

# Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty.

## Code of Behaviour Policy Review 2023/2024

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## 1 Preamble to Code of Behaviour.

The work of schools, in encouraging and developing in their students a strong sense of personal responsibility towards others, is a truly critical task. Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of every school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students. The Act requires that the school's code of behaviour is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). The Guidelines have their basis in law.

*A code of behaviour shall be prepared in accordance with such guidelines as may, following consultation by the Board with national association of parents, recognised school management organisations and trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, be issued by the Board.*

Education (Welfare) Act, section 23(3)

The code of behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well. The code helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour. The code of behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. Keeping this inclusivity in mind, this code of behaviour was reviewed in September and October 2023 by a committee drawn from all members of the school community. It was reviewed in line with the DES Guidelines and in light of the school community's experiences in the code's implementation up to this point.

### 1.1 Code of Behaviour Committee.

Ann Marie Brosnan	Principal
Brendan Walsh	Deputy Principal
Denise Hayes	Teaching Staff Member
Mairead Kingston	Teaching Staff Member
Ray Kelleher	Parent Nominee
Una Wilson Good	Parent Nominee
Alannah Sexton	Student Voice
Robyn Applebee	Student Voice
Caitlin Connolly	Student Voice

### 1.2 Code of Behaviour Overview

The code expresses the vision, mission and values of the school. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards are expected and supported. The code enables school authorities to strike an appropriate balance between their duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and their responsibility to students whose behaviour is a challenge to the teaching and learning process. The code of behaviour is a key tool in enabling the school authorities to support the learning of every student in the school.

Maintaining a harmonious environment can present a challenge to schools, given competing needs, time pressures and varying capacities or readiness to learn. A code of behaviour that has the support of the entire school community can go a long way to helping meet this challenge successfully.

Sacred Heart Secondary School is very proud of its reputation and views its students as ambassadors of the school. The Board of Management recognises that even while students are off the school grounds, their actions may directly affect other members of the school community or the standing of the school in the broader Clonakilty community. In certain cases, the school reserves the right to apply the principles of this Code of Behaviour to incidents which occur outside of school and/or outside of school hours. The school may, in its absolute discretion, choose to deal with alleged behaviour which occurs outside of school grounds or outside of school hours as if the alleged misbehaviour had occurred during school time or on school grounds. While the circumstances of each case will be examined individually, the school may exercise this discretion in circumstances where the incident in question harms, or creates a risk of harm to, any member of the school community or where the incident is significant to the standing or reputation of the school itself.

The school is aware that our students have their own varying needs and challenges. While we expect the same high standard of behaviour of all our students, the measures set out in this policy may be applied differently in different cases depending on the special needs profile of a particular student or other relevant factors.

Each case will be considered individually and will be dealt with and managed in accordance with this Code and the particular facts and circumstances of the particular case and student involved.

### ***1.3 The content of the code of behaviour***

The *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* sets out certain matters that must be included in a code of behaviour. Section 23(2) of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000* says:

*A code of behaviour shall specify—*

- *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 the school concerned;*
- *the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
- *the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.*

In order to comply with these requirements, and in order to have the best chance of achieving its objectives, the code of behaviour should address:

- the standards of behaviour expected in the school
- the plan for promoting good behaviour

- the ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- the plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- school procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

Guidance on each of these aspects of the code of behaviour is provided in the NEWB Guidelines.

## 2 Mission Statement.

### School Mission Statement

*Motto:*

*Sacred Heart Secondary School;  
Where Learning Continues to be an adventure.*

**Engaging ....Inspiring ..... Flourishing**



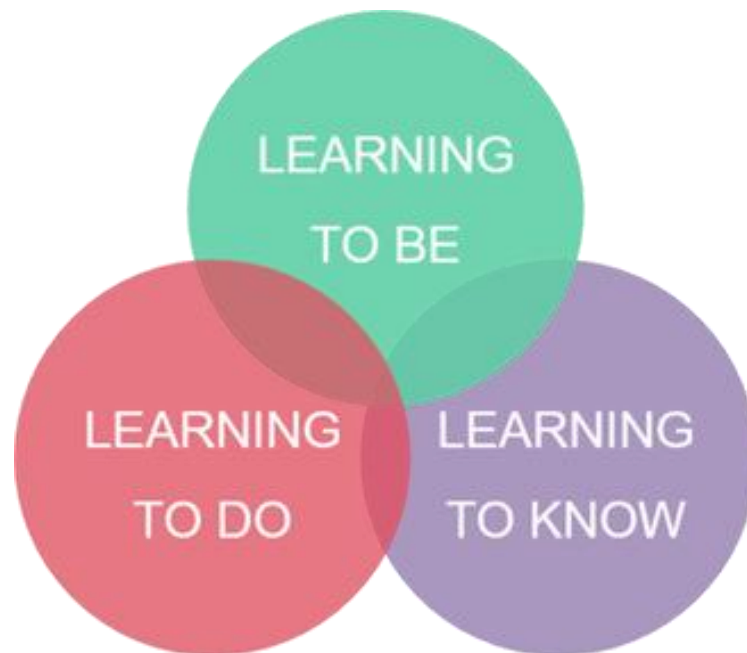
## Mission

Learning to be....

Learning to do.....

Learning to learn....

Learning to work together in a creative and Christian environment, as we prepare for the future.



