

# Code of Conduct

**Coláiste De Lacy**

*Version 9 (2023)*



## **Introduction**

Coláiste De Lacy is a co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary school located in Ashbourne, Co Meath. The school operates under the patronage of the Louth Meath Education and Training Board (hereafter referred to as LMETB). As such, it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education (hereafter referred to as the DE) and LMETB.

Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour/conduct for its students. This policy is the “Code of Conduct” of Coláiste De Lacy and has been developed in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), hereafter referred to as the NEWB Guidelines.

*‘The code of behaviour (conduct) is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that altogether form the schools plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well’ (NEWB Guidelines, 2008).*

This Code of Conduct has been drawn up in consultation with all the school partners, including the Board of Management, school staff, students and parents/guardians<sup>1</sup>. It takes cognisance of the responsibility of the school to ensure that all of its students are educated in a happy, safe, respectful and optimal learning environment. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of all students. Coláiste De Lacy endeavours, to the greatest possible extent, to provide an appropriate education for all students and, in that context, the right of the overwhelming majority of compliant students to learn will not be subverted by any disruptive minority.

## **School Ethos**

Coláiste De Lacy is a school of academic excellence and as such, it implements a modern and innovative approach to teaching and learning. It aims to provide the best educational experience and developmental opportunities for its students. There is an incessant focus on teaching and learning within the school for everyone (*Ag foghlaim le chéile*). Students are encouraged to strive for excellence in a happy, supportive, positive, caring and challenging environment. The Coláiste De Lacy values include: effort, hard work, respect, positivity, personal responsibility, integrity and kindness. The Irish language and culture are extremely important throughout the school. The school fosters a spirit of support and collaboration among all educational partners.

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘Parents’ is used throughout the remainder of this document to mean both Parents and Guardians



### **Coláiste De Lacy Mission Statement**

*“Coláiste De Lacy is a community of learners and leaders working together in a safe and inclusive learning environment that fosters positive relationships, good learning habits, growth mind-set, respect, and personal growth for all.*

*Through the combined efforts of the whole school community, we aim to nurture curious minds, caring hearts and responsible citizens”.*

### **Ár bhFís (Vision)**

An overview of the vision for Coláiste De Lacy is outlined below:

- Student happiness, wellbeing and belonging are core
- Student pride and participation in their school
- Positive relationships and a positive school environment
- Safe and respectful environment supported by good order and organisation
- Valuing of hard work, effort and creativity
- Focus on positivity, responsibility, relationships and care
- All students achieve their individual best and experience success
- Centre of excellence and innovation for teaching and learning with a particular focus on BLP<sup>2</sup>

### **Suaithéantais Cholaíste De Lacy (The Coláiste De Lacy Crest)**



<sup>2</sup> BLP stands for Building Learning Power.



Although Coláiste De Lacy is a relatively new school, its philosophical foundations are strong. The philosophical principles of the school are as follows:

- *Fás* (growth as individuals and as a learning community)
- *Ag foghlaim le chéile* (a continual focus on learning for all)
- *Caidrimh dhearfacha* (positive relationships between all members of the school community will nurture its growth and ensure that it is a happy, safe and well-ordered place of optimal learning)
- *Solas agus Soirbheachas* (an emphasis on the positives and joy in life and learning).

## **Policy Content**

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to students<sup>3</sup> of Coláiste De Lacy and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. This policy provides that if a student is recognisable as a student of Coláiste De Lacy (i.e.; wearing the school uniform, at a school event, during lunch hours.... etc.), then the school reserves the right to safeguard its good name. This policy also applies to students on educational outings and tours, regardless of location, time, wearing the uniform...etc. It applies to all residential trips, field trips, foreign tours, adventure trips...etc. The code requires that all interactions between school staff and parents/guardians will respect the normal protocols that should apply to such interactions.

### **Relationship of Policy to the Ethos of Coláiste De Lacy**

*‘Each school has its unique identity, ethos, values and culture. The Board has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies’ (Page 15, NEWB Guidelines, 2008).*

The priority in Coláiste De Lacy is to ensure a safe, positive, supportive and optimal educational environment for all. The Code of Conduct helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage *de-a-iompair* (good behaviour for learning) and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The Code of Conduct helps múinteoirí (teachers), other members of the foireann (staff), students and parents/guardians to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. The students, staff and parents

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<sup>3</sup> The Teaching Council ‘Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers’ and the LMETB ‘Code of Conduct for LMETB Staff’ applies to all teaching staff.



have identified the values that they believe the students of Coláiste De Lacy should emulate (see Appendix A). This Code of Conduct aims to foster these values and promote a growth mind-set in students.

## **Policy Context and Rationale**

Many people work together in the school each day and therefore a high level of courtesy and consideration for others is necessary. Behaviour/conduct which is ill mannered, annoying, dangerous or disruptive cannot be allowed. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported. It is the key tool in enabling the school leadership to support the learning of every student in Coláiste De Lacy in compliance with the legislative requirements. It is also intended to inform and to clarify issues related to the school's expectations and procedures. The Code of Conduct complies with the provisions of all relevant legislation and legal instruments (in compliance with the NEWB guidelines, 2008).

## **Principles**

There are some basic principles that underpin the Code of Conduct. These include:

- Providing clarity about expectations and responses for students
- Recognising that everyone's behaviour and learning matters
- Focusing on promoting good behaviour
- Nurturing a growth mind set in students<sup>4</sup>
- Balancing needs
- Recognising the importance of and nurturing positive relationships
- Focusing on personal responsibility
- Ensuring fairness and equity
- Promoting equality
- Recognising educational vulnerability
- Attending to the welfare of students
- Attending to the welfare of staff
- Promoting safety and freedom from threat

## **Goals of Code of Conduct**

The goals of the Code of Conduct are to:

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<sup>4</sup> The development of a Growth Mind Set is the psychological tenet of BLP. It is based on the work of Carol Dweck, Guy Claxton and Graham Powell.



- Create a positive, orderly and structured environment where teaching, learning and personal development (*fás*) can occur
- Promote good behaviour, personal responsibility, resilience and self-discipline
- Foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported
- Enable the school leadership to support the learning of *every student* in the school
- Encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- Help young people to mature into responsible participating citizens
- Build positive relationships of mutual respect (*caidrimh dhearfacha*) and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- Create a safe, secure learning environment for all students and staff by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community
- Implement effective procedures which allow for the day to day running of the school and which meet the demands of current legislation
- Facilitate the appropriate involvement of all school personnel
- Ensure understanding by the parents/guardians, students, staff and management of the Code of Conduct and the reasons for it
- Emphasise the promotion and acknowledgement of good behaviour (*dea-iompair*)
- Outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions that will be used in response to negative behaviour
- Outline how positive behaviour is encouraged
- Outline the interventions to be used when a student repeatedly and/or seriously misbehaves.

### **Understanding Behaviour**

Teachers, parents and students may have different understandings about behaviour. An understanding of the factors that influence behaviour is fundamental to developing and implementing the schools code of behaviour.

“Learning, relationships and behaviour are inextricably linked” (page 27, NEWB Guidelines). Behaviour is affected by within-person, external or interpersonal factors. In addition, the social nature of schools is an important factor. Knowledge of the “influence of groups and the relationships within and between the many groups and subgroups in the school environment is an important part of the understanding of behaviour. School life is fundamentally social and individual students and teachers are part of the many groups and subgroups in the course of a single day. The dynamics that operate within and between these groups are very powerful and are themselves significant influences on individual and group behaviour” (page 28, NEWB Guidelines). The



*Clann*<sup>5</sup> structure in the school gives each *Caomhnóir*<sup>6</sup> a good opportunity to get to know their *daltaí* (students) really well.

In addition, home values/norms and parental attitudes strongly influence a student's behaviour and learning in school. The importance of demonstrating positive parental attitudes and support for the school is communicated to all parents at information evenings, in school correspondence, in meetings...etc.

Focus group discussions were held with students, staff and parents regarding standards of behaviour and understanding the impact of behaviours. Each group was presented with a list of common (sample) behaviours and each one was discussed in detail. Although not always unanimous in their perspectives, there was huge agreement across all groups regarding the nature/seriousness and tolerance/acceptability of each behaviour. Frequency and context were clearly identified as the two main factors to be considered where evaluating the impact of behaviour. These focus group discussions have helped to inform this Code of Conduct.

### **Standards of Behaviour**

The school expects all members of the school community to behave in ways that show respect for others and demonstrate the school values. Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured, caring environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to. The term standards can also mean rules or expectations.

The school's standards of behaviour reflect values such as:

- ✓ Respect for self and others
- ✓ Kindness and willingness to help others
- ✓ Courtesy and good manners
- ✓ Fairness
- ✓ Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
- ✓ Attending school regularly and punctually
- ✓ Doing one's best
- ✓ Taking responsibility for one's learning
- ✓ Keeping the rules/expectations
- ✓ Helping to create a safe positive environment
- ✓ Respecting staff
- ✓ Respecting other students and their learning

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<sup>5</sup> Clann = Tutor group

<sup>6</sup> Caomhnóir = tutor for a Clann



- ✓ Participating in school activities
- ✓ Safeguarding the health and safety of everyone on campus, e.g. primary school children, fellow pupils, teachers, visitors, parents...etc.

