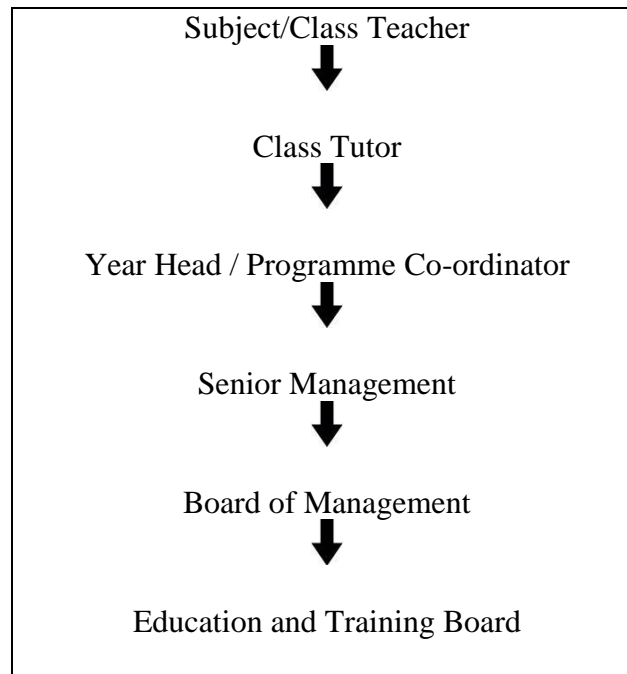


Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Donabate Community College

The Ladder of Referral



Additional Support Staff

- Guidance Counsellors
- Learning Support/Resource
- SNA Personnel
- Reference to “Care Team” is taken to include all or some of these staff

Roles and Responsibilities

<p><u>Role of Class/Subject Teacher</u> The teacher promotes a positive learning environment with mutual respect between teacher and students. They are responsible for class discipline and records punctuality, attendance and students' progress.</p>	<p><u>Rewards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal praise ● Note on VShare ● Commendation slip ● Postcards/Approved Positive Discipline initiatives ● Certificates ● Other 		<p><u>Supports and Supports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting and discussion with student ● Explanatory note on VShare ● Changing seating plan ● Additional classwork/homework/class teacher Detention. ● Subject Teacher Report ● Referral to Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator on Incident Report Form(<i>A physical copy of this, signed by the teacher must be given to the Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator within two working days of the incident in question</i>) <p>(See section "Strategies and Sanctions")</p>
<p><u>Role of Class Tutor</u> The Tutor has a pastoral role in their class group. The Tutor has particular responsibility for their class group. This is a voluntary role and it is done in a voluntary capacity. The Tutor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has a caring role 	<p><u>Rewards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal Praise ● Note on VShare ● Awards System ● Class Trips/Activities ● Postcards/Approved Positive Discipline 		<p><u>Supports and Supports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting and Discussion with student ● Phone call to Parent/Guardian re pastoral matter ● Liases with Year Head /

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors general wellbeing and progress • Meets with students to discuss progress/challenges/areas of concern. • Liases with the Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiatives • Certificates 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Co-ordinator • Referral to Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator
<p><u>Role of Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator</u></p> <p>The Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator has overall responsibility for all the students in the year group. The Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors student progress/performance/attendance/uniform/behaviour and highlights concerns relating to attendance and punctuality so that Teaching and Learning can take place • Acts upon all referrals by updating VSware with the action taken • Referral to Guidance Counsellor / Care Team • Liaises with Senior Management in the Duty of Care to all students. 	<p><u>Rewards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Praise • Note on VSware • Commendation Slip • Awards System • Class trips/activities • Postcards/Approved Positive Discipline initiatives • Certificates • Acknowledgement at Assembly • Referral to Deputy/Principal 		<p><u>Sanctions and Supports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss issue/Behaviour with student • Meet with student and/or Parent/Guardian • Detention • Contract of Behaviour • Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator Report on action taken • Referral to Guidance Counsellor • Referral to Principal

<u>Role of the Principal/Deputy Principal</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Teaching and Learning in the classroom • Act upon all referrals 	<u>Rewards</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Praise • Note on VShare • Commendation Slip • Awards System • Approve Class Trips/Activities • Approve Positive Discipline Initiatives • Certificates • Acknowledgement at Assembly 		<u>Ladder of Referral for dealing with sanctions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with student • Meeting with Parent/Guardian • Meeting with Deputy Principal/Principal • Referral to Board of Management
<u>Role of the Board of Management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Management will adjudicate each issue brought to them on its own merits, and will make a decision in the spirit of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour ensuring that all parties have been treated fairly and natural justice has prevailed. • In certain cases the Board of Management may refer a case to its Discipline Sub-committee. 	<u>Rewards</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Management seep opportunities to positively promote Donabate Community College with its stakeholders and the wider community. 		<u>Sanctions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Management may impose any sanction listed in our Code of Positive Behaviour up to and including an exclusion from school.