## Standards of Behaviour.

### 3.1 *Expectations:*

- We expect our students to attend school every day (refer to Attendance Policy & student journal).
- We expect students to attend punctually.
- Full school uniform is to be worn every day.
- RESPECT for all in an inclusive, fair, safe and positive environment see, Anti-bullying & Substance misuse and health and safety Policies).
- Students should do their best and work to their full potential.
- Students to follow all school procedures (Health and Safety Policy)

(Refer to visuals on pages 18, 19, 20 & 21.)

### 3.2 *Unacceptable Behaviour*

- Non-attendance is unacceptable (refer to Attendance policy for procedures relating to notification of a child's absence from school).
- Behaviour deemed to be of a bullying nature. (See anti-bullying behaviour policy)
- Behaviour that compromises learning and teaching.
- Damage to property.
- Possession, use of and/or supply of tobacco-based products, alcohol and illegal and non-disclosed drugs, legal drug substitutes, addictive substances, **vaping devices** and pornography, during school hours and during school related activities.
- Theft.
- Use of electronic devices & mobile phones during school times.
- Personal presentation that contravenes the Uniform Code (refer to Uniform Code).

### 3.3 *Uniform/Appearance*

#### **Rationale**

The school uniform is necessary in the interest of hygiene and health, inclusion, and high standards of presentation. Our school uniform is the means by which pupils are identified as members of our school community. As a social measure, it removes expense for families and removes undue pressure, distraction, and competitiveness in the school community.

It is the intention, at all times, to maintain the integrity of the school uniform. As fashions are constantly changing, and students are always imaginative and forward looking in relation to innovations which may breach the spirit if not the letter of the code, it may be necessary to update the code during the school year. In such circumstances the Principal, or in her absence the Deputy Principal, will be the final arbiter of what is acceptable.



Sacred Heart Secondary School Uniform Policy is as follows:

- ✓ All students are expected to have their hair in a neat and clean condition.
- ✓ All items of uniform should be labelled with pupil's name.
- ✓ School jackets should be placed in lockers/bags when not in use.
- ✓ Permitted Jewellery includes a watch, ring, one ear stud or sleeper in each earlobe for Junior Cycle students. In addition, Senior Cycle students (students wearing the red jumper; 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) are allowed to have one small discreet stud facial piercing. During PE, Science and Home Economics, these piercings may need to be removed. In the case of a new piercing which isn't fully healed and can't be removed, the piercing needs to be covered for health and safety reasons. Students are permitted to wear piercings of cultural significance.
- ✓ Students who fail to wear full, correct uniform may not be admitted to their class, or attend school activities on that day.
- ✓ The uniform, which must be clean, tidy and in good repair, consists of:

**For all First, Second- and Third-year students.**

V-neck bottle green jumper with school crest

- Tartan Pleated Skirt (Leggings/tracksuit pants are not allowed) or Black Pants/Trousers
- White blouse with reverse collar
- Green bobby sock or green/black socks/tights
- Dark coloured flat shoes
- Outdoor jacket – Red/Black fleece.

**For all TY and 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> year students.**

- V-neck red jumper with school crest
- Tartan Pleated Skirt (Leggings/tracksuit pants are not allowed) or Black Pants/Trousers
- White blouse with reverse collar
- Green bobby sock or green/black socks/tights
- Dark coloured flat shoes
- Outdoor jacket – Red/Black fleece.

**P.E.**

Pupils must have appropriate sportswear, including runners, for P.E. To avoid competition, students are asked that these items are not branded. For security reasons and to avoid unnecessary competition, students are asked not to bring designer sportswear to school. School team sports tops/jackets may not be worn during the school day.

### **PRACTICAL CLASSES**

Protective clothing and goggles must be worn as instructed.

**Runners (of any colour or make)** are not permitted – except for P.E./games or on presentation of a Doctor's cert.

**Note: No other variation of uniform is permitted.**

Breaches of the Uniform Code will result in sanctions. A student not wearing full uniform or in breach of any of the above will be provided with an opportunity to address the matter. Any subsequent failure to adhere to the uniform code may result in a detention (lunch time or afterschool) being issued. Persistent breaches of the Uniform Code may result in suspension.

### ***3.4 Promoting Good Behaviour***

#### **3.4.1 Mechanisms**

- Reports
- Merit Letter
- Written Comment in Journal
- Parent / Teacher Meetings
- Phone call
- Co-curricular & Extra-curricular Activities
- Student Council / Peer mentoring / YSI Advocates
- School Tours
- Pastoral Care Team inclusive of class tutors.
- SNA support where applicable.
- Career Guidance
- SEN team including Learning Support and Resource Teaching,
- Curricular Provision
- Awards: (Awards Night, 4<sup>th</sup> Year & 6<sup>th</sup> Year Graduation)
- Website and school social media.

#### **3.4.2 Involving Students & Parents in the Life of the School**

- Assemblies
- Parent / Guardians Information Nights
- Parent / Guardians Teacher meetings
- Reports
- Other co-curricular and extra-curricular activities
- School Musical, Choir and Orchestra
- School Liturgies and Retreats
- School trips
- Student Council, Peer Mentors, Student Voice
- Parents Association
- Team Building Activities
- Fundraising
- Tours
- Awards
- Leaving Cert Graduation Mass
- Sixth and Fourth Year Graduation Night
- Policy Development and Review
- Open Night

### ***3.5 Implementing the Code of Behaviour***

Implementation of the Code of Behaviour is supported by the Pastoral Care structures.