Our standards of behaviour also signal to members of the school community the kinds of behaviour that are not acceptable in the school, for example:

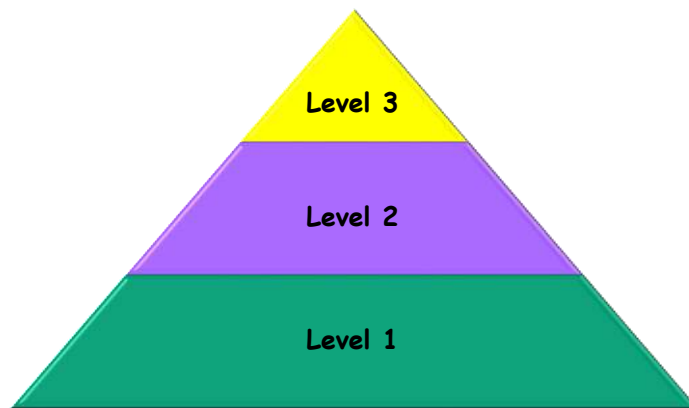
- ✓ Behaviour that is disrespectful and damaging to the positive relationships and atmosphere within the school
- ✓ Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- ✓ Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- ✓ Behaviour that is inappropriate for a place of work and learning, e.g. engaging in physical contact, more than one student in a toilet cubicle...etc.
- ✓ Behaviour that creates a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of others
- ✓ Threats or physical hurt to another person
- ✓ Damage to property
- ✓ Theft
- ✓ Vaping, smoking, use of e-Cigarettes and any substance abuse/misuse (including alcohol)
- ✓ Being in the presence of other students vaping, smoking, using e-Cigarettes or abusing/misusing any substances
- ✓ Possession (on person, in locker, in bag, in jacket...etc.) of illegal and/or banned substances<sup>7</sup>
- ✓ Supply of illegal and/or banned substances
- ✓ Use of foul language
- ✓ Arranging to meet anyone one who is not a member of the school community on the school campus
- ✓ Students driving and/or parking cars on the campus.

As part of a whole-school approach to understanding the nature and impact of negative behaviours, specific examples of misconduct were discussed by staff, students and parents. Each behaviour was then classified as Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 standards of behaviour (see Appendix C).

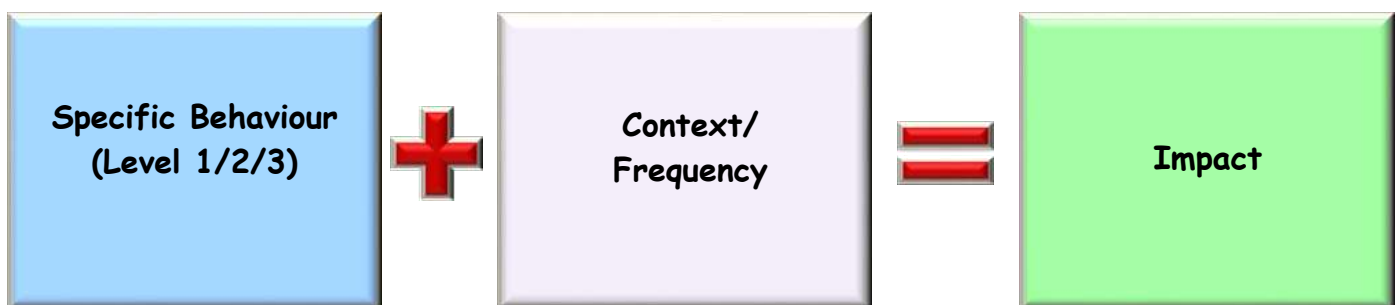
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<sup>7</sup> Banned substances include drugs (legal or illegal, natural or synthetic), alcohol, tobacco, tobacco related products, medicines, solvents, aerosols, vapes etc.





Level 1 behaviours are relatively low level and level 3 behaviours are less frequent but more serious. However, the context and frequency of level 1 or 2 behaviours determines the overall impact of that behaviour. In order to full understand behaviour and its impact, the context and frequency of the behaviour must also be considered.



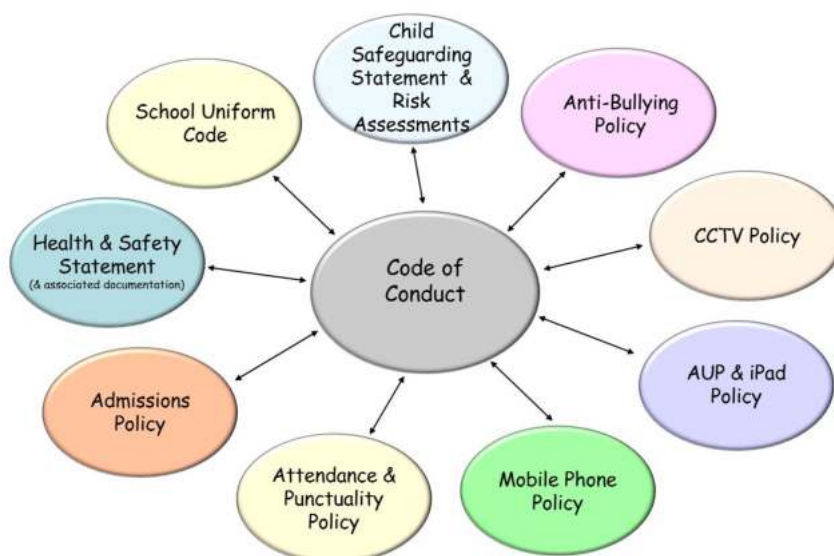
**Important Notes:**

1. The expectations/rules of Coláiste De Lacy are outlined in Appendix B and are included in the student *Dialann*. It is an essential prerequisite of enrolment in Coláiste De Lacy that the Code of Conduct is accepted in writing on admission. The Code of Conduct (including future revisions) **must be fully complied with for the duration of the student's enrolment in the school** (Year 1 – 5/6).
2. **It is not possible to list every single positive or negative behaviours which could occur within a school.** However, the context of each behaviour is extremely important when analysing and responding to misconduct. For example; a student may reflexively use foul language if they accidentally hit their hand with a hammer in Woodwork lesson. Another student may direct foul language at a teacher in anger. Both students have used foul language, however, the context and consequently the impact are completely distinct and different in seriousness. Behaviour and context/frequency cannot be separated when considering impact and sanctions.

### **Related Policies**

The Code of Conduct is an integral mechanism/policy in Coláiste De Lacy. It is one of the most important policies with regards to how the school maintains an optimal learning environment and a positive atmosphere. However, it does not operate in isolation. ***All other school policies*** directly relate (to a greater or lesser extent) to the school's Code of Conduct. It is the interdependence and co-operation of these policies in an organic way that ensures their effectiveness. However, the Code of Conduct is essential in ensuring the effective implementation of the other policies. Where the strategies implemented by each individual policy have been exhausted or where appropriate, issues may be referred to the Code of Conduct for processing. For example; where students do not comply with the school's expectations under the School Uniform Code or Anti-Bullying Policy, then issues may be referred to be dealt with under the Code of Conduct. Some of the most common policies that co-operate with the Code of Conduct are shown below. **This list is not exhaustive and all school policies interrelate to the Code of Conduct.**

It is understood that students choosing to enrol in Coláiste De Lacy will accept and fully comply with the policies of the school.



**The procedures for notifying the school about a student's absence are outlined in Appendix E.**

**Please note that Bullying and Harassment will not be tolerated in Coláiste De Lacy. Under the Anti-Bullying Policy, breaches may be referred to the Code of Conduct. This will include the full range of sanctions of the Code of Conduct, up to and including Suspension and Exclusion.**



## **Practices & Procedures of the Code of Conduct**

### **Promoting Good Behaviour**

Promoting good behaviour is one of the main goals of the school's Code of Conduct. This requires consistency across the whole school. The day-to-day excellence of school management and classroom teaching enables most students to behave in ways that support their own learning and development. Indeed, the psychological basis of BLP is personal responsibility and the development of a growth mind-set in students. This Code of Conduct aims to support and nurture this growth. It aims to assist students to make better choices and take responsibility for their conduct and their learning. In addition to this, some specific strategies to promote *deá-iompair* (good behaviour for learning) may include:

- ✓ Affirming good behaviour (verbally, at Tionól/Clann Time, through positive awards system, writing a note in the dialann, specific rewards, sending home a merit card, phone call home by Caomhnóir/Year Head...etc.)
- ✓ Setting and communicating high, clear, consistent and widely-understood standards/expectations e.g. uniform, punctuality, demonstrating basic manners...etc.
- ✓ Nurturing positive relationships (*Caidrimh dhearfacha*) and interactions between all members of the school community
- ✓ Recognising and discussing positive feedback about behaviour during weekly reviews with Caomhnóirs
- ✓ Use of rewards that recognise effort, growth and attitude as much as individual achievement (awards ceremonies, merits in dialann's, merit cards (designed by the students) .... etc.)
- ✓ Adults model the behaviour that is expected from the students
- ✓ Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
- ✓ Good school and class routines (Clann Time, organisation of school day, corridor behaviour, lining up outside classrooms...etc.)
- ✓ Insisting on the practice of basic manners
- ✓ Clear boundaries and rules/expectations for students (as outlined in the various sections of the dialann)
- ✓ Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
- ✓ Exploring with students how people should treat each other (at Clann Time, in SPHE lessons, specific initiative/programmes such as Anti-Bullying Programme.... etc.)
- ✓ Involving students in the preparation and review of the school Code of Conduct
- ✓ Identification by students, staff and parents of the values and expectations of the school
- ✓ Good teaching and learning that engages students and builds their learning capacity
- ✓ *Wellbeing* programme
- ✓ Maintaining a pleasant and well organised school and classroom environments e.g. lots of visual displays, displaying student work, keeping high standards of cleanliness and tidiness...etc.
- ✓ Extracurricular activities



- ✓ Clann, Caomhnóir and Year Head structure
- ✓ Student driven curriculum and good school organisation (including one hour lessons).

### **Modelling the Standards**

The adults (staff, visitors and parents) in Coláiste De Lacy have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour in their dealings both with students and with each other. Their example is a powerful source of learning for students. The way in which the adults interact will provide students with a model of good working relationships. Parents are also expected to model the standards and attitudes that students are asked to respect. In order to do this, they need to be familiar with the standards of behaviour and to understand the importance of expecting students to behave according to these standards.

### **Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour**

Despite the best efforts of any school, inappropriate behaviours and harm to relationships can happen. Even minor breaches of the Code of Conduct can be disruptive and harmful, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the students own learning, the learning of others and the capacity of the teacher to teach all of the students. Coláiste De Lacy has an incessant focus on high quality teaching and learning, consequently the disruption of lessons cannot be tolerated.

Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of other students, the school leadership have to weigh the needs of the relevant student(s) with the needs of other students and staff. This requires the application of professional skill and judgement in each individual case, while considering the student(s) involved, specific circumstances/context of the incident and the impact on and perception of other students.

