



# Code of Behaviour 2019

Ramsgrange Community School is a welcoming, open and inclusive school. Our aim is to develop each of our students as a whole person by promoting an atmosphere of respect, honesty, and fairness in which all in the school community can achieve their full potential.

**Ramsgrange  
Community  
School**

**Respect  
Community  
Success**

**Sisters of St. Louis & WWETB.**

# Introduction

**This document is the culmination of much work between Parents, Students, Teachers, School Management and the Board of Management. This collective approach has led to what we feel is a fair, reasonable and transparent behaviour system which expresses our shared values for Ramsgrange Community School.**

**A key element within this policy is the active acknowledgement of positive efforts and actions by our students in all facets of their daily school and community lives. We believe our focus and culture must continue to move towards rewarding the good work and behaviour that permeates throughout our daily school lives.**

**However, this must be balanced with a clear procedure for dealing with misbehaviour that affects the quality of student life and the quality of teaching and learning in our school. This policy aims to reach that balance between positive reinforcement and managing negative behaviour. Restorative Practice will form the basis of managing and improving negative behaviour and will be used in the first instance for resolving issues.**

**Please do not hesitate to contact the school should you wish to discuss any element of this policy.**

## Context

***The Code of Behaviour supports our Mission Statement and School Vision (Respect, Community & Success) and is prepared in line with the NEWB Guidelines and all relevant statutory legislation.***

This Code should be read in conjunction with;

- The School's Mission Statement (Cover Page)
- Acceptable Use Policy (2016)
- Admissions Policy (2018)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (2018)
- Assessment and Change of Level Policy (2015)
- Children First – Child Protection April 2018
- Critical Incident
- Health & Safety 2015
- Health & Safety Policy Statement
- Homework Policy (2010)
- Promotion of Equal Treatment – Gay & Lesbian Teachers 2009

- Relationship & Sexuality Education Policy 2015
- School Tours/Trips & Extracurricular Sporting Activities (2016)
- Subject Choice Policy May 2017
- Substance Use Policy
- Uniform Policy (2014)

and any other relevant policies, all of which can be found on the school's website

Schools are complex organisations, whose specific purposes are teaching and learning, leading to personal and social development. Like all organisations, schools need accepted rules of procedure and codes of behaviour in order to operate efficiently and to ensure a positive learning atmosphere conducive to the realisation of their specific purposes.

The values on which our Codes of Behaviour is based are those of mutual respect, fairness, equity, self-discipline and social responsibility. They emanate from recognition of the need to protect majority rights and to ensure the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where effective teaching and learning can take place.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between pupils and the need to seek to accommodate these differences.

Schools' activities take place in classrooms, practical workshops and laboratories, formal and informal playing areas, in the sports hall and in various out of school areas.

Unacceptable behaviour can arise in any of these areas. It is important that the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in all of these areas are known and understood so that affirmation can be given, and sanctions can be applied. Sanctions should be made clear and should be fairly and consistently applied following the use of Restorative Practice.

**Ramsgrange Community School places greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results.**

## **Behaviour System Structures and Procedures**

It is Ramsgrange Community School’s aim to foster a positive attitude to personal responsibility and behaviour. Our primary goal is to encourage pupils to consider what they should do as part of their moral and ethical development. There are a range of means in which positive behaviour and achievement both within and beyond the classroom are recognised. These include assembly, individual classes, awards nights etc.

In the daily routine of school, pupils can achieve high standards for themselves and make a positive contribution to the community in a variety of ways.

### **Some examples are:**

- Assisting new pupils or any visitors to the school.
- Involvement in Meitheal, Student Council and Prefect system.
- Being punctual to class and activities.
- Ensuring all equipment is brought to class.
- Completing homework to the best of their ability.
- Valuing and respecting yourself and other people.