Starting point:

- Teacher and or supervising teacher.
- Class tutor
- Year Head
- Deputy Principal
- Principal
- Guidance counsellor
- Where appropriate, as deemed by the relevant Pastoral Care Team, link with other agencies.

(Refer to Visual on Clarification of Roles on page 18)

### **3.6 Communicating the Code of Behaviour to School Community.**

- A copy of the code of behaviour is available on the school website or on request from the office.
- Parents, guardians and students are required to have read, understood, signed (electronic) and agreed to abide by and support the code of behaviour, prior to enrolment via the online application portal, or for late applicants by hard copy
- Information nights (First Years, Fourth Years and Sixth Years).
- Staff Handbook.
- Student Diary / Journal
- Year Heads / Tutors and SPHE teachers will teach students the code of behaviour.
- B.O.M.
- Website
- Student Council
- Parents' Association

### ***3.7 Response to confirmed Inappropriate Behaviour***

Procedures for dealing with minor issues will be followed: (in no particular order)

- Verbal reprimand: by subject teacher / supervising teacher.
- Homework Journal: the teacher records the incident in the student's journal. This is then countersigned by the parent / guardian.
- Change of seating arrangement:
- Removal of privilege: Student denied access to school trips / games / tours.
- Extra homework: Class teacher assigns extra relevant homework to the student.
- Detention.
- Extra school duties: student is given tidying / cleaning / improvement of environment duties.
- Phone call home.
- Notice of concern communicated home.
- Time Out: To allow for the incident to deescalate and give the necessary time and space for the student(s) involved.
- Referral to Year Head / Pastoral Care Team.
- Referral to Guidance and where appropriate to external agencies.
- Removal from the student any banned items such as Mobile phones / Vaping devices etc.
- Parent – Guardian / Teacher conference requested.
- Student placed on Daily Report.
- Progress Report compiled by Year Head.

### ***3.8 Mobile Phones & Electronic Devices***

The use of mobile phones is prohibited in the school. All phones must be powered off and out of sight from 8.50am to 4pm (Monday and Tuesday) and to 3.20pm Wednesday, Thursday and Friday). If a student uses a phone, or is seen to have a phone on display, the phone & the SIM card will be confiscated for one week during the school day on the first offence and for two weeks on the second offence. Refusal to comply immediately is a serious offence and will be dealt with as a refusal to comply with the school's code of behaviour. The use of electronic devices (chrome books, tablets, iPads, laptops) are to be used only as an educational tool for the purpose of teaching and learning in the classroom and at all times will be supervised by the teacher of the class.

Students who need to contact a parent / guardian are welcome to use the phone in the school office on request.

- Students are responsible for their mobile phones and the school has no responsibility if a student loses a mobile phone.
- Parents must not call or text their children during the school day. Contact at any time must be made through the school office.
- Videoing or recording another person (staff or student) without their knowledge is an invasion of privacy and any student caught doing so may face suspension.
- Isolated or once off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging do not fall within the definition of bullying and are dealt with under the school's Code of Behaviour. However, placing a once off offensive message, image or statement on a social network site or public forum where that message, image or statement

can be viewed and / or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour and may be dealt with under either or both policies.

### ***3.9 Indecent, Pornographic or Socially Objectionable Material.***

Any indecent, pornographic or socially objectionable material will be confiscated and can only be returned when the student is accompanied by a parent. Possession and / or circulation of such material will be considered a serious offence. It is to be noted that any offence coming under the remit of the Child Protection Policy will be handled in accordance with the procedures of that policy and, where appropriate, may be reported to the Child and Family Agency, TUSLA, and / or the An Garda Síochana.

### ***3.10 Method of fair procedures for investigation and decision making:***

The investigation may be carried out by a subject teacher, class tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal and / or Principal or Acting Principal using the following procedure:

- Teacher Referral Form may be filled by the teacher(s) involved. (Appendix 2)
- Student Incident Form may be filled by the student(s) involved. (Appendix 1)
- Contact may be made with the parents / guardian to inform them that an incident is being investigated.
- The teacher(s) may interview both parties separately and or together and may also interview others.
- Parents / Guardian may be invited to come to the school to discuss and or contribute to the investigation.
- The school can use CCTV as part of its investigation.

The school reserves the right to contact the Gardaí immediately where a serious breach of the code occurs during school time. While the following list is not exhaustive it could include offences such as serious threat of violence to others in the school, actual violence to another, sexual assault, supplying illegal drugs to others or being under the influence of alcohol and drugs in the school.

### ***3.11 Authority to Suspend:***

The B.O.M has delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour, student(s) up to and including 3 days and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the authority to suspend student(s) up to and including 5 days.

The B.O.M can suspend a student for up to 10 school days on any one period of suspension.

### ***3.12 Principal's Accountability to BOM:***

- Principal reports all suspensions to the BOM and the reasons for them.
- Records are to be kept of all suspensions.
- Report to TUSLA as per Child Protection Guidelines.
- Parents will be informed in writing of the decision to suspend.
- Parents have the right to appeal.

***3.13 Procedures for Suspension:***

Procedures as set out in the schools Suspension and Expulsion Policy will be followed.