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to maintain a classroom and school environment that is supportive of the learning of every student in the school and which ensures continuity of instruction for all. The whole school community of Coláiste De Lacy responds to inappropriate behaviour as follows:

- Preventative measures
- Sanctions
- Ladder of referral
- Interventions



### **Preventative Measures**

The initial response of Coláiste De Lacy is one of building relationships and prevention in order to minimise the occurrence of poor behaviour. The following list is not exhaustive but includes some of the ways in which students are encouraged in their endeavours to uphold the Code of Conduct by use of the following measures:

1. The Code of Conduct is published on the school website and made available to all parents/guardians of all potential applicants/new entrants into the school and they are asked to read it and to sign to indicate their agreement with the content and their support and co-operation with the Code of Conduct.

*This is done to ensure that parents/guardians and students understand what the school standards are, why they must be adhered to and what procedures will be followed if the standards/expectations/rules are not upheld.*

2. At the start of each new academic year/induction process, the expectations of the Code of Conduct are explained to students and any amendments to it are highlighted.

*This is done so as to inform/remind students of the content and to take account of the fact that they are new or have been out of the school environment for 3 months.*

3. School rules and the reason for them are discussed and explained as part of the school's pastoral care programme (including at Tionól, Clann Time...etc). A synopsis of the rules is included in the school dialann. The expectations and school routines may be explained to students with specific individual needs (as identified by the school) to ensure understanding.

4. The notion of tolerance for others, self-control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are discussed as part of the many curricular and extra-curricular initiatives in the school e.g. Religious Education and SPHE programmes.

5. Issues such as bullying, racism, sexism, harassment, violence, substance misuse, well-being...etc. are discussed with the students during their time in school using Tionól, SPHE, CSPE, current affairs and/or outside speakers.

*This is done to help the students to better understand these issues so that they can base their thinking, understanding and action on factual information and in the light of the values espoused in the school.*

6. Many supports are put in place for students as part of the school's Pastoral Care Programme. The *Clann* structure ensures that the *Caomhnóir* gets to know their students really well and develops a good relationship with them. The Year Head has overall responsibility for the wellbeing, academic progress and



behaviour of the year group. The Year Head can refer students to the *Student Support Team* for consideration of targeted/external support. There are also many opportunities for students to demonstrate leadership in the school and to develop a true sense of belonging and importance to the school community.

*This is done to help the students to feel a sense of belonging and to develop relationships with their Caomhnóir and Clann.*

7. Staff in Coláiste De Lacy are expected to thoroughly prepare all of their lessons in order to ensure that:

- Learning and engagement are optimal
- The learning of all students is supported
- Opportunities for misconduct are minimised
- A growth mind-set is encouraged and nurtured in students
- Lessons build the learning capacity of the students

The foundation of positive behaviour for learning (*dea-iompair*) is effective teaching and learning, and an inclusive and engaging curriculum. Where students are engaged and motivated to learn, it is more likely that their behaviour will be positive.

Building Learning Power (BLP) is an approach to helping students to become better responsible learners, both in school and out. It is about creating a culture in classrooms, and in the school more widely, that systematically cultivates habits and attitudes that enable young people to face difficulty and uncertainty calmly, confidently and creatively. Students learn how to be; tenacious and resourceful, imaginative and logical, self-disciplined and self-aware, collaborative and inquisitive. BLP aims to build a spirit of resilience, self-efficacy and metacognition. It teaches students how to empathise, listen and manage distractions. In doing so, BLP promotes a growth mind-set, positive attitudes and positive behaviours in students.

8. The curriculum of Coláiste De Lacy is relevant, modern and determined by student preferences. A taster programme in first year facilitates students in making informed decisions about which optional subjects are best for them. This minimises (as much as possible), the disengagement of students when forced to take a subject which they don't like. In addition, classes are organised as mixed ability groupings for the majority of subjects and timetabled events. Targeted support is provided (where possible and feasible) for some students with SEN's. This usually takes the form of resource teaching, small group withdrawal and team-teaching.
9. Coláiste De Lacy has an established *Positive Behaviour Programme* (PBP). The programme is a whole school initiative to identify and minimise common misbehaviours, to ensure consistency in implementation of agreed practices, to provide training for staff and to provide targeted support for Level 2 and 3 behaviours. Staff members involved in the PBP team look at ways to promote and recognise positive behaviour while investigating ways to support students with challenging behaviours. The PBP team collaborate with the SET



department in the development of targeted supports, e.g. behaviour plans and a range of support programmes such as *Alert*, *Getting it Together*, *Check & Connect*, *Why Try*, *Let's Go...*etc. The PBP team also collaborate with the Student Support Team to assign *Check & Connect* mentors to students where appropriate and available.

10. All of the students in Coláiste De Lacy use iPads to facilitate teaching and learning. The iPad has the potential to increase student engagement and consequently reduce misbehaviour. All students receive training in the use of Office 365, online safety and the schools AUP. The ubiquity of technology in the lives of the students has raised digital literacy to a life skill. As part of being a good digital citizen, students are expected to comply fully with the school's expectations regarding the use of technology and mobile devices.

### **The Use of Sanctions**

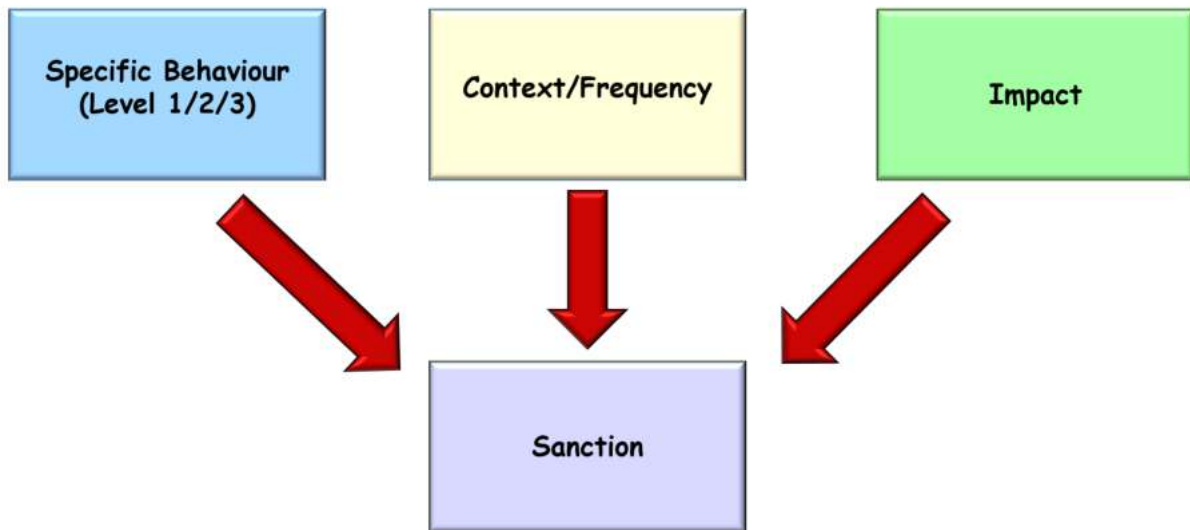
The objectives of the use of sanctions in Coláiste De Lacy are as follows:

- To help a student to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- To give the student an opportunity to reflect on and take responsibility for their personal actions
- To help a student to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviours on others
- To help students to understand that they have choices about their own behaviours and that all choices have consequences
- To signal to other students and to staff that their well-being is being protected
- To prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- To nurture a growth mind-set in students
- To keep the student, or other students and adults safe.

Good practice in the use of sanctions ensures that:

- Sanctions are used consistently
- Students & parents know what sanctions are used in the school
- Sanctions are proportionate and appropriate
- Sanctions are used to change behaviour

In deciding the appropriate and proportionate sanction to use, the following is taken into account:



### Sanctions

The following sanctions may be used in Coláiste De Lacy. This list is not exhaustive and these sanctions are imposed by the staff of the school in accordance with the ladder of referral. Such sanctions include:

- A fair and firm reprimand from a member of staff is expected to be sufficient to correct inappropriate behaviour
- Time-out (removal of the student from the scene of the incident e.g. the student is put working in a different place/location such as another part of the classroom or in another classroom by arrangement with a colleague). This is used in situations where a student is disrupting the teaching and learning. This is also used when a student needs time to reflect on behaviour/potential harm and to regulate emotions
- A note home to parents/guardians in the school dialann. Notes to parents/guardians should be signed to indicate receipt of information
- The provision of an opportunity to makes amends for low-level poor behaviour and/or to reflect upon and learn from the experience, e.g. removal from yard/courts, extension learning to assist a student in catching-up, assignment of a particular seat to assist a student in self-managing behaviour, apologising to another person where a relationship has been damaged or hurt has been caused...etc.
- A referral to the Caomhnóir and/or Year Head

Sanctions for more serious misdemeanours or for consistent breaches of the Code of Conduct include:

- Referral to another staff member (in line with the ladder of intervention/referral)
- In school learning/reflection opportunity in school for an accumulation of notes/minor issues or to assist student in catching up on extension learning missed. This may include being kept in at a lunch time by a





teacher/Caomhnóir/Year Head (12 hours' notice should be given to the students and to the parents/guardians by means of a note in the dialann)

