláiste na Trócaire's mobile phone/technology policy (Phones and electronic devices must be switched off and kept in a student's locker during college hours unless being used under teacher supervision for class work)

This means:

- That you keep phone/ electronic devices in your locker at all times
- That the school is a phone free zone after 8.30am to end of school day unless required for class
- That mobile phone is switched off and out of sight unless required for a class
- That you show respect for privacy of other students
- That all students and their parent/guardians sign the Coláiste na Trócaire Acceptable User Policy as part of the college rules.
- That if a device is being used in class, it is strictly for the class activity, not for personal use.
- That you comply with policy and teacher instruction
- If a student needs to contact a parent/guardian, this must happen from school office, not from students mobile device
- That the sharing of student codes and passwords is forbidden

Because:

- The Office phone is available if you need to make an essential call or if your parent/guardian needs to contact you during college hours
- Students who contact home via mobile do so without office knowledge and this may become a health and safety risk
- It is important that students are in a safe environment free from distraction, and any potential for bullying (through texting and social media)
- Teachers are entitled to teach without interruptions
- The use of digital video/photos and other recording devices can lead to an invasion of privacy
- Use of electronic devices during break time can lead to isolation and limit the opportunity for socialisation
- Use of electronic devices can increase peer pressure to have the latest model

9. That you do not use addictive/intoxicating substances

This means:

- That you do not bring any addictive/intoxicating substances onto the Coláiste na Trócaire campus.
- That you do not use or distribute or sell alcohol, stimulating or illegal drinks/substances/solvents or cigarettes/e-cigarettes at any time on the Coláiste na Trócaire campus or during college related activities
- Students are not allowed visit a public house while participating in a college activity **even if over 18 years.**

Because:

- The use and sale of addictive substances is a Health and Safety issue
- Coláiste na Trócaire is responsible for the protection and safety of all of the college community
- It is illegal and is strictly forbidden - If anyone is found in possession of illegal substances, parent/guardians and Gardaí will be contacted immediately

10. That you do not bring into Coláiste na Trócaire or have on your person objects likely to cause injury or harm

This means:

- That you do not bring, or facilitate the bringing into the Coláiste na Trócaire campus, or on any college related activity, any object likely to cause injury or with the intent to harm others
- This also includes jewellery likely to pose a threat to safety
- That you do not misuse classroom equipment e.g. compass, scalpel that is likely to cause injury or with the intent to harm others

Because

- Such objects can present a serious threat to the Health and Safety of the college community

Addendum to Code of Behaviour Policy during Covid-19

Rationale

In light of the need for students to be more mindful of attending school during the current Covid-19 climate, this amendment to the Code of Behaviour Policy is required so that students will be aware of specific rules on their return to school. Our guiding principle when making any changes or adjustments to this policy is to be able to keep all of our students, families and staff safe.

These amendments will be communicated to students, parents and staff.

Note to Parents/Guardians:

Parents/guardians are required to observe and respect all protocols in relation to any contact with the school. All visits to the school are required to be made in advance through the school office.

Behaviour Expectations

Our school requires every member of the school community to observe and respect the principles of cough and sneeze etiquette and make every effort to minimise risk to oneself and others.

This requires us to modify some of our behaviours which include;

- amended expectations about breaks or play times, including where students may or may not congregate
- clear rules about coughing or spitting at or towards any other person
- clear rules for students at home about conduct in relation to remote education
- identify any reasonable adjustments that need to be made for students with more challenging behaviour.