***3.14 Post-Misbehaviour Procedure***

i.e. Supports for re-integration after Time Out / Suspension / Expulsion.

Post Suspension may involve some or all of the following:

- Support meeting for the Student with the Principal and / or the Deputy Principal and / or Year Head.
- Recommit to the Code of Behaviour and re-sign the code of behaviour.
- Support measures put in place for the student, such as Teacher mentor, Year Head, and or Guidance Councillor where applicable.
- Student may be placed on “Behaviour Focus Report / Progress Report”
- Pastoral Care Team meeting may be informed.

## 4 Sanctions

### 4.1 *The use of sanctions*

The Board of Management should promote a whole-school approach to the use of sanctions. This approach should provide for:

- clarity about the role and purpose of sanctions
- good practice in the use of sanctions
- the school's duty of care
- supports for students with special educational needs.

**The objective of a sanction is to help the student to learn.**

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping students to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keep the student, other students, and adults, safe.

### 4.2 *Good practice in the use of sanctions*

#### 4.2.1 **Sanctions should be used in a way that ensures that:**

##### 4.2.1.1 **Sanctions are part of a plan to change behaviour**

A sanction is a form of positive intervention. However, sanctions are unlikely to change behaviour on their own. They should be used as part of a wider plan to help the student to learn.

A sanction should be used in a respectful way that helps students to understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour.

In particular, a sanction should:

- defuse and not escalate a situation
- preserve the dignity of all the parties
- be applied in a fair and consistent way
- be timely.



#### **4.2.1.2 Sanctions are used consistently**

The contents of the Code of Behaviour and the appropriate sanctions that may be used, are communicated to all staff, e.g. (staff handbook, induction, website and staff meetings).

#### **4.2.1.3 Sanctions are appropriate**

They should be appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the student and comply with equality legislation, and sanctions should not be used in a manner that discriminates.

### ***4.3 Responding to inappropriate behaviour***

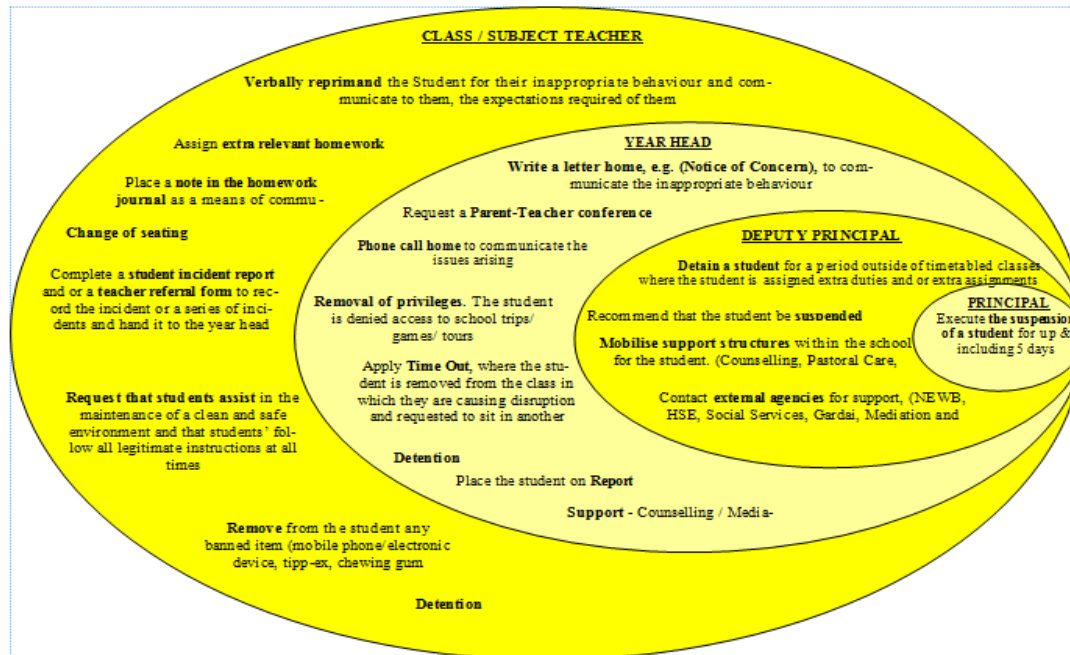
The school's response to inappropriate behaviour is communicated at paragraph 3.7 of this policy

When after-school detention is used as a sanction, parents will have 24-hour notice of the detention.

#### ***4.4 Inappropriate sanctions include:***

- physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment: physical chastisement of a student is illegal under section 24 of the *Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997*
- ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a student's self confidence
- public or private humiliation
- applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small-group wrongdoing
- leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. a corridor) while in the care of the school
- persistent isolation of, or ignoring, a student in class
- sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way: the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 require that schools do not discriminate in the use of sanctions.