The following are the Core School Rules as agreed by students, teachers and parents. Students will be taught the following core school rules regularly throughout the school year at Tutor Meetings and at Year Group Assemblies:

<b>Core Rule</b>	<b>This means:</b>	<b>Because:</b>
<b>Attend school regularly</b>	✓ I come in every day in full uniform unless I have a valid reason because...	<i>I will learn more and be prepared better for exams and my career.</i>
	✓ I must bring in a note from my parents/guardians or a doctor’s cert for each day I miss because...	<i>It is the law to explain why I was absent, and the school must record why I wasn’t in.</i>
	✓ I don’t leave school without permission because...	<i>My safety is important</i>
<b>Be on time for each class</b>	✓ I arrive to school early in the morning and after lunch because...	<i>I disrupt the teacher and other students if I am late.</i>
	✓ I move quickly between classes and don’t delay because...	<i>Being on time is a good quality to have.</i>
	✓ I must access the toilet facilities and use my locker before 9am and during break times only because...	<i>I must learn to manage myself, so I am not disrupting the teaching and learning.</i>
<b>Behave</b>	✓ I move quickly between classes and don’t delay because...	<i>Being on time is a good quality to have.</i>
	✓ I walk on the left-hand side of	<i>This helps the whole school</i>

<b>Appropriately on the Corridor</b>	the corridors and follow any one-way systems because...	<i>community move more easily and with fewer accidents.</i>
	✓ I move quietly between classes because...	<i>I disrupt the teaching and learning occurring in classrooms if I am too loud</i>
<b>Follow the classroom routine</b>	✓ I may only enter the classroom with the teacher's permission because...	<i>It helps to ensure the safety of all students.</i>
	✓ I sit in the seat assigned to me because...	<i>Routine helps me to focus</i>
	✓ I take out my class materials including school journal because...	<i>Being organised makes learning easier</i>
<b>Behave Appropriately in Class</b>	✓ I let others learn without distraction because...	<i>Everyone has a right to learn.</i>
	✓ I use 'One voice, Hands up & Listen' because...	<i>It makes it easy to participate in class.</i>
	✓ Using a mobile phone without the teacher's permission is not allowed because.....	<i>We learn better in environments that are safe and free from distractions.</i>
<b>Use my School Journal properly</b>	✓ I keep my school journal neat and record my classwork and homework in it because...	<i>It helps me to remember my homework and helps with revision and study.</i>
	✓ I get it signed each week at home or when asked to because...	<i>Parents/Guardians can see how well I am doing, and it has space for notes.</i>
	✓ I put the journal on the desk and give it to a teacher when asked because...	<i>Searching in my bag for it can be distracting and wastes time.</i>
	✓ I must not leave a lesson without permission from my teacher and a note in my school journal because...	<i>This helps to ensure students are outside classrooms for valid reasons and are safe.</i>

## Rewarding good behaviour

### What rewards can teachers use?

- Give praise.
- Write a positive note in the journal.
- Give Positive points. (See appendix 4)
- Show students work/ project to the rest of the class.
- Be allowed to start their homework early on in the class.
- Make student(s) a cup of tea
- Allow student(s) to attend interesting/ relevant workshops
- Senior students may use positive stamps as credit towards leadership positions or privileges in the school.

## **Role of Key Personnel in our Code of Behaviour**

### **The Subject Teacher**

In order to elicit co-operation and effort from the students, praise and commendation both written and verbal are vital given in an effort to raise each student's self-esteem and confidence.

Subject Teachers aim to build a positive and vibrant work ethic in the classroom. Their approach to classroom management will be firm, fair, inclusive and consistent.

***Achievements and positive contributions of students can be recognised in a variety of ways:***

- Words of praise and encouragement.
- Note to parents – placed in the student's journal.
- Certificate of Achievement.
- Extra responsibility given.
- A display of their work.
- Inform Class Tutor/Year Head who will reinforce achievement.
- Nomination for awards.

***In the event of the non-co-operation of a student, the following procedures apply:***

Reason with the student while making sure that they understand the consequences of their actions for everyone involved. This can be achieved through Restorative Practice questioning.

In the event of negative behaviour occurring in class, subject teachers have a range of sanctions available to them after they have tried to solve the issue using Restorative Practice. **These include:**

- Verbal reprimand
- Teacher discusses behaviour with the student one-to-one.
- Loss of privileges at the discretion of the event organiser.
- Moving the pupil to a different location within the class
- Issue Incident Report to the Year Head.
- Possible referral to Student Support Team
- Note sent to parents in Student Journal.
- Referral to Class Tutor or Year Head.
- Referral to Deputy Principal in the case of serious or gross misbehaviour.