- After-school learning/reflection opportunity (24 hours' notice should be given to the students and to the parents/guardians by means of a note in the dialann). This will only be issued by a Year Head after consultation with the Principal or Deputy Principal
- Attendance at a *Rang Feabhais* (2/3-hour improvement session) which takes place on a Friday evening or Saturday morning. The student attends in full uniform and reflects on their behaviour, its consequences, harm caused and possible interventions to modify that behaviour. A *Rang Feabhais* can only be issued by the Year Head, Principal or Deputy Principal. In excess of 48 hours' notice must be given to parents. A *Rang Feabhais* can be used for students to make up learning due to truancy
- A school community task such as picking up litter, removal of graffiti or assisting a teacher with a task
- A verbal reprimand from Deputy Principal/Principal
- Restrictions on use or confiscation of the iPad
- A telephone call/letter to parents by a member of staff, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal
- A meeting with parents/guardians and/or the student
- Putting a student on report for a defined period of time to assist in self-management and monitoring of behaviour
- Putting a student on an attendance report following a truancy incident to assist the students and the school is managing the student's attendance. This attendance report is signed by the parents/guardians of the student on a daily basis to ensure that parents/guardians are also involved in the monitoring process and to prevent reoccurrence
- Colour coding of report systems to indicate clearly to the student and the parents/guardians the level of behaviour that needs to change and possible next steps e.g. green for level 1 behaviours, yellow for level 2 behaviours or an accumulation of level 1 behaviours, and red for level 3 behaviours or an accumulation of level 2 behaviours
- Exclusion from a favoured activity
- Withdrawal of school privileges e.g. ban from computers, not being allowed to represent the school, not being allowed to attend a school trip/event...etc.
- Withdrawal of student's leadership role or responsibilities e.g. *Peer Educator, Student Council...etc.*
- Other suitable interventions designed to modify specific behaviours e.g. Individual Behaviour Plans, Individuals Behaviour Contracts...etc.
- Referral to outside agencies for further assistance, support and interventions e.g. LAR, NEPS, SUST, Psychotherapy...etc.
- Suspension from school (in accordance with the school's policy on Suspension & Exclusion)
- Exclusion from school (in accordance with the school's policy on Suspension & Exclusion)



**The procedures for Suspension and Exclusion are included at the end of this Code of Conduct. The procedures are in accordance with the LMETB 'Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedures' (included in Appendix F).**

### Ladder of Referral

As stated earlier, it is the responsibility of every single member of the school community to maintain a classroom and whole school environment that is supportive of the learning of every student. The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour/breaches of the school rules are referred to as the 'ladder of referral'. The basic principle is that the more serious the incident/misbehaviour, the higher up the ladder it is dealt with.



- A. Each *Múinteoir* (subject teacher) has responsibility for implementing the Code of Conduct in his/her own classroom. With the help of consistent rules and routines in class/school, occasional minor misbehaviour should be attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher. *Múinteoir*'s may use some of the schools agreed sanctions. *Múinteoir*'s should record all incidents of misconduct in their own records and in the student journal and on the school administration system where necessary. SNA's should guide and support students in managing and monitoring the behaviour of students.
- B. Each Clann is assigned a Caomhnóir with special responsibility for them. The Caomhnóir monitors the students' *dialanns* and supports low level behaviours. Caomhnóirs should keep records of student misconduct and enter them onto the school administration system. Caomhnóirs complete a weekly review with the students of their progress, attitude and conduct.
- C. Each year group has a Year Head. The Year Head has special responsibility for the year group and has a pastoral and disciplinary role to play for the students in their year group. Year Heads usually deal with more serious offences (Level 2/3) or an accumulation of minor offences (Level 1). Year Heads can



impose/recommend school sanctions up to and including suspension (sanctioned by Principal). Year Heads keep detailed records of student conduct and enter them onto the school administration system.

- D. Students whose behaviour has not modified despite the school's best efforts will be referred to the Principal or Deputy Principal. The Principal and Deputy Principal will meet with the relevant parties; student, parents, staff member...etc. and agree strategies/interventions/sanctions.
- E. The Principal informs the Board of Management of all suspensions and recommendations of exclusion (see section on Suspension and Exclusion).

### **Interventions**

Each Múinteoir will deal with the majority of routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies, thus minimising the need for interventions. The school has both formal and informal structures in place for when intervention is necessary.

- Formal structures will include: Clann system, Year Heads, *Student Support Team*, PBP team, guidance counsellors, involvement of external agencies and supports...etc.
- Informal structures will include: peer support, mediation, providing informal support to colleagues e.g. removing a student to a colleague's room for time-out...etc.

Interventions refer to the strategies used to help prevent students from re-offending and give specific help to those students who find it particularly difficult to comply with the Code of Conduct. Such strategies usually involve gathering information and consultation with school personnel, parents/guardians and others as appropriate. Specific intervention packages may need to be designed to suit individual needs. Examples of specific interventions include:

1. Additional support may be necessary for some students and may include: meeting with the Principal/Deputy Principal/ Year Head/Caomhnóir, being put on report, target setting, being assigned an area, the development of a student support plan.... etc.
2. Specialised support may be necessary for a small minority of students for example: having an SNA<sup>8</sup> assigned where appropriate and feasible, behaviour contracts, behaviour plans, having a reduction in the number of subjects, involvement of external agencies<sup>9</sup>....etc.

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<sup>8</sup> SNA = Special Needs Assistant

<sup>9</sup> External agencies may include NEPS, HSE, Community Psychological Services, NCSE, Child Guidance Services, Adolescent and Mental Health Services...etc. The list is not exhaustive.



**Please note that the effectiveness of an intervention is directly dependant on the engagement of the student with the intervention being tried and the support of the parents. Both of these factors are essential in order for an intervention to be successful.**

## **Policy Implementation**

### **Implementing the Code of Conduct**

The implementation of the Code of Conduct for Coláiste De Lacy will include the following:

- All school partners are involved in the development and review of the code
- Significant amendments to the Code of Conduct will be communicated to the stakeholders
- A major review will involve consultation with and ratification by all partners
- The code will be made accessible to all through its publication on the school website and hard copies will be available on request
- The school published the Code of Conduct on the school website and makes it available to all. The Code of Conduct is also published with the *Admissions Policy and Annual Admissions Statement* each year and parents/guardians are required to sign an acknowledgement of receipt of it. This is to confirm in writing that the Code of Conduct is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the code by their son/daughter
- A synopsis of the code is published in the student dialann for students to refer to.
- Students must carry their student dialann to all classes
- Parents/guardians are requested to sign the student dialann on a weekly basis (for homework and the weekly review) and to acknowledge any notes from teachers on a daily basis
- At the start of each academic year/induction process, each class is brought through the standards of behaviour/expectations/sanctions in the Code of Conduct and any amendments to it are highlighted
- School rules/expectations and the reason for them are discussed as part of the school's pastoral care programme and as necessary
- The Wellbeing programme and extracurricular opportunities (music, sport, drama, after school study, .... etc.) are used as vehicles for teaching the Code of Conduct and habits for responsible behaviour and relationships
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to share information with the relevant school personnel in order to assist the school in understanding a student's behaviour and to plan interventions where necessary
- Behaviour in the school will be monitored carefully at all times.



## **Whole School Approach**

The Code of Conduct, on its own, cannot create the environment that makes it possible for students to learn and behave well. All members of the school community have responsibility to ensure that students behave well. The main elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

- ✓ An ethos, policies and practices<sup>10</sup> that are in harmony to create a positive school environment. Related policies include the schools Anti bullying, Pastoral Care, Attendance and Substance Use Policies.
- ✓ A teamwork and consistent approach to behaviour
- ✓ A focus on the importance of respectful relationships and acknowledgement of harm
- ✓ Effective classroom management and good curricular planning and preparation
- ✓ An inclusive and involved school community

Classroom management and teaching methods have a strong influence on students' behaviour. The classroom environment, like the wider school community, gives students clear messages about teachers' expectations and creates boundaries. The skills of the teacher in managing a routine engagement with students are critical in preventing problems. In addition, the supervision of students at break times also helps to ensure the school creates and maintains a positive school environment for all members of the school community.

## **Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities**

Coláiste De Lacy acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour and a role in dealing with (minimising) negative behaviour. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities allow for consistency among staff as well as ensuring that there is a planned approach to helping students to change their own behaviour.

### **Students**

The school expects that students will at all times uphold the Code of Conduct, demonstrate manners and respect, engage in learning, engage with supports (where appropriate) and make a positive contribution to school life.

### **Parents/Guardians**

The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians in the development and operation of the Code of Conduct and expects them to support the code and encourage their sons/daughters to uphold it.

### **Teachers**

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<sup>10</sup> Practices include the ability groupings in the school and Timetabling.



The school acknowledges the role of teachers in the development and operation of the Code of Conduct. The school recognises that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management.

### Other staff

The school acknowledges the contribution of ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful delivery of the Code of Conduct. In particular, they have responsibility to report incidents of misbehaviour, changes in behaviour/attitude, patterns of behaviour, and examples of positive behaviour they witness.

### Board of Management

The school acknowledges the role of the Board of Management in the development and operation of the Code of Conduct. All policies are developed in consultation with and are ratified by the Board of Management.

### **Success Criteria & Monitoring**

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed at the start of the next academic year as part of the normal Whole School Development Planning review cycle. If necessary, the Code of Conduct may be reviewed at any time in light of changing circumstances and/or changing legislation. Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of the school. Any suggested amendments/improvements will be communicated to the Principal or Deputy Principal(s) who will consult with all partners.



# Suspension & Exclusion

## **Suspension and Exclusion**

Coláiste De Lacy is required under Section 23 (2) of the Educational Welfare Act 2000, to include the procedures for Suspension and Exclusion in the Code of Conduct. These policies and procedures for the use of Suspension and Exclusion are in accordance with the NEWB Guidelines (2008). They are based on the principles of natural justice<sup>11</sup> and are applied in a fair way<sup>12</sup>.

**The following procedures should be read in conjunction with the LMETB 'Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure' (included in Appendix F).**

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters. The Juvenile Liaison Officer/Community Garda is a significant source of support and advice for the school and the student.

**The key difference between Suspension and Exclusion is the degree of seriousness and persistence of the behaviour.**

## **Authority to Suspend or Exclude**

The LMETB holds the authority to suspend or exclude a student. The LMETB has devolved this authority to the Board of Management of Coláiste De lacy under Section 44 of the Education and Training Boards Act (2013). Consequently, the Board of Management of the school has the authority to suspend or exclude.