### 4.5 Sanctions used in Sacred Heart & Clarification of Roles

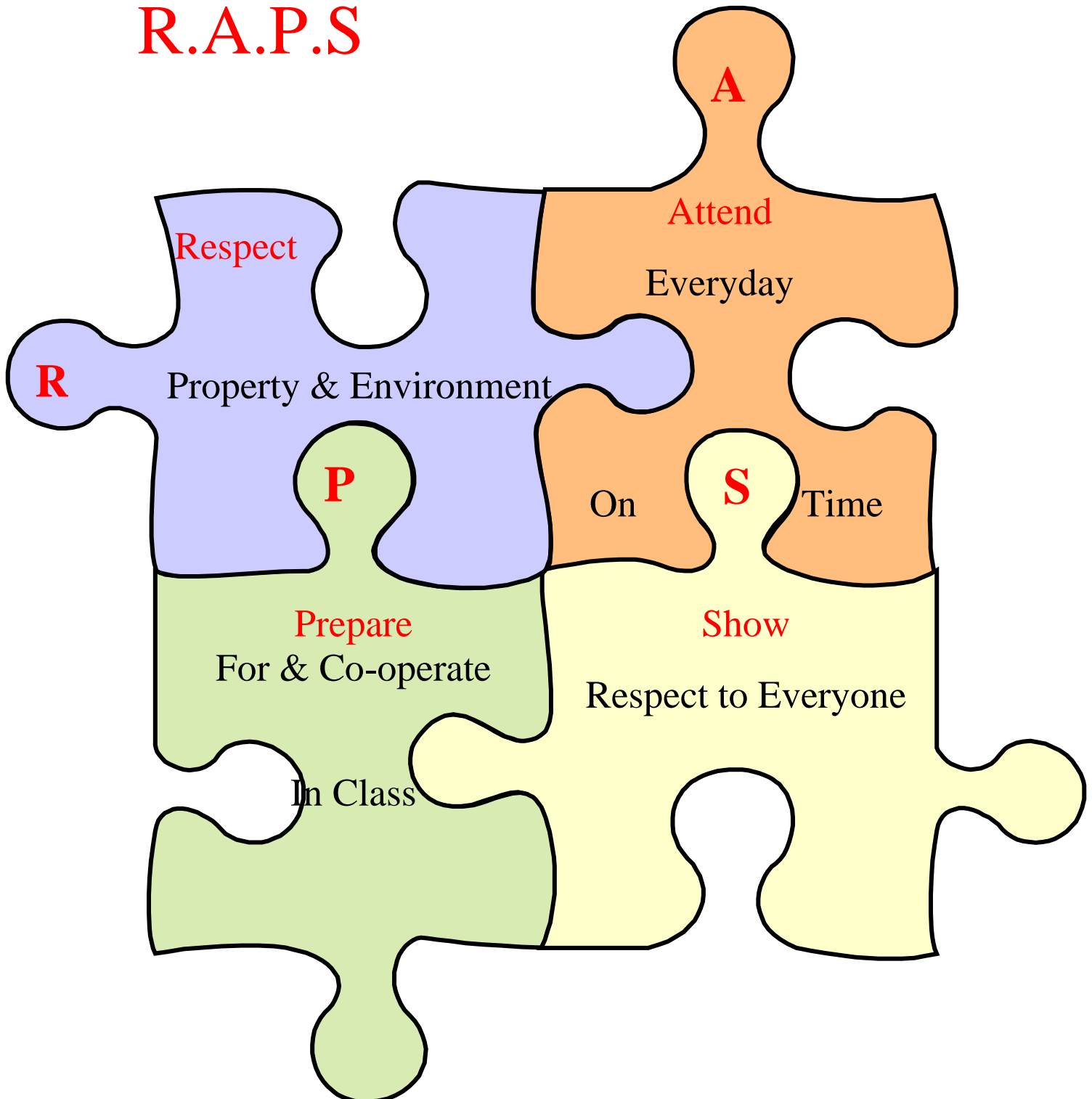


**4.6 School / Classroom Expectations**

**Code of Behaviour**

**Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty**

**R.A.P.S**



# Expectations and Rationale

**“SUCCESS IS THE SUM OF SMALL EFFORTS – REPEATED DAY IN AND DAY OUT.” – ROBERT COLLIER**

Full School Uniform must be worn at all times, as outlined. No additional garments are permitted

By wearing the correct school uniform every day in school, you are practicing responsibility and learning that personal presentation can make you feel more confident

Only permitted jewelry can be worn. This includes a watch and one ear stud for Junior Cycle. Senior Cycle students are permitted to have one small discreet facial piercing. Nose rings are not permitted for any year group, instead, a nose stud can be worn in Senior Cycle. Nose piercings are permitted for religious reasons. Piercings must be removed for practical subjects.

By following these expectations, you are setting high standards for yourself which can help the student through their working lives and helps prepare them for the working world as similar high standards will be expected in employment.

The use of all electronic recording devices are prohibited at all times. Such devices are required to be turned off and out of sight at all times. Refusal to do so may result in confiscation of the device by the Deputy Principal and/or other staff.

Such items are a source of distraction for the student and their peers, and may negatively affect the quality of learning and teaching. Having a break from screens is important in a young person's development, as well as supporting their wellbeing.



## 5 Suspension Policy

### 5.1 Purpose of Suspension

The purpose of suspending a student from school is to provide the student with time for reflection, to emphasise the seriousness of specific misbehaviours and to give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour.

### 5.2 Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management has delegated to the Principal, the authority to suspend, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour, student(s) up to and including 3 days, and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, the authority to suspend student(s) up to and including 5 days. Thereafter the Board of Management has the authority to impose a suspension of duration greater than 5 days and up to and no more than 10 consecutive school days.