This list is not exhaustive. In the event of a behaviour incident occurring, which, in the view of the class teacher is severe enough to require further sanctioning, the matter must be referred to the relevant Class Tutor and, if necessary, the Year Head or Deputy Principal.

***Any sign of sustained improvement needs to be met with approval.***

### **The Class Tutor**

**On receipt of a referral (positive or negative) about a pupil and having consulted in detail with the Subject Teacher, the Class Tutor may take a form of the following action:**

- Meet pupil, gather facts.
- Identify the source of the problem.
- Consult with others
- Try to resolve the issue using Restorative Practice.
- Get agreement to work in partnership to bring about the desired change.
- Help work out strategies for change.
- Small signs of improvement need to be met with approval.
- Request Parent Teacher meeting through the Year Head.
- Issue Incident Report

***Forms of Affirmation may include:***

- Highlighting positive contributions of class to members of the school community through use of Notice Boards, Assembly, School's social media.
- Letter of Achievement, Certificates of Attendance/Punctuality.
- Pointing out improvements no matter how small.
- Giving responsibility within their area of ability.

***Following the use of Restorative Practice the following forms of Sanction may include:***

- Give negative points. (See appendix 4)
- Refer to Year Head for Formal School Detention.
- Refer to Year Head for placement of pupil on report.
- Referral to Deputy Principal

### **The Year Head**

**On receipt of a referral (positive or negative) on a pupil from a member of staff the Year Head may adopt a form of the following course of action:**

***Forms of affirmation may include:***

- Recognition of achievements at Year Group Assembly.

- Rewards.
- Nomination for School Awards.
- Give positive points. (See appendix 4)

***Following the use of Restorative Practice the following forms of Sanction may include:***

- Consultation/meeting with Class Teacher/Deputy Principal.
- Counsel/Warn/Impose sanction/Note in Journal.
- Closely follow and monitor the student's behaviour by placing the pupil on Report <sup>1</sup>(Report Notification sent to parents).
- Request Parent-Teacher meeting.
- Refer for counselling.
- Place pupil on Formal school detention<sup>2</sup>.
- Give negative points. (See appendix 4)

## **The Deputy Principal**

***Forms of Sanction may include:***

- Placing pupil on formal school detention.
- Placing pupil on Report.
- Withdrawal of pupil from class.
- Referral to the Student Support Team
- Referral of serious cases to Principal.
- Request a Parent-Deputy Principal Meeting.
- Make a recommendation to the Principal that a suspension is warranted.

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**<sup>1</sup> REPORT** Year Heads may issue a Report Card to pupils as a means of monitoring their performance in class. These run for one week and are then reviewed. Pupils must present the Report Card to each teacher at the beginning of each class. The teacher will make a comment on the pupil's participation at the end of the class. The Report card must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the Year Head by 9:00 am on each day.

The issuing of a Report Card is seen as a sanction in itself on the pupil's behaviour. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to proceed to another phase of the disciplinary structure.

**<sup>2</sup> DETENTION** Year Heads, the Deputy Principal and the Principal may issue a detention. Detention occurs on Thursday from 4.00 – 5.30 p.m. Pupils are required to attend the next available detention. Work will be set and must be completed.

Records are maintained in relation to behavioural offences that occur. This information may be used in meetings with parents / guardians, or as evidence in the event of further sanctions being deemed necessary.



## **The Positive Behaviour Strategy Team (PBST)**

The Positive Behaviour Strategy Team consists of the Deputy Principal, the Behaviour for Learning Teacher and 2 teachers nominated and elected by teaching staff at the beginning of each academic year.

### ***Forms of Sanction may include:***

- Placing pupil on Detention.
- Placing pupil on Report.
- Referral for counselling and/or assessment.
- Draft a 'Behavioural Plan' and implement it with the student.
- Request a Parent-PBST Meeting.
- Agreeing a modified timetable arrangement for the student.