The Board of Management may then devolve the authority to suspend (not exclude) to the Principal of the school. The Board of Management have devolved this authority to the Principal (or appointed person in charge). The Principal may suspend a student for up to and including three days without consulting the Board of Management in advance. A suspension of up to 5 days may be given if sanctioned by the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Suspensions of longer than 5 days in duration must be sanctioned by the Board of Management. No individual suspension may be longer than 10 days. The Board of Management may extend the period of an individual suspension beyond 10 days in exceptional circumstances where the return of the student to the school presents a danger to the welfare, health and/or safety of the students/staff. An accumulation of

<sup>11</sup> Right to be heard and the right to impartiality

<sup>12</sup> Fair way = free from bias



over 6 day's suspension (in an academic year) and any exclusions will be reported to the Educational Welfare Officer.

### **Grounds for Suspension/Exclusion**

Suspension/Exclusion should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. A decision to suspend or a proposal to exclude a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's continued presence in the school at that time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of another student or students
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property or person or reputation
- The student's behaviour has had a detrimental effect on the welfare of staff or student(s)
- The student has engaged in a named behaviour that the school has deemed to warrant an Automatic/Immediate Suspension (see Appendix D)
- The student breaches the Code of Conduct (at the discretion of the Principal).

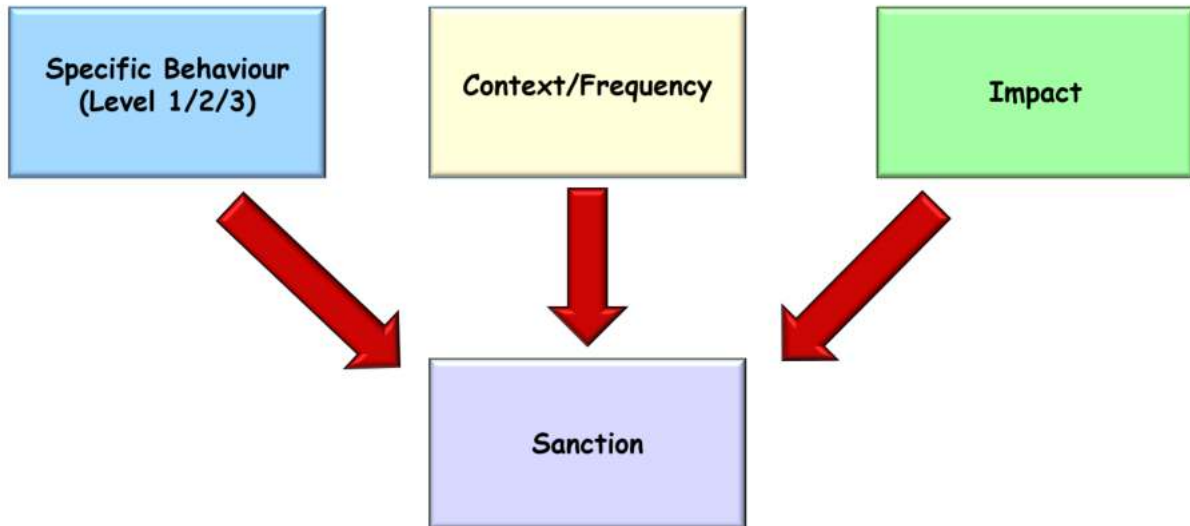
### **Factors to consider before Suspension/Exclusion**

1. Nature and seriousness of the behaviour
2. Context of the behaviour
3. Impact of the behaviour
4. Interventions tried to date
5. Whether the Suspension/Exclusion is a proportionate response
6. Possible impact





**The key difference between Suspension and Exclusion is the degree of seriousness and persistence of behaviour.**



#### **Forms of Suspension**

1. Part of a behaviour management plan
2. Immediate suspension (warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, staff or others) (for particular named behaviours, see Appendix D)
3. Suspension during a state examination: this type of suspension should only be used where there is; a threat to the good order of the conduct of the state exams, a threat to the safety or welfare of other students and personnel, or a threat to the right of the other student to do their exam in a calm atmosphere. It should normally be approved by the Board of Management
4. Automatic suspension (for particular named behaviours, see Appendix D)

#### **Suspension Procedures and Implementation**

- Investigate the alleged misconduct
- Seek an account from the student(s) involved (written or verbal)
- Apply fair procedures based on principles of natural justice
- Inform student and parents of this complaint (by phone or in writing)
- Give parents and students an opportunity to respond
- Make an objective decision based on the findings of the investigation
- Impose the sanction (inform the parents in writing)
- Formal written records will be kept at all stages of the process and any conditions attached to the suspension



- The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management
- The student will be reintegrated after suspension
- Where possible, the student and their parent will attend a restorative meeting with the Year Head/Principal/Deputy Principal and any other relevant members of staff to discuss their reintegration into classes. This meeting will usually occur on the day that the student returns to school after their suspension has been served
- A restorative meeting may also take place in order to repair relationships between relevant parties e.g. the student may have to try and restore a relationship with another student/staff member
- The teachers will help the student to take responsibility for catching up on work missed.

### **Appeals against Suspension**

Where the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parents/guardians or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007 and Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education. The relevant appeal forms are available on request from the DE.

### **Removal of a Suspension**

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy decides to remove the suspension for any reason.

### **Exclusion Procedures and Implementation**

The procedure for Exclusion is in line with the NEWB Guidelines. A summary of the procedural steps is as follows:

- Parents/guardians are informed in writing or in person of the alleged misbehaviour and the possibility that the alleged misbehaviour, if substantiated, may result in a recommendation to the Board of Management to exclude the student from Coláiste De Lacy
- The relevant members of school staff e.g. the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head, Caomhnóir...etc. will meet with the parents/guardians and the student to hear their response to the allegation of misbehaviour
- A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal. The investigation will follow the principles of natural justice



- As part of the investigation into the alleged misbehaviour, any student(s) involved may be asked to give their account of the alleged incident (verbally or in writing). These accounts may be summarised or anonymised to protect the identity of the students involved if the Principal believes that this is in the interest of these students
- Parents/guardians and the student are informed of the procedure and kept up to date with the investigation
- A decision is made (free from bias)
- The Principal prepares and makes a recommendation to the Board of Management and informs parents of same in writing
- The Board of Management hold a hearing and considers the Principals recommendation. The student and their parents/guardians are invited to attend the hearing to give them an opportunity to respond to the recommendation
- The Board of Management deliberates and makes a decision following the hearing
- The Principal and parents/guardians are notified in writing of the decision
- The Principal notifies the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of any decisions by the Board of Management to exclude a student, as soon as is practicably possible (by letter or email). The Principal may inform the EWO by phone to expect the written confirmation
- Consultations are arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education
- Confirmation of the decision to exclude will be communicated to the parents/guardians 20 days after the EWO receives written notification from the Principal.

### **Exclusion for a first offence**

Coláiste De Lacy recognises that Exclusion as a very serious step and will only take cases for Exclusion to the Board of Management in extreme cases of misbehaviour. Depending on the circumstances, the school will normally (but not always) have tried a series of other interventions and believe all possibilities for changing the students behaviour within the school have been exhausted. However, exclusion is an appropriate sanction in exceptional circumstances for a first offence, for example:

- Serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- Sexual assault
- Seriously inappropriate behaviour (severe bullying, cyber-bullying, distribution of child pornography...etc.)



### **Appeals against Exclusion**

In the case of exclusion, the parents/guardians or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007 to the Secretary General of the Department of Education. The relevant appeal forms are available on request from the DE. A mediator will be nominated by the Appeals committee. The Educational Welfare Officer will be consulted.

### **Procedural Fairness**

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All communities have a legitimate expectation that schools (Boards, Principals and teaching staff) will follow these principles in all circumstances, particularly when dealing with suspensions and Exclusions.

Procedural fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements.

1. The right to be heard which includes:

- The right to know why the action is happening
- The right to know the way in which the issues will be determined
- The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account
- The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations and
- The right to appeal.

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision which includes:

- The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker.

To ensure the elements of procedural fairness are met, it is appropriate to provide the student and their parents/guardians with details of all allegations relating to the incident. This usually will involve providing copies of any relevant statements. Should the principal be of the view that it is not appropriate to provide copies of the statement, for example, because of a fear that witnesses may be intimidated, full details of the allegations outlined in the statements should be provided instead.



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### **School Contact Details**

**Principal:** Janice Uí Bheoláin

**Deputy Principal(s):** Barry O'Higgins & Stephanie Spillane

**Address:** Killegland, Ashbourne, Co Meath

**Phone:** 01 5241075

**Email:** [colaistedelacy@lmetb.ie](mailto:colaistedelacy@lmetb.ie)

**Website:** [www.colaistedelacy.ie](http://www.colaistedelacy.ie)

**Roll Number:** 76196W



## **Appendix A**

### **Coláiste De Lacy Student Values:**

The current students, parents and staff of Coláiste De Lacy believe that the students in the school should be:

- Kind
- Courageous
- Honest
- Responsible
- Pleasant/Happy/Fun
- Helpful
- Imaginative
- Creative
- Generous
- Try their best
- Co-operative
- Have empathy for others
- Have a desire to learn
- Hard working
- Respectful
- Friendly
- Have integrity
- Team Players
- Resilient



## **Appendix B**

Pages from student dialann that outline summary of expectations, Restorative Practice, Weekly Reviews and Wellbeing supports:

Coláiste De Lacy



Student Journal 2023-2024

### **Dea-iompar (Behaviour for Learning)**

Our priority in Coláiste De Lacy is to ensure a safe, positive, supportive and optimal educational environment for all. Consequently high expectations will be communicated to and required from all students. Coláiste De Lacy will be powered by positive relationships and care. The philosophical foundations of our Code of Conduct are care, respect, positivity and personal responsibility. The expectations of students (school rules) are outlined as follows:

**The expectations/rules of Coláiste De Lacy are as follows:**

**1**

Students will treat themselves, school staff, fellow students and visitors to the school with respect and have consideration for the rights and feelings of others. Students will refer to teachers as *Iníon* or *Máistir*.

This is a rule of our school because having respect for oneself and for others promotes a respectful, caring atmosphere where the rights of all are upheld. Having consideration for the rights and feelings of others creates a better, more pleasant learning environment. This is essential for developing *caidrimh dhearfacha* (positive relationships) within Coláiste De Lacy.