### 5.3 The Grounds for Suspension

Suspension will normally be imposed for a very serious offence, as defined in this policy. A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Further to this, where in the opinion of the Principal or Acting Principal, detentions are inadequate disciplinary responses to serious offences, or in the instance of repeated serious offences, the sanction of suspension may also be imposed. Such incidences may involve:

- A threat to the safety of others
- Behaviour which falls within the definition of bullying contained in the School's anti-bullying procedures
- Serious disruption of teaching and learning and the orderly atmosphere of the school
- Deliberate damage to or theft of property
- Misuse of technology
- Substance abuse (see page 5 Section 3.2)
- Persistent breaches of the Code of Behaviour which have not been rectified by the normal school interventions.
- Truancy
- Sharing toilet cubicles.
- **(This list is not exhaustive)**

Other than in the case of immediate suspension (see below), before a suspension is imposed, the Principal will have considered the seriousness and context of the behaviour, the impact of the behaviour on the other members of the school community, the interventions that have already been implemented with the student involved (where relevant) and the likely impact of the suspension on the particular student.

#### ***5.4 Suspension Procedures.***

The alleged incident will be investigated by the Deputy Principal or the investigating teacher(s) to determine the facts of the situation. This may involve an interview with the student(s) in question and any witnesses to the incident.

Following the report from this investigation, should the Principal decide that it is appropriate to suspend a student, the following procedure will be implemented.

Before the suspension is imposed, the student and his / her parents will be contacted and the matter will be explained to them. Every effort will be made to request and to facilitate the student / parents / guardians to meet with the Principal and/or Acting Principal, Deputy Principal and Year Head at a specified time acceptable to all parties, so as to afford them a full opportunity to respond to the disciplinary action being considered.

Confirmation in writing will be given to the student / parents / guardians that suspension has been imposed, the date from which such a decision takes effect and the period of the suspension. Parents / guardians will be fully informed of their right to appeal the decision to suspend to the Board of Management within 5 working days.

#### ***5.5 Immediate Suspension***

Without prejudice to the foregoing, where the Principal or Acting Principal has been notified of an alleged serious offence and where immediate suspension is deemed necessary for Health and Safety reasons, the Principal, following a preliminary investigation and without prior notice to the students / parents / guardians, may suspend a student with immediate effect for such a period as is deemed appropriate, pending a full investigation of the alleged offence.

Official notice of such suspension will be confirmed in writing to the student / guardians / parents and the period of the suspension indicated.

Following the imposition of a suspension, the Principal will notify the Board of Management of the suspension (under Section 21(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.) Where a student is suspended for a period of not less than six days, the Principal will inform TUSLA by in writing via periodic reports.

Following a period of suspension, the student, accompanied by her parent(s) / guardian(s), is required to present herself to the Principal or Deputy Principal on returning to the school, before going to any class. At this meeting the Principal / Deputy Principal will review the case, and decide what structures are required to support the student in returning to school and in addressing the behaviour which led to the suspension.

### ***5.6 Appeals of suspension***

A suspension imposed by the Principal can be appealed to the Board of Management as follows:

- An appeal should be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Management within 5 school days of the imposition of the suspension and should set out the parent(s) / Guardian(s)' case against the suspension.
- At its next meeting, the Board will nominate two members, neither of whom should have any involvement in the case, to investigate the issue and report back to the Board with its findings and recommendations.
- If this investigation recommends that the Board remove the suspension, the record of the suspension will be removed from the student's file. If the investigation approves the suspension then the suspension will stand.
- There is no further right to appeal unless the student's cumulative suspensions in any one year exceed 20 days, in which case there is a right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. The Principal must inform the parents and TUSLA if this 20 day limit has been reached.

### ***5.7 Review***

The Board will monitor the frequency of the use of suspension as a disciplinary measure and will regularly review the procedures to ensure that it is being used fairly and appropriately, and in the best interests of the entire school community.

## **6 Expulsion Policy**

Only the Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. This authority may not be delegated.

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step and will only be taken by the Board in extreme cases or as a last resort after interventions have failed as follows:

- Where there is significant and continuing disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- Continued presence of the student in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the pupil's own safety and well-being.
- Continued presence of the student in school constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety and well-being of others.
- Where the student is uncontrollable and is not amenable to any form of school authority.
- In cases of specific misbehaviour such as
  - Actual violence or physical assault.
  - Supplying illegal / mood altering substances.
  - Sexual assault.
  - Deliberate serious damage to property.
  - Serious misuse of technology.



Other than in exceptional circumstances, before considering expulsion, the school will have taken significant steps to address the student's behaviour. These steps may include:

- Meeting with parents and the student to endeavour to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- Ensuring that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, should it persist.
- Ensuring that other possible options have been given a fair trial to bring about an improvement in behaviour through an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP).
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

However there may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence or where a particular issue arises. Due process and fair procedures will be followed in all cases and the principles of natural justice will apply.

### ***6.1 Procedure for expulsion***

The Principal will ensure that there is a thorough investigation of the incident. The student may be suspended from school while this investigation is taking place, if this is deemed necessary, in accordance with suspension policy.

Where the student has already reached the age of 18, she shall have the same rights of response and attendance at the hearing etc. as her parents would if she was under 18.

The Principal will inform the student and the parents, in writing, of the details of the alleged misbehaviour and the possibility that it could result in expulsion.