## **The Principal**

### **Suspension (Appendix 2 - Suspension Policy)**

The Principal has the authority to impose suspensions, subject to the parents' right of appeal to the Board of Management against the decision.

The decision to suspend a student will be taken only if a serious breach of discipline has occurred and/or all other disciplinary measures have failed.

### **Expulsion (Appendix 3 - Expulsion Policy)**

A pupil may be recommended for expulsion by the Principal to the Board of Management. In the event of a pupil being recommended for expulsion the parents/guardians, or the pupil themselves, if they are 18 years of age or over will be provided with the right of appeal as specified in Section 29 of The Education Act 1998.

Indefinite suspension or expulsion are procedures which are subject to review by the Board of Management.

## **Concluding Points**

This Code of Behaviour is available on the school's website.

It is a requirement of entry that parents/guardians sign their acceptance of the Code of Behaviour in advance of their daughters/sons being accepted into the school.

Ramsgrange Community School values the role played by the Parents Association and the Code of Behaviour may be commented on by the committee of the Parents Association and their views passed on to the Principal. Parents/Guardians wishing to comment on the Code of Behaviour should do so through the Parents Association Committee members or the Principal.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Definitions

#### 1. Misdemeanours:

Misdemeanours include isolated minor breaches of school regulations and repeated minor infringements of rules related to schoolwork. Restorative practice can be used to resolve these issues. Sanctions here include verbal reprimand, detention, contacting home etc.

#### 2. Continuous Misdemeanours:

These include repeated minor breaches of school regulations and repeated minor infringements of rules related to schoolwork and homework. Sanctions here include reporting the student to the Principal or Deputy Principal, placing the student on report, informing parents, negative points, loss of privileges, formal school detention, internal suspension etc.

#### 3. Serious Breaches and Gross Misbehaviour

These could include wilful harm to any person or property and include insulting behaviour, sexual harassment, bullying and theft.

Smoking and vaping is also included under this heading.

It also includes <sup>3</sup>

- serious assault (physical fights) by students on another person,
- supply, possession and use of alcohol or illegal/legal drugs or any non-prescription mind altering substance,
- Leaving the school grounds without permission.
- Directed offensive language,
- possession of pornography and/ or sending pornography or explicit images to another student.
- possession of weapons,
- serious damage to property,
- misuse of mobile phones or Internet<sup>4</sup>,
- Smoking,
- any misbehaviour of a similar kind.

As part of such disciplinary action the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a student or students where it considers the actions to warrant such sanctions.

## **Appendix 2: Suspension Policy**

Suspension is described as necessitating the student to absent themselves from Ramsgrange Community School for a specified limited period of school days. During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in school.

Suspension is designed to address student's behaviour. Consequently any period of suspension:

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<sup>3</sup> **SPOT CHECKS:** As part of a preventative policy in relation to the possession of Alcohol and Illegal Drugs or other dangerous items the school authorities may, from time to time, carry out spot checks of bags and/or lockers in the presence of the pupils' concerned.

<sup>4</sup> Circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with school activities including but not limited to material in relation to staff and students where such circulation undermines, humiliates or causes damage to another person is considered a serious breach of school discipline and may result in disciplinary action.

- a. enables RCS to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents/guardians.
- b. gives RCS staff an opportunity to plan and arrange interventions.
- c. impresses on parents/guardians the seriousness of behaviour.

### **Grounds for suspension:**

Suspension is utilised as a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- a. the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- b. the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- c. the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

***A single incident of serious misconduct or gross misbehaviour may be grounds for suspension.***

### **Factors considered prior to suspension.**

- a. The nature, seriousness and persistency of the behaviour.
- b. The context of the behaviour.
- c. The impact of the behaviour on other students and staff.
- d. The effect on the quality of teaching and learning in the class group of the student concerned.
- e. The interventions tried to date, including internal and external supports and agencies.
- f. The possible impact of suspension.
- g. Whether the suspension is an appropriate response to the behaviour.

### **Forms of suspension**

#### **IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION**

In certain exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students or staff of the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still be applied.