**2**

Students will co-operate and follow the instructions of all staff members. Students will co-operate with and be kind to each other.

This is a rule of our school to maintain good order, avoid disruption and create a better learning/working environment for all. Instructions given to assist the smooth day to day running of the school are carried out in the interests of all. Physical violence cannot be tolerated.

**3**

Students will attend school regularly; remain for the full school day and if absent, the school will be notified of the reason for the absence.

This is a rule of our school because missing class adversely affects learning and can impede the progress of the other students. The school is legally obliged to report the reason for all absences. Students and parents/guardians must follow the correct sign out procedures.





4

Students will bring their dialann, iPad, books, copies and all equipment that they need to all relevant classes. iPads will be brought to school fully charged.

This is a rule of our school to ensure that students are fully prepared for their learning and to minimise time wasting. Having the correct learning resources in class means students can access the correct materials to help their learning.

5

Students will do their obair breise (homework) and participate fully in class. They will listen to each other and their teachers and not disrupt any classes. Students will take responsibility for their learning and do their best at all times.

This is a rule of our school because obair breise reinforces learning and helps students to reach their full potential. Disruption of classes is unfair on fellow students and prevents the learning of everyone. Everyone in Coláiste De Lacy will be 'ag foghlaim le chéile' (learning together) and so disruption of learning will NOT be tolerated.

6

Students will get their parents/guardians to sign their dialann scoile every weekend.

This is a rule of our school because it facilitates communication between teachers and parents/guardians. In addition, it allows everyone to monitor student progress.

7

Students will keep their mobile phones and other electronic devices switched OFF during class times and they will not use them to record or photograph any person/thing related to school without prior permission. iPad's will be used in class to facilitate learning but must be stored safely in lockers at break time and lunch. Sending messages by phone/iPad is not allowed during class time.

This means that mobile phones and other electronic devices must not be visible during class times (with the exception of school iPads). Such devices that are visible are considered to be in use. This is a rule of our school for the following reasons:

- Messaging causes too many disruptions and distractions from learning
- Camera phones impinge on the privacy of others
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones or electronic recording/listening devices causes disruption, prevents students from hearing instructions and impinges on the privacy of others.





8

Students will be on time for school/class and not loiter or go to their lockers between classes.

This is a rule of our school because not being on time causes disruption to the learning of everyone. In addition, Coláiste De Lacy is concerned about the fás (growth/development) of the whole child/person and encourages students to develop good punctuality expectation that students should be seated at their desks ready for clann time to start at **8:45am sharp**.

9

Students will move quietly around the school in an orderly manner.

This is a rule of our school for the health and safety of students and staff and so that teaching and learning can take place in a positive atmosphere and without unnecessary disturbances.

10

Students will wear their full school uniform every day to and from school and comply fully with the correct Coláiste De Lacy éide scoile (uniform) code.

This is a rule of our school because uniforms promote an atmosphere of uniformity, pride and equality among the student population. The uniform is the public image of the school and it is the responsibility of each member of the school community to promote that image. The uniform code is clearly communicated to students and parents/guardians through the dialann, presentations at information nights and letters/information sheets sent to homes.

11

Students will show respect for all property and equipment in the school and on the school grounds. Students will not throw litter and will assist in keeping the school clean and tidy.

This is a rule of our school because defacing/damaging school property is destructive and shows a lack of respect and consideration for the school community of which the student is a member. Damage to property costs money in repairs, which could be better spent on other school items and could also cause a hazard to health and safety.



12

Students will not chew gum, smoke or bring any prohibited substances into the school. Students will fully comply with the Substance Use Policy.

This is a rule of our school for the following reasons:

- Chewing gum damages property
- Smoking on the school grounds is illegal and smoking seriously damages health
- Banned/prohibited substances pose a risk to the safety of all

### Important Notes:

Coláiste De Lacy endeavours, to the greatest possible extent, to provide an appropriate education for all students and, in that context, the right of the overwhelming majority of compliant students to learn will not be subverted by any disruptive minority.

The above expectations for students are taken from the school Code of Conduct.

Full compliance with the schools Code of Conduct is a condition of enrolment in Coláiste De Lacy.



**Always  
Remember  
the Three "B"s**

- ✓ **Be  
Respectful**
- ✓ **Be  
Ready**
- ✓ **Be  
Responsible**



## Classroom and Campus Guidelines

Be in school, seated for clann time at 08:45am sharp.

Refer to school staff as Iníon (female) or Máistir (male)

At beginning of each lesson, take out all necessary equipment for class. Leave your iPad face down and your dialann opened on the weekly tracker.

Follow all your instructions and stick to your task. Raise your hand if you wish to speak to your teacher

Always try your best. Get "stuck" into your learning and don't be afraid to make mistakes

Take ownership of your learning and be accountable for your actions. Ensure you are productive and as positive throughout the day

Record Obair Breise when instructed to do so. Show your teacher that this has been done before putting your dialann away

Pack up, only when you are told to do so. Pick up any paper or rubbish and tuck your seat in

Moving from lesson to lesson, move promptly, keep to the left and use correct stairs for your year group





## Restorative Practice



### What is Restorative Practice?

Restorative practice aims to create an environment which puts an emphasis on building relationships and where students take ownership and accountability for their actions.

### Why is Restorative Practice important?

- It will make our learning environment and school community even happier and more positive.
- It creates a positive outcome for everyone involved in harm or conflict.
- Promotes empathy amongst school community.
- Ever important life skill for students.
- It helps build relationships with everyone in our school.

### Restorative Actions:

- Speak Respectfully
- Listen with an open mind
- Act with Kindness
- Respect each other's feelings
- Take responsibility for what we say and do
- Make things better with positive actions



"Responsibility is accepting that you can be the cause and the solution of the matter".



## WEEKLY REVIEW: Week beginning 21st August 2023

Period	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Clann					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

L	Late	IP	iPad not charged or misuse
NE	No book, copy or equipment	CG	Career Guidance Appointment
HW	Homework not done satisfactorily	UB	Unacceptable Behaviour
TP	Toilet Pass	UNF	Uniform Infraction
D	Disruptive	AT	Assigned Task



Great Learning, Well Done!



Learning Progressing Well



Concern(s) regarding learning!

Positive Contribution to CDL:

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Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Caomhnóir's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**WEEKLY REFLECTION: Week beginning 21st August 2023****My Learning Journey**


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**What will I try differently next week?**


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**My Wellbeing Journey**

Please tick/circle which of the above emoticons best describes how you feel about your Wellbeing this week.

Then complete a reflection on your Wellbeing Journey below.

This week I was/felt.....(tick which Wellbeing Indicators apply to you this week)!

**ACTIVE**

- Am I a confident and skilled Participant in physical activity?
- How physically active am I?

**RESILIENT**

- Do I believe that I have the coping skills to deal with life's challenges?
- Do I know where I can go for help?
- Do I believe that with effort I can achieve?

**RESPONSIBLE**

- Do I take action to protect and promote my wellbeing and that of others?
- Do I make healthy eating choices?
- Do I know where my safety is at risk and do I make right choices?

**RESPECTED**

- Do I feel that I am listened to and valued?
- Do I have positive relationships with my friends, my peers and my teachers?
- Do I show care and respect for others?

**CONNECTED**

- Do I feel connected to my school, my friends, my community and the wider world?
- Do I appreciate that my actions and interactions impact on my own wellbeing and that of others, in local and global contexts?

**AWARE**

- Am I aware of my thoughts, feelings and behaviours and can I make sense of them?
- Am I aware of what my personal values are and do I think through my decisions?
- Do I understand what helps me to learn and how I can improve?



## Appendix C

<u>Sample Behaviour</u>	<u>Ranking by Staff</u>	<u>Ranking by Students</u>	<u>Ranking by Parents</u>	<u>Ranking by School Leadership</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Littering	1	1	1-2	1	
Muttering	1	1	1-3	1	Importance of Context
No copies/materials	1	1	1	1-2	Importance of Frequency
No homework	1	1	1	1	Importance of Frequency
Incomplete Homework	1	1	1	1	Importance of Frequency
Chatting/talking without permission	1	1	1-3	1-2	Importance of Context
Running out of class at the end of the lesson before the class is dismissed	1	2	3	2	
Lack of basic manners (saying please/thank you)	1	1-2	3	1	
Chewing gum	1	1	3	1	
Earphones	1	1-2	3	1	Importance of Context
Wandering around the classroom (without permission)	1	1	3	1	
Lateness	2	2	1-3	2	Importance of Frequency
Fidgeting	1	1	1	1	
Not paying attention (in class, at Tionól, at a school event...etc.)	2	1	1-3	2	Importance of Frequency
Swinging on a chair	1	1	1	1	
Avoiding cleaning up duties/rota	1	1	3	1-2	



Disorganisation (ongoing)	1	2	1-3	1	
Damaging a dialann	1	3	2-3	2	
Serious disruption of learning	3	3	3	3	
Giddiness in class or at Tionól	1	1	3	2	
Having no dialann in class	1	1	1-2	1	Importance of Frequency
Causing trouble between groups	1-3	2-3	2-3	2-3	Importance of Context & Frequency
Exaggerated coughing/yawning that is disrupting learning	1-2	1-2	2-3	2	Importance of Frequency
Moving out of seat during class without permission	1	1-2	3	1	
Challenging teachers instructions	2	2	2-3	2	Importance of Context
Cursing/Using bad language	2	2	2-3	2	
Bullying	2-3	3	3	2-3	Importance of Context
Intentional pushing	2	2-3	2-3	2-3	Importance of Context & Frequency
Vandalism	2-3	3	3	3	
Graffiti	2-3	2	3	3	
Not standing back to allow a teacher through a door	2	1	2-3	2	Importance of Context
Defiance/Ignoring instructions	2-3	2	2-3	2-3	Importance of Context & Frequency
Smoking while in school uniform or at a school related activity	3	3	3	3	