As part of the Principal's investigation, the Principal will meet with the student and the parents and provide them with an opportunity to give a response to the allegations etc. as well as to make any observations or submissions about the nature of the alleged wrongdoing or any mitigating factors. At least five working days prior to this meeting, the parents of the student (or the student herself if she is over 18) will be provided with a copy of all statements (redacted or anonymised as necessary), CCTV footage or other forms of evidence that the Principal will be providing to the Board as part of their investigation. In certain limited circumstances, the Principal may not be able to provide copies of the statements; in such cases, a summary of the evidence contained therein may be provided instead.

The Principal will then draft a detailed report of the investigation setting out the results of the investigation and the recommendations for sanction (including, if it is deemed appropriate, a recommendation that the student be expelled) and the reasons for this recommendation. The Principal will provide a copy of the report to the parents /guardians and student and to the Board of Management at least 5 working days before the Board of Management hearing.

The parents will be given advance notice of the date of the Board of Management hearing and will be invited to attend. They will also be informed that they may make a written and oral submission to the Board. The written submission may be made in advance.

## ***6.2 The Board of Management Hearing***

The Board will ensure impartiality and no Board member who has had any involvement in the circumstances of the case will take part in the hearing.

At the hearing, the Principal and the parents/guardians, or a student who is eighteen years or over, will put their case to the Board in each other's presence.

Parents may wish to be accompanied at such hearings and the Board will facilitate this. There is no right to legal representation in this process.

After the hearing, and not in the presence of the Principal or the parents/guardians / student, the Board of Management will consider if the expulsion is appropriate in light of the following factors:

- The nature, scale and persistence of the behaviour in question
- The effect of the behaviour on the school community (staff and students)
- The previous behaviour and conduct of the pupil
- Any contrition or attempts by the pupil to reform their behaviour
- Attempts (short of expulsion) made by the Principal and staff to divert, correct or check the behaviour and the effectiveness of those attempts
- The duty of the school to provide an education for its students and whether the continued enrolment of the student affects or limits the Board's ability to discharge this duty.
- The duty of care owed by the school to its employees, pupils and to visitors to the school and whether the continued enrolment of the student affects or limits the Board's ability to meet this duty of care.

Based on the foregoing considerations, any submissions from the parents and the Principal's Report, the Board then makes a decision as to whether or not to exclude the Student.

## ***6.3 Following the Board Decision***

Where the student and her parents / guardians attend the meeting with the Board, and the Board, having heard the student and her parent / guardian, form the view that it is necessary and proper to impose the sanction of expulsion, the Board, before making the decision to expel the student, will notify, in writing, the Educational Welfare Officer of its opinion and the reasons therefore, in accordance with Section 24(1) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

Where the student / parents / guardians do not attend the meeting:

If the student or her parent / guardian fail to attend the meeting with the Board and fail to provide a reasonable explanation for not doing so, the Board will determine the matter in their absence. Before making a decision to expel the

student, the Board will notify, in writing, the Educational Welfare Officer of its opinion and the reasons therefore, in accordance with Section 24(1) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

Where it is decided to impose the sanction of expulsion, the student and her parent / guardian will be informed by letter by the Board that the sanction of expulsion has been imposed and the date from which the decision will take effect. The student will not be expelled from the school before the passing of 20 school days following the receipt by the Education Welfare Officer of the notification. In the interim, the Board may, in accordance with section 5 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, suspend the student or make other arrangements to ensure that ‘good order and discipline are maintained in the school’.

#### ***6.4 Involvement of the Education Welfare Officer***

Within this twenty-day period, the Education Welfare Officer will convene meetings with relevant parties to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education.

While these negotiations are taking place, and before the expulsion is finalised, the Board may consider it necessary to continue the student’s suspension from school. This task may be delegated to the Principal or Chairperson.

After the twenty days has elapsed, where the Board remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the decision will be formally confirmed to the parents/guardians and the student in a registered letter signed by the Chairperson and the Principal.

The parents/guardians will be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the appropriate form. This appeal is made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills and must be made within 42 days of the date of the final decision to expel the student.

Appeals to the Secretary General must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeals Application form (a copy of which can be obtained from the school or from the Appeals Administration Unit of the Department of Education and Skills) and addressed, by signed letter, fax or e-mail to the Appeals Administration Unit of the DES. The appellant should at the same time notify the school of the appeals or, alternatively, send a copy of the completed Application Forms to the school.

#### ***6.5 Review***

The code will be reviewed at regular intervals by school management in conjunction with the Board of Management. In conducting this review, these teams will seek the views of the Student Council and the Teaching staff in the school. Cognisance will be taken of the level and pattern of suspensions and detentions enforced and the effectiveness of these measures. Attention will also focus on the positive strategies and their effectiveness.

**6.6 Major Review**

It is proposed to hold a major review of this code within 5 years.