#### **SUSPENSION DURING STATE EXAMINATIONS**

This sanction will be approved by the Board of Management and will only be used where there is:

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

## **ROLLING SUSPENSION**

A student will not be suspended again shortly after they return to school unless:

- a. They engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension and
- b. Fair procedures are observed in full and
- c. The standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any student.

## **'AUTOMATIC' SUSPENSION**

The Board of Management of Ramsgrange Community School has decided that as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students that those named behaviours in 'Appendix 1 under Gross misbehaviour' incur suspension as a sanction. The decision to impose suspension for these named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.

### **Procedures in respect of suspension**

Ramsgrange community school is committed to following fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student in line with all relevant legislation. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious breaches or gross misbehaviour that could warrant a suspension, the school will:

1. Inform the student and their parents about the serious breach or gross misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it may result in suspension. Parents/guardians may be informed by phone and/or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.
2. Parents and students will be given the opportunity to respond by phone, in writing or by attending a meeting whichever is deemed appropriate.

### **Procedures in respect of immediate suspension**

In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected. The school must have regard to its duty of care for the student. In no circumstances will a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

### **Implementing a suspension**

The Principal will notify the parents 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 (for example, parents might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998*, section 29).

The letter will be clear and easy to understand.

### **Recording a suspension**

Formal written records will be kept of:

1. the investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
2. the decision-making process
3. the decision and the rationale for the decision
4. the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

### **Reporting a suspension**

1. The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.
2. The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (*Education (Welfare) Act, 2000*, section 21(4)(a)).

### **Authority to suspend and the period of suspension**

1. The Board of Management of Ramsgrange Community School has delegated to the Principal, the authority to suspend a student for a maximum of period of five school days at any one time.
2. A student will not normally be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances where following investigation the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective as outlined under 'grounds for suspension'. The

matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes.

However, a Board of Management may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions.

3. The Board of Management will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it.
4. The Board will 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 twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.
5. These provisions enable school authorities to give the student a reasonable time to reflect on their behaviour while avoiding undue loss of teaching time and loss of contact with the positive influences of school. They recognise the serious nature of the sanction of suspension and ensure that this seriousness is reflected in school procedures. The provisions mean that the Board of Management takes ultimate responsibility for sanctions of significant length, especially where such suspensions might reach twenty days in one school year and therefore might lead to an appeal.

### **Appeals**

1. Parents/guardians, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal the Principal's decision to suspend to the Board of Management of Ramsgrange Community School. In the event of an appeal of suspension the following will apply:
  - a. The Principal must be informed of the appeal of suspension in writing or verbally within 10 days of receipt of the letter of suspension.
  - b. The appeal will be placed on the agenda and heard at the next Board of Management Meeting.
  - c. The Principal outlines the reason(s) for suspension to the Board with the parent(s)/guardian(s) present.
  - d. The parent(s)/guardian(s) outline the reason(s) for the appeal with the Principal present.

- e. Both the Principal and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) may be questioned by the Chairperson, or by Board members, through the chair, regarding issues raised.
- f. The Principal and parent(s)/guardian(s) leave the Board meeting.
- g. The Principal and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) may be recalled by the Board, with the other party present, should any clarification be required by the Board.
- h. The Board informs the parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the Board's decision. This to be signed by the Chairperson.

In the event of the appeal being successful the suspension will be erased from the student's record.

1. **Section 29 Appeal:** Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, as amended by the *Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007*.

At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*, and will be given information about how to appeal.

### **Grounds for removing a suspension**

A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management decides to remove the suspension for any reason or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs that it be removed following an appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

### **Supports after a suspension ends**

A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to parents/guardians informing them of the suspension. The school will endeavour to help the suspended student take responsibility for catching up on work missed.

Once the period of suspension is complete a student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. A record of the behaviour and sanction imposed will be



maintained on the student's file. However, once the sanction has been completed the school expects the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Students will be readmitted to Ramsgrange Community School on a phased basis should this be considered necessary.

### **Review of use of suspension**

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension at regular intervals to ensure its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to that use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

## **Appendix 3: Expulsion Policy**

A student is expelled from Ramsgrange Community School when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*.