School Routines and Procedures

All members of the school community have to be mindful of the following;

- following any altered routines for arrival or departure
- following instructions on who students can socialise with at school
- moving around the school as per specific instructions (for example, one-way systems, out of bounds areas, queuing)
- rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drinking bottles
- use of toilets

Hygiene and Health Expectations

- following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising
- expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal ('catch it, bin it, kill it') and avoiding touching your mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- tell an adult if you are experiencing symptoms of coronavirus

Wellbeing and Social and Emotional Learning

Our school will provide a safe and pleasant environment and spend a considerable amount of time liaising with students on promoting their wellbeing. This will include;

- Curriculum changes to support students during SPHE, PE and CSPE classes
- Additional time devoted to in-class discussions on general wellbeing and development
- Additional supports that students can access outside of classroom if required

Students are expected to:

- Arrive to and depart from school premises at the agreed time
- Proceed to the designated classroom without delay
- Follow instructions from staff members on movement throughout the school campus
- Ask for permission to go to the toilet
- Wash hands thoroughly before entering school premises and while in school, wash their hands for at least 20 seconds more often than usual with soap and water or hand sanitiser
- Remain in their designated seating within the classroom during classes
- Keep a safe distance from other students and refrain from physical contact with their peers
- Maintain healthy practise when coughing or sneezing, cover any cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching the mouth, nose and eyes with hands
- Adhere to rules in relation to toilet visits and pre-arranged playtime activities.
- Refrain from spitting or coughing at or towards other students and members of staff
- Maintain responsibility for their own equipment e.g. stationery and water bottles and ensure that these are not shared with other students
- Tell a member of staff if they are unwell and are exhibiting signs of Coronavirus.

The school will explain these rules clearly to students at the start of the year and remind them periodically. Class teachers will ensure that the rules are displayed in classrooms and that they are explained to Students.

Sanctions for unsafe behaviour during the Covid-19 pandemic

Incidents which involve students who deliberately fail to comply with instructions on the following list, will be addressed in line with sanctions of our current Codes of Behaviour policy. These include;

- behaving inappropriately which causes offence or concern to other students and members of staff through pranks or fake coughs/sneezes
- spitting or coughing at other students or members of staff
- spreading unfounded rumours or stories that a student / students or members of staff have tested positive for Covid-19.

Rewards

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this policy. Rewards have the ability to change behaviour.

- Signal/sign e.g. thumbs tip
- Smile/nod of approval
- Verbal praise - private and public
- Specify' why giving a compliment - "Good, you have waited your turn to speak"
- Merit on VS Ware
- Acknowledge/praise outside the classroom
- Sitting with friends during class
- Positive comments on written work
- The use of stickers/stamps
- Written praise to Tutor/Year Head/parent
- Record in homework journal
- Display of students work throughout Coláiste na Trócaire
- Award at end of College Term/Year
- Public recognition at year/college assemblies
- Referral of praise to Principal/Deputy Principal
- Certificates for attendance, punctuality and other areas of achievement
- Participation in extra-curricular and social occasions
- Trips, days out
- Nomination for award on Annual Awards Day.

*Please note this list is illustrative and not exhaustive

Sanctions

Good practice in the use of sanctions, ensures that:

- They are a part of a plan to change behaviour
- They are used consistently
- Students and parents/guardians know what sanctions are used in Coláiste na Trócaire
- Sanctions are proportionate
- Sanctions are appropriate

Thresholds for unacceptable behaviour are:

- rights being disrespected
- Somebody being hurt or a threat to hurt (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- property threatened or damaged
- inability to take responsibility
- Use of illegal substances

The approach to student's inappropriate behaviour is a problem solving approach where the teacher and college respond. Sanctions do not change behaviour but they can limit it in the short term. The following lists of sanctions may be used.

- Students will be reminded of the class rule.
- Students may be directed to work elsewhere in the room.
- Students may receive a demerit on the VS Ware system
- Students may be directed to take cool-off time or five minutes to sit quietly and calm down in a quiet area of the room.
- Students may be asked to stay back and work out a solution with their teacher, or fix things up or put things right.
- Students may be directed to leave the room and go to another room to cool down or go to the principal's office.
- Parents may be notified.
- Referral to behaviour support team or student support team
- Referral to the guidance counsellor
- Students may be placed on a Behaviour Plan
- Students may be asked to engage with Restorative Practice
- College Community Tasks
- Detention
- Discipline Hearing.
 - o The committee comprises of
 - o Deputy Principal or his/her nominee
 - o Year Head or his/her nominee
 - o Any other teacher
- Suspension or expulsion
- Sanctions are applied as a choice and therefore as a logical consequence to the child's action.