**Date of Adoption by Board of Management:**

**Signature of Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_



## 8 Appendix 2 – Student Referral Form

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Referral \_\_\_\_\_

Year Head Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Reason for Referral

Reason (tick one or more)	Possible indicators (circle indicator(s) that may apply)
Attendance	Number of days or part-days absent; late for class; any patterns forming; other (please specify)
Educational	test results, reading, spelling, organisation, handwriting, homework, numeracy, verbal V written performance, time management, other (please specify)
Social/Emotional	energy levels, concentration, changes in demeanour, drop in grades or quality of work, change in appearance, body scarring, hygiene issues, other (please specify)
Behaviour	More aggressive; loud; distracted and/or distracting; more inhibited; quiet; subdued; isolated; zoning out; disruptive to other students or teachers; other (please specify)
Other	

**Brief outline of specific areas of concern based on observation, disclosure, evidence, P/T meeting....**

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**Strategies put in place to support the student/ any interventions to date**

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Teacher's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow up/Action by Year Head**

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## Appendix 3 - Concerned About Behaviour Letter

Date

Dear Parent,

I wish to let you know that the behaviour of (Student's Name) has been causing some concern of late. I have received referrals from Teacher X, Y and Z concerning her (name behaviour).

(Student's Name) has many good qualities and has been doing very well in (state some positive areas).

I think that a brief meeting between you, (Student's Name) and I would help us resolve this without too much difficulty. Could you please call me to make an appointment at your convenience? The following times are most suitable for me:

Day:                      time

Day:                      time

Day:                      time

I'd like to thank you for your ongoing support in this matter

Yours sincerely

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(Year Head)

## 9 Appendix 4 -Notice of Concern 1.

### Notice of Concern 1.

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to inform you that \_\_\_\_\_

Tick where appropriate

Home Work	
Class Work	
Participation in Class	
Punctuality for Classes	
Wearing of the School Uniform	
Attendance	
Conduct and Behaviour	

Are/is unsatisfactory.

We would be grateful if the above issue(s) could be addressed so that immediate improvements can be made.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ (Year Head.)

-----Cut Here-----

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### Notice of Concern 1.

**Please acknowledge receipt of this letter by returning it to the above teacher.**

**I/We have received the above Notice of Concern 1. dated,**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Pupil:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_



## **10 Appendix 5 - Improved Behaviour Letter**

Date

Dear Parent,

I am pleased to inform you that (student's Name) has improved greatly since we spoke last. The number of incidents of (state behaviour) has been greatly reduced and I have had positive reports from Mr X, Ms Y and Ms Z.

I'd like to thank you for your ongoing support in this matter

Yours sincerely

---

(Year Head)

## 11 Appendix 6 -Student Progress Report

Can all subject Teachers of the following student please make a comment in the comments section on any aspect of this student's behaviour/performance.

Student on Review \_\_\_\_\_

Subject	Comments	Signature of Teacher.
Maths		
Gaeilge		
English		

## 12 Appendix 7a - Individual Behaviour Plan

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Behaviour Target	
What student already does well:	
Required behaviour to meet target	
Suggested Strategies:	
Evidence of improvement:	
Rewards	Sanctions
Teacher comments:	

TO BE SIGNED BY

PUPIL \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT \_\_\_\_\_

TUTOR \_\_\_\_\_

HEAD OF YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

**13 Appendix 7b -Sample Individual Behaviour Plan**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Behaviour Target</b> To desist from “talking out of turn in class” as several teachers have stated that the constant interruptions are frustrating them in keeping the whole class on task.	
<b>What student already does well:</b> Student always apologises when reprimanded. Student generally makes some effort with her work.	
<b>Required behaviour from student to meet target</b> When she wishes to contribute, she must raise her hand first and then wait for permission to speak. During ‘whole class teaching time’, she must avoid talking to her classmates. She must respond by being quiet when the agreed signal is given by the teacher	
<b>Suggested Strategies:</b> Have a brief 1 to 1 discussion with student to agree on plan Be proactive in seeking student’s engagement in class Use non-verbal signals to discourage Use proximity control If she refuses to co-operate remain calm Privately discuss progress (or lack of)	
<b>Evidence of improvement:</b> Number of class interruptions will be reduced. This will be recorded in Teacher’s Comments below.	
<b>Rewards</b> Non verbal, spoken and written praise Class tutor and year head will be told Parents told by phone Surprises	<b>Sanctions</b> Verbal warning Repeat verbal warning Use in-class time out Send student to Teacher X
<b>Teacher comments:</b>	

TO BE SIGNED BY

PUPIL \_\_\_\_\_ TUTOR \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT \_\_\_\_\_ HEAD OF YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

## **14 Appendix 8 - Some Sample Rewards**

### Individual

- Affirmation (appropriately given)
- Allocate leadership role
- Informing other teachers (e.g. class tutor/year head)
- Note in Journal
- Each letter home
- School Report
- Phone call home to parents to communicate improvements.

### Whole class

- Display work
- Affirmation announcement at assembly
- Homework off
- Extracurricular trip
- Celebrations
- Inclusion in school newsletters or web site

## 15 Appendix 9- Éacht



Dear

I would like to take this opportunity to formally acknowledge the excellent work of your daughter\_\_\_\_\_ at Sacred Heart Secondary School. This has been particularly evident in the following area(s).

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Yours sincerely,

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## 16 Appendix 10 - Attendance Report

The student on report is required to present this report card to each teacher at the beginning of each class and ask the teacher to mark and sign the card on completion of the class.

Student Name:
Date:

Time	Write "Present" if student presents this report at the beginning of class.	<i>Teachers Initials</i>
Class 1		
Class 2		
Class 3		
Break		
Class 4		
Class 5		
Class 6		
Lunch		
Class 7		
Class 8		
Class 9		

Signature of Pupil:
Signature of Year Head/Deputy Principal:

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