The Board of Management of Ramsgrange Community School has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice, that authority is reserved to the Board of Management and will not be delegated.

### **The grounds for expulsion**

RCS considers the expulsion of a student to be a very serious step, and one that will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

The school will take significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried while seeking the assistance of support agencies

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 safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, Ramsgrange Community School will have utilised a series of other interventions, and believe we have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

The Board of Management of Ramsgrange Community School has decided, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction. However, a general decision to impose expulsion for named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures.

1. Serious or malicious damage to school property
2. Supply, possession or use illegal/legal drugs
3. Serious physical assault or violence
4. Sexual assault

### **Expulsion for a first offence**

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include:

1. a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
2. actual violence or physical assault
3. supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
4. sexual assault.

### **Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student**

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction the Board of Management will undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a student.

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
2. The context of the behaviour.
3. The impact of the behaviour.
4. Any interventions tried to date.
5. Whether expulsion is an appropriate response.
6. The possible impact of expulsion.

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

Ramsgrange Community School is required by law to follow fair procedures as well as procedures prescribed under the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, when proposing to expel a student. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

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

The Board of Management of Ramsgrange Community School has decided that the above procedural steps at 2, 3 and 4 can be accomplished together in a single meeting, consistent with giving parents due notice (a minimum of 7 calendar days) of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for a Board hearing.

### **STEP 1      A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal**

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal will:

- a. inform the student and their parents, in writing, about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion
- b. give parents and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed. This will include a meeting with the Principal, parents, student and any other relevant personnel.

### **STEP 2      A recommendations to the Board of Management by the Principal.**

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- a. inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- b. ensure that parents have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- c. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parents
- d. notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing

- e. advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- f. ensure that parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

**STEP 3      Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal’s recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.**

The Board of Management will review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures. The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board’s deliberations

Where a Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student, it must hold a hearing. At the hearing, the Principal and the parents, or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their case to the Board in each other’s presence. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board will facilitate this, in line with best practice and Board of Management procedures.

After both sides have been heard, the Board will ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board’s deliberations.

**STEP 4      Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.**

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

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion. (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)*). The student will not be expelled from Ramsgrange Community School before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) receives this written notification (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)*).

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents are informed that the Board of Management will now inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

**STEP 5      Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.**

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student will be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- a. make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student,
- b. and anyone else who may be of assistance convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, section 24).

Pending these consultations about the student's continued education, the Board of Management may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of students is secured (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, s24(5)). The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. Suspension should only be considered where there is likelihood that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

## **STEP 6 Confirmation of the decision to expel.**

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel (this task cannot be delegated to the Chairperson and the Principal). Parents will be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.

Parents and the student shall be told about the right to appeal and supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