Back answering/cheek	1-2	2	1-3	2	Importance of Context & Frequency
Rough boisterous behaviour on entering a classroom or on corridors e.g. pushing	2	2	2-3	2	Importance of Context
Speaking disrespectfully to a member of staff	1-3	3	2-3	2-3	Importance of Context
Refusal to hand over Dialann	2	2-3	2-3	2	Importance of Context
Escalation of incident from minor to major	2-3	2-3	2-3	2-3	
Fighting	3	3	3	3	
Inappropriate language (written)	1-3	2	2-3	2-3	Importance of Context
Inappropriate comments (verbal)	1-3	3	3	3	
Not taking correction	1-2	1-2	1-2	2-3	Importance of Context
Mitching/Truancy	3	3	3	3	
Theft	3	3	3	3	
Dominating group work	1	1	1-2	1	Importance of Frequency
Not participating in group work/activities/projects	1	1	1-2	1	Importance of Frequency
Not taking responsibility for behaviour	1-3	1-2	2-3	1-3	Importance of Context
Not taking responsibility for learning	1-2	1-2	2-3	1-2	
Setting off the Fire Alarm (intentionally)	3	3	3	3	



Non-cooperation during Fire Drills	3	3	3	3	
Non-cooperation at school events	2	2	3	2-3	
Display of aggression	2-3	2-3	3	3	Importance of Context
Clicking pen	1	1	1	1	
Asking to leave class (repeatedly)	1	1	2-3	1	
Speaking out of turn	1	1	1	1	Importance of Context
Not following instructions	1	1	1-3	1-2	Importance of Context & Frequency
Talking over teacher	2	2	1	2	Importance of Context & Frequency
Throwing things	2	1-2	2-3	1-3	Importance of Context & Frequency
Inappropriate physical contact	3	2	3	2-3	
Making out/Kissing	3	2-3	3	2-3	
Disrespectful conduct on corridors e.g. barging through crowds/doors	2-3	2	3	2-3	
Refusing to do work	2	2	2-3	2-3	Importance of Frequency
Horseplay	2	2	3	2-2	
Using iPad inappropriately/Non-compliance with AUP	1-3	2	3	1-3	
Taking an image/video of a person or scene without permission	3	3	3	3	



Mobile phone going off in class (text/alarm/ringing/notification)	2	1	3	2	
Leaving the school grounds without permission	3	3	3	3	
Use of foul language (in the company of a teacher)	3	2-3	3	3	



## **Appendix D**

### **Named Behaviours that warrant an Automatic/Immediate Suspension:**

- Vaping, smoking, use of e-Cigarettes and/or banned substances (as defined earlier in policy)
- Serious aggression and/or disrespect towards a staff member
- Serious breach of AUP
- Fighting
- Seriously threatening or intimidating behaviour
- Provoking/initiating a fight
- Use of foul language
- Theft or deliberate damage to school property
- Graffiti
- Tampering with or damaging any Health and Safety equipment/devices/fixtures. This is also a criminal offence
- Repeated infraction of school rules and/or total defiance of Principal or Deputy Principal
- Non-attendance at a *Rang Feabhais* (Friday afternoon or Saturday morning detention)
- Possession of drugs (as defined in the CDL *Substance Misuse Policy* to) and/or banned substances subject to further investigation and/or a Board of Management consideration of case
- Supplying drugs and/or banned substances (as defined in the CDL *Substance Misuse Policy* to anyone) subject to further investigation and/or a Board of Management consideration of case
- Any action that increases the risk of introducing, contracting or spreading any infectious disease. This includes but is not limited to: spitting, coughing at a person, sneezing at a person, etc.
- Repeated driving and/or parking of a car/electric vehicle by a CDL student on the Ashbourne Education Campus.



## **Appendix E**

### **Procedures for Notifying the Coláiste of a Student's Absence:**

The Code of Conduct must describe the procedures to be followed by parents when they are notifying the school about a child's absence (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23 (2) (e) & Section 18). It is a legal imperative that parents inform the school of their child's absence (full day or part-day) for any reason. Parents must also provide the school with a reason for the absence.

Guidelines for parents regarding the notification of absence are as follows:

- Where possible, the parents/guardians should inform the school in writing by email to [colaistedelacy@lmetb.ie](mailto:colaistedelacy@lmetb.ie) of any planned absences in advance.
- A text message is sent to all parents when a student is absent in the morning. Regardless of whether the school has received prior notification or not, all parents must follow the link that they receive by text message to explain the reason for the absence
- The school administration/Attendance Officer input the relevant data into the school's management software
- A medical certificate may be requested by the school to explain any significant absences due to illness
- The school returns all absences (details and reasons) to Tusla
- Coláiste De Lacy may contact parents in order to ascertain information regarding absences, to discuss a student's attendance and/or to implement an attendance strategy for a student
- Coláiste De Lacy has developed a *Statement of Strategy for Student Attendance*
- Parents will be notified when their child has reached 10, 15 and 20 days absences (whether explained or not)
- Pages regarding attendance and punctuality are included in the student dialann and shown over:



## Attendance and Punctuality

Two of the most important elements of ensuring academic achievement are being punctual and attending school regularly. Being on time for school and ensuring regular attendance will contribute positively to your child's academic, emotional and social growth and development.

### Monitoring Attendance

Under the law, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years post primary education, whichever comes later. It is our responsibility to monitor absences and report this statistical data to Tusla Education Support Service bi-annually.

If your child accumulates 20 absences in an academic school year, regardless of reason, we are legally obliged to report this information to the Tusla Education Support Service. An Educational Welfare Officer may then subsequently contact you to discuss the matter further.

### *What happens when my child is absent?*

When your child is absent from school, you as a parent/guardian must let the school know the reason for the absence every day. **When your child is marked absent from school, an automatic text message will sent to the parent/guardian and they must complete the absence report linked in the message.**



Where possible, please attempt to minimise your child's school absences by making appointments for out of school hours e.g. dentist, doctor etc.

### Monitoring Punctuality

As a school, we endeavour to encourage students to be on time for school as being late is not just disruptive to their learning, but to many others within the school community.

If your child is late for school, please communicate the reason by writing a note in the 'Late Section' of the Dialann.

Help your child get to school on time each day by ensuring that they are prepared the evening before.







## Checklist for Being on Time

- ✓ I've packed my bag the night before,
- ✓ I've charged my iPad the night before,
- ✓ I've my uniform ready the night before,
- ✓ I've made my lunch the night before,
- ✓ I've had my shower the night before,
- ✓ I've set my alarm the night before,
- ✓ I get enough sleep the night before,
- ✓ And finally, I get up early and leave out the door,
- ✓ To be there, and ready on time, for sure.

## Why is punctuality important?

- Missing a few minutes of class time every day can easily add up to a few hours over the course of a school year.
- Punctuality is a critical skill that will stand to students when they leave school and enter the world of work.
- Being on time, whether to school in the mornings or to class, demonstrates that you are reliable and that you can manage your time.
- Arriving late to class disrupts the flow of a lesson for everyone else in the room.
- Attending school and lessons on time is a vital habit as it will reduce stress. You will feel more confident and composed for your day if you have time to spare to get yourself organised etc.





## **Appendix F**



# **LOUTH AND MEATH EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**





## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **1. Policy Statement**

1.1. The suspensions and expulsions policy applies to all schools established and maintained by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board.

### **2. Legal framework**

2.1. Louth and Meath ETB acknowledges the duty of schools under its control to publish their policy concerning admission and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students pursuant to Section 15 (d) of the Education Act 1998 and Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Code of Behaviour in Coláiste De Lacy specifies:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school
- The measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from a school
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student
- The procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

2.2. Coláiste De Lacy affirms that its Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board 2008. The Code of Behaviour addresses:

- The standards of behaviour expected in the school
- The plan for promoting good behaviour
- The ways in which a school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- The plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- School procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion

2.3. Coláiste De Lacy recognises the Right to Appeal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act.

2.4. In regard to informing the Education Welfare Board, Coláiste De Lacy affirms its statutory obligation pursuant to section 21 (4)(a) of the Education Welfare Act.

2.5. Coláiste De Lacy affirms that data collected in relation to students and parents is in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018.

### **3 Suspensions**

3.1 The Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy holds the authority to suspend a student. This authority is devolved under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training



Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Boards of Management of each of the schools under its control.

3.2 Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy may delegate this authority to the Principal of Coláiste De Lacy. The Board of Management should make a formal delegation arrangement taking due account of the provisions of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.

3.3 Coláiste De Lacy recognises that suspension is only one strategy within the Coláiste De Lacy Code of Behaviour in response to inappropriate behaviour.

3.4. Coláiste De Lacy recognises that when all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension affords a student time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for their behaviour and to accept the need for the behaviour to change. Coláiste De Lacy works closely with parents to assist a suspended student to re-join the school community successfully.

3.5. Coláiste De Lacy acknowledges that suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The student breaches the Code of Behaviour. (At the discretion of the Principal.)

3.6. Coláiste De Lacy affirms that all suspensions must be notified to the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy.

3.7. Coláiste De Lacy affirms that the Education Welfare Services of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) should be Informed of suspensions in the following circumstances:

- Where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive school days.
- Where the aggregate number of days on which a student has been suspended /absent in any school year is 20 or more days.

3.8. Coláiste De Lacy affirms that suspension may occur after the following factors have been considered:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The impact and context of the behaviour
- The interventions tried to date
- That all discipline options under the Coláiste De Lacy Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
- That all actions /decisions taken are recorded and all correspondence copied.



- Discussion has occurred with the student and parent(s) regarding the specific behaviour which the school considers unacceptable, and which may lead to suspension.

3.9. The Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy affirms that students attending Coláiste De Lacy may be suspended as follows pending investigation and /or discussion with parents. The following list is not exhaustive:

- For serious misbehaviour
- For an unacceptable level of repeated misbehaviour
- For bullying, insulting, aggressive or violent behaviour towards others whether in person, by mobile phone or via social media or other electronic means; in the school, or when identifiable with the school
- For the supply/possession /use of alcohol and /or illegal drugs
- For the supply /possession /use of weapons/ hazardous materials
- For behaviour that may be a danger to self or others
- For racist behaviour /supply of racist behaviour/use of racist material
- For behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act 2000
- For sexual harassment and/or the possession/supply /use of pornographic material.