*Please note this list is illustrative and not exhaustive

Detention

Detention may be used by the class teacher as part of a structured classroom management practice.

A note will be placed in the students journal by the class teacher informing the parent/guardian that detention has been given, stating the reason why.

Parent/guardian are required to sign note, student will present signed note to teacher on return to class.

Year heads/ senior management may assign students to supervised detention, during or after school.

Supervised detention is different to a teacher's personal detention assigned as a result of classroom management. Days and times for supervised detention will be agreed in September of each year.

After School Detention

In some instances where other interventions have failed or where the gravity of the situation/ incident is deemed of such a serious nature, after school detention may be deemed necessary. Parents and Guardians will be given due notice regarding after school detention and must make arrangements for student transport.

Coláiste na Trócaire follows a graduated approach to monitoring and shaping student behaviour

- Behaviour is recorded on VS Ware and students are awarded merits or demerits accordingly
- Student behaviour is monitored weekly at the behaviour support team meetings
- Student's whose behaviour is concerning, serious in breach of acceptable norms or persistent may be placed on behavioural interventions

Coláiste na Trócaire has three levels of Behaviour Plans.

Please note however that breaches of the code of behaviour are dealt with at the appropriate level depending on the nature and severity of the student behaviour.

Fair Procedures and Natural Justice

- Coláiste na Trócaire is required by law to follow fair procedures in respect of proposals to suspend or expel a student. Any failure on the part of the College Board of Management to ensure that these procedures are observed would breach Coláiste na Trócaire's legal obligations.
- Any investigation should be free of bias. A Principal, class or subject teacher, or other staff, or other staff member involved in the behaviour matter in the first instance, should not be involved in conducting the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour or making a decision to impose a sanction in order to ensure the absence of bias in the decision maker.
- The right of reply and to cross examine witnesses are central to fair decision making. Both the parents and the students should be facilitated in presenting their views on the allegations made. The Board of Management should take steps to ensure that the procedures and the proceedings are understood by the parent/guardian.
- It is also preferable that, if at all possible, in terms of the principle of **impartiality in decision making** different people or groups carry out the task of investigating misbehaviour and that of deciding whether a serious sanction is warranted. This may not always be possible and therefore where the Principal may have to carry out the investigation and make the decision, he/she must act justly, and be seen to act justly.

Policies and Procedures for Suspension

Coláiste na Trócaire will follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the following procedure will be observed.

- the student and their parents will be informed about the complaint
- Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond
- the student and parents have the right to be heard
- The student and parents have the right to impartiality
- Fair procedures must be applied to:
 - the **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion
 - the process of **decision-making** as to (a) whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and (b) what sanction to impose.

Colleges established or maintained by an ETB

The ETB holds the authority to suspend a student. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) has devolved this authority under **Section 31** of the *Vocational Education (Amendment) Act 2001* to the Board of Management of Coláiste na Trócaire. The EO or Designed Officer should be informed by the college of the intention to suspend to ensure that legal requirements are being adhered to.

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student. Where this authority is delegated to the Principal, the delegation should be done formally and in writing. **Suspension will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern.** In considering whether to suspend a student the Board of Management will be presented with a report containing the following:

- 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 an appropriate/proportionate response

Parents will be notified in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will contain the following

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reason for the suspension

Policies and Procedures for Expulsion

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the college constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property
- The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, college authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

Expulsion for a once off event.

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 proposal 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 Coláiste na Trócaire
- Sexual assault.

NB * This list is illustrative not exhaustive

A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing
4. Board of Management deliberation and actions following the hearing
5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel

Section 29 Appeal

If the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current SCHOOL/COLLEGE year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a student aged over eighteen years of age, may appeal the suspension under **Section 29** of the **Education Act 1998**, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.(when commenced)

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension/expulsion, they and the student should be told about the right to appeal. The appeal must be made in the first instance to the Education Officer of LCETB or Designated Officer. Where an appeal to the LCETB is concluded, parents/guardians, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

Ratification and Publication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____ and was published on the College website on _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date of next review: September 2023