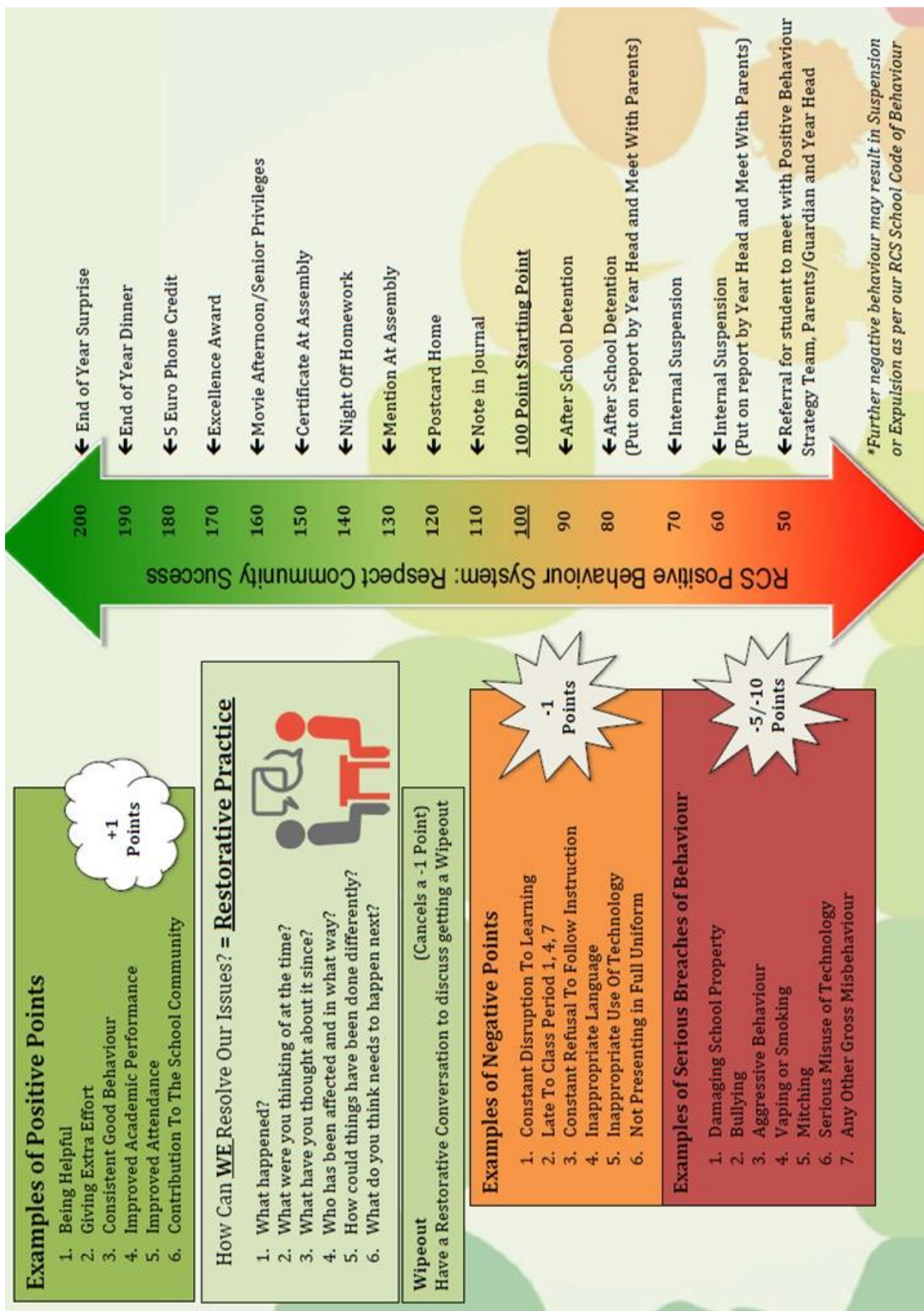
### **Appeals**

A parent, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (*Education Act 1998* section 29).

An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

### **Review of use of expulsion**

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion at regular intervals to ensure its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to that use of suspension is appropriate.



# Code of Behaviour



## Acceptance Form

**Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_

*I/We have read the Code of Behaviour of Ramsgrange Community School.*

*Any student who is enrolled at Ramsgrange Community School is subject to this Code of Behaviour. This is a condition of enrolment and is not dependent on the code being signed by the parent/guardian or the student.*

*School rules apply to all situations where students are in the care of staff.*

*I/WE accept the rules and procedures within the code of behaviour which enable the school to operate efficiently and to ensure a positive learning atmosphere.*

Parent/Guardian Name: (BLOCK CAPITALS): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent/Guardian Name: (BLOCK CAPITALS): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## School Contact Points

**Web site:** [www.ramsgrangecommunityschool.ie](http://www.ramsgrangecommunityschool.ie)

**Phone:** 05138211

**Postal:** Ramsgrange Community School  
Ramsgrange  
New Ross  
Co. Wexford

**Email:**

**Office:** [ramsgrange@eircom.net](mailto:ramsgrange@eircom.net)

**Principal:** [Rachel.oconnor@ramsgrangecommunityschool.ie](mailto:Rachel.oconnor@ramsgrangecommunityschool.ie)

**To contact the Board of Management address correspondence to:**

The Secretary,  
Board of Management,  
Ramsgrange Community School,  
Ramsgrange  
New Ross  
Co. Wexford.