3.10. Coláiste De Lacy acknowledges that a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Such grounds may include where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety or welfare of students, staff of the school or any other person.

3.11. A student may be suspended during a state examination and such suspension should normally be approved by the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy. This type of suspension should only be used where there is:

- A threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- A threat to the safety or welfare of other students and personnel
- A threat to the right of the other students to do their exam in a calm atmosphere.

3.12. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy may decide as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviour incur suspension as a sanction. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.

#### **4 Inappropriate use of Suspension**

- Rolling suspension. A student should not be suspended again shortly after they return to Coláiste De Lacy unless they engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension, that fair procedures are observed in full and the standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as that standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.



- Informal / unacknowledged suspension. Exclusion of a student for part of the school day as a sanction is a suspension.
- Open-ended suspension. Students should not be suspended for an indefinite period. Any such suspension would be regarded as a de-facto expulsion.

### **5 Procedures in respect of Suspension.**

5.1 Louth and Meath ETB affirms that Coláiste De Lacy is required to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. The school should observe the following procedures

- The student and parent(s) should be informed about the complaint
- The student and parent(s) should be given the opportunity to respond



- In the case of 'immediate' suspension, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Parents must be notified and arrangement made for the student to be collected from the school. The school must have due regard for its duty of care for the student.

5.2 A student should not be suspended for more than 3 days except in exceptional circumstances. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy should provide guidance to the Principal concerning the kinds of circumstances under which suspensions of longer than 3 days might be approved. If a suspension of longer than 3 days is being proposed the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. However, Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. Such authorisation must be recorded in the minutes of meeting of the Board of Management and reviewed on an annual basis.

5.3 Louth and Meath ETB affirms the Boards of Management of Coláiste De Lacy should formally review any proposal to suspend a student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

## **6 Implementing the suspension**

6.1 The Principal of Coláiste De Lacy should notify the Parent(s) and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for an appeal to the Department of Education, in the case of a suspension which would bring the days suspended in one academic over 20 days.

6.2 In the case where Parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, Louth and Meath ETB confirms that written notice will serve as notice to impose a suspension.

6.3 A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy decides to remove the suspension for any reason.

## **7 Section 29 Appeal against Suspension**

7.1 Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the Minister for Education.



7.2 An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.

7.3 An appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.

7.4 Appeals must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Form and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

## **8 Expulsion**

8.1 Louth and Meath ETB has the authority to expel a student. This authority may be delegated under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy.

8.2 Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Coláiste De Lacy acknowledges that expulsion of a student is a very serious step and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

8.3 The Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy affirms that Coláiste De Lacy needs to have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion.

Such measures may include:

- Meeting with parents and students to try and find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour should it persist
- Ensuring that all possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of relevant support agencies, e.g. Child and Family Agency Education Welfare Services, HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. National Behavioural Support Service JLO, NEPS, NCSE.

8.4 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 school constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety and welfare of others.



- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

8.5 Before expulsion is considered school authorities must satisfy themselves that all possibilities have been exhausted for changing the student's behaviour.

#### 8.6 'Automatic Expulsion'

The Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy may decide in consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students that particular named behaviours would result in 'Automatic' expulsion. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedure.

#### 8.7 Expulsion for first or once-off offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy decides 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 of Behaviour could include:

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

### **9 Factors to Consider before proposing to expel a student**

9.1 The Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy should take the following factors into consideration before considering expelling a student:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions already tried to change the student's behaviour
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

9.2 Expulsion would not be appropriate for the following:

- Poor academic performance
- Poor attendance or lateness
- Minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.





## **10 Procedures in respect of expulsion**

10.1 A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. The Principal should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the investigation.

10.2 The Principal should inform the student and his/her parents about the specific details of the alleged breach of behaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The Principal must ensure that the student and parents are given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour. The Principal should communicate this in writing to ensure that parents have a permanent record of having been informed.

10.3 A meeting should be arranged between the student and their parents and the Principal of Coláiste De Lacy before a sanction is imposed.

10.4 Should a student and their parent(s) fail to attend a meeting the Principal should write advising:

- the seriousness of the matter
- the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting
- Failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour
- Record all correspondence

10.5 Where the Principal of Coláiste De Lacy forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board to consider expulsion.

10.6 The Principal should:

- Inform the student and parents in writing that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that parents have written records of (a) the allegation, (b) the investigation, (c) written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide the Board with the same comprehensive records as are given to the student and the parents.
- Notify the parents in good time of the date of the hearing with the Board of management and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
- Ensure parents are given enough notice to allow them to prepare for the meeting.

10.7 It is the responsibility of the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.

10.8 The Board of Management should undertake its own review of documentation and all circumstances of the case.





10.9 The Board of Management should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.

10.10 Where the Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy decides to expel a student it must hold a hearing and this meeting should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures.

10.11 Parents may be accompanied at the Board hearing but, as this is a lay forum; legal representation is not the normal practice, however it may be allowed due to the potentially serious consequences for the student. The Board Secretary should be informed in writing who shall be attending this meeting at least two days prior to the meeting taking place.

10.12 At the start of the meeting the Chairperson shall enquire whether any member has an objective bias in respect of the matter being considered by the Board. Where the Board is satisfied that an objective bias exists, the member(s) involved shall withdraw from the meeting.

10.13 At the hearing the Principal and the parents, or a student aged 18 or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence and will be available to answer questions from Board Members. Each party should be allowed question the evidence of the other party. Questions should be directed through the Chairperson at the end of each presentation.

10.14 Once the Principal and the Parents have made their cases, they will withdraw from the meeting.

10.15 Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal; the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting briefly for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there will be no discussion on the merits of the particular case being considered.

10.16 In the conduct of the hearing the Board must take care to ensure they are and are seen to be impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this in line with good practice and Board procedures.

10.17 When both sides have been heard the Board should ensure that the Principal and Parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.

10.18 In hearing and considering a proposed expulsion the Board shall have regard to:

- (a) the nature, scale and persistence of any behaviour alleged to have given rise to, or contributed to, the decision made by or on behalf of the Board,
- (b) the reasonableness of any efforts made by the school to enable the student to whom the appeal relates (the 'student concerned') to participate in and benefit from education,
- (c) the educational interests of the student concerned and the desirability of enabling the student as far as practicable to participate in and benefit from education with his or her peers,
- (d) the educational interests of, and the effective provision of education for, other students of the school and the maintenance of a classroom and school environment which is supportive of learning among the students of the school and



ensures continuity of instruction provided to students in any classroom concerned and the school,

(e) the safety, health and welfare of teachers, students and staff of the school,

(f) the code of behaviour under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act of 2000 and other relevant policies of the school and —

(i) in the case of that code of behaviour, the extent to which it is in compliance with that section 23 and any guidelines issued under subsection (3) of that section, and

(ii) in the case of those other policies, the extent to which each of them is implemented, promotes equality of access to and participation in education and is in compliance with —

(I) any enactment that imposes duties on schools or their boards,

(II) any relevant guidelines or policies of the Minister,

(g) the duties on schools or their boards imposed by or under any enactment,

(h) guidelines issued pursuant to section 22(7) of the Act of 2000, and

(i) such other matters as the Board considers relevant.

## **11 Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing**

11.1 Having heard from all the parties involved it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and if expulsion is the appropriate sanction.

11.2 When the Board of Management having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion pursuant to section 24 91) of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Board should refer to the Child and Family Agency Education Welfare Services reporting procedures for proposed expulsions.

11.3 The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification.

11.4 The Board of Management should inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and where expulsion is proposed the parents should be informed that the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

## **12 Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer**

12.1 Within 20 days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management the EWO will make all reasonable attempts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parent and the student. The EWO will convene a meeting of those parties. These consultations will focus on alternative educational arrangements for the student.



12.2 Pending the consultations in 12.1 the Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. This should only be considered where the continued presence of the student during this time would seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a risk to the safety and health of students or staff.

### **13 Confirmation of the decision to expel**

13.1 When the 20-day period following notice to the EWO has elapsed and the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel. The Board of Management may delegate authority to the Chairperson and Secretary to review this decision of expulsion after the twenty days has expired.

13.2 Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student must be informed of their right to appeal to the Minister of Education.

### **14 Section 29 Appeal against Expulsion**

14.1 The parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the expulsion under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

14.2 Parents and the student should be informed about their right to appeal to the Minister for Education.

14.3 An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.

14.4 An appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.

14.5 Appeals must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Form and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

### **15 Review of use of Expulsion**

15.1 The Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy should review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals.



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## **16 Implementation and Review of Policy**

16.1 The Principal and Board of Management of Coláiste De Lacy will responsible for the implementation of this policy.

16.2 This policy shall be reviewed periodically, in light of emerging legislation and circulated Guidelines from the Department of Education from its official adoption by the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board and Coláiste De Lacy Board of Management.

This policy was reviewed and adopted by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board on 15 November 2018 for incorporation into school's Codes of Behaviour.

This policy was reviewed in November 2020 in light of commencement of changes to the Section 29 Appeals procedures under the Education (Admission to schools) Act 2018.

**This policy was ratified by the Coláiste De Lacy Board of Management on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**



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**Definitions under the Education Act, 1998**

**“Parent”** includes a foster parent, a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997, or other person acting in *loco parentis* who has a child in his or her care subject to any statutory power or order of a court and, in the case of a child who has been adopted under the Adoption Acts, 1952 to 1998, or, where the child has been adopted outside the State, means the adopter or adopters or the surviving adopter;

**“Principal”** means a person appointed under *section 23*;

**“School”** means an establishment which—

(a) provides primary education to its students and which may also provide early childhood education, or

(b) provides post-primary education to its students and which may also provide courses in adult, continuing or vocational education or vocational training, but does not include a school or institution established in accordance with the Children Acts, 1908 to 1989, or a school or institution established or maintained by a health board in accordance with the Health Acts, 1947 to 1996, or the Child Care Act, 1991;

**“Student”**, in relation to a school, means a person enrolled at the school and in relation to a centre for education, means a person registered as a student in that centre;