* All paperwork on student behaviour is kept in student files - See * in Appendix

SCHOOL RULES

School Rules apply whenever you are wearing the school uniform, when representing the school or when engaged in any school activity. School rules describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible adults. They are there to safeguard students' right to learn and teachers' right to teach in a caring, safe and respectful environment.

In Donabate Community College we want every student to reach their potential. This can be achieved by students trying their best in class and at their homework. Other ways that can assist reaching your potential include:

1. Coming to school every day and arriving on time.
2. Coming to school in full uniform.
3. Showing respect for people and property and that you report any accidental damage that you may cause or may have seen.
4. Being fully prepared for your subjects.
5. Acting in a respectful manner around the school.

SCHOOL RULES EXPLAINED.

1. **That you come to school every day and arrive on time.** Therefore:

- Be in the school building at 8.20am for morning classes and 1.05pm for afternoon classes.
- Attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- Truancy is regarded as being a particularly serious transgression of the rules.
- If you miss school, you bring a note in your Journal from your parent/guardian on your return to school and present to Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator and Subject Teachers.
- If you are unavoidably late, you bring a note from your parent/guardian and be signed in on our VSware system by our Administration staff at reception.
- If you are sick during the school day and need to leave the school, a parent (or authorised adult) must collect you or give permission to school authorities for you to leave the premises.

- If you must leave school during the day you must get the parental note signed by your Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator or Deputy Principal prior to signing out at the office. You must make it your business to find your Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator as early in the morning as possible, not just before you need to leave.
- Proceed to all classes without delay and arrive on time.
- Do not go to the toilets/lockers between or during classes without your teacher's permission.
- Behave yourself on your way to and from school.
- Enter the school through the designated door.
- Behave on the school buses or on public transport during school outings and trips.

Rationale

1. Time missed is hard to make up.
2. The school is entitled to an explanation for your absences.
3. It is expected that a late arrival to school be explained out of courtesy.
4. Arriving late for class wastes your time, the teacher's time and class time.
5. Going to the toilets during or between classes disrupts class. It is at the discretion of the class teacher. A Toilet Permission (TP) must be recorded in your journal except in cases where a student has a medical condition. Going to the lockers between classes disrupts class.
6. The school rules apply on your way to and from school and during lunch break.

2. That you come to school in full uniform. Therefore:

- Wear the full school uniform in school at all times except, when otherwise directed by the school.
- Bring the appropriate sports gear for participation in timetabled P.E. classes.
- Have a neat, tidy and natural looking hairstyle.
- Hats and scarves are to remain in your school bag for the duration of the school day. Coats, jackets and sweatshirts are not permitted to be worn in class.
- Smoking is forbidden anytime you are wearing the school uniform, when representing the school or when engaged in any school activity.
- No facial piercing allowed. Students are permitted to wear stud earrings only. Excessive additional jewellery is not allowed.
- Make-up is allowed only if it is natural and subtle. Subtlety will be determined by the class teacher, Year Head /Programme Co-ordinator or Senior Management.

- A t-shirt is optional under the school shirt, provided it is white.
- Students are responsible for looking after their own uniform and PE uniform

Rationale

1. Wear your uniform with pride, be dressed suitably for school activities and be a good ambassador when representing the school.
2. Hair style/colour should be in keeping with a dress code suitable for school. It should not be distracting.
3. Wearing jewellery during certain activities can be dangerous (Health and Safety issue)– it should be left at home.
4. Hats and scarves can be a distraction in class.
5. Smoking is unhealthy and illegal under the age of 18.
6. Students should always be good ambassadors of their school.

3. That you have respect for people and for property and that you report accidents that you may cause or may have seen. Therefore:

- Being helpful and treating other students, all staff and visitors to the school with good manners and respect. This includes any interaction with school staff outside of school time.
- Respecting the instructions of your teachers and staff.
- Any form of bullying is unacceptable.
- That you should proceed in an orderly fashion around the corridors.
- That you do not use offensive or abusive language/you speak respectfully to all members of the school (all staff, peers and guests).
- That you use the litter bins in classrooms, in social areas and on the school grounds.
- That you respect the school property and the property of other people.
- Reporting any accidental damage you may have caused or seen to the main office .
-

Rationale

1. Like you, other people are entitled to be treated with good manners and respect.
2. Teachers are entitled to your respect and cooperation.
3. Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery.
4. Rough behaviour can lead to accident or injury.

5. Offensive or abusive language shows disrespect and can cause hurt.
6. Keeping the school environment pleasant and litter free is everyone's responsibility.
7. You would expect the same respect for your property.
8. The school authorities need to be aware of damage caused to property or equipment.

4. That you do your best in class and at your homework. Therefore:

- Listen in class to your teachers.
- Contribute to class and participate in class to the best of your ability.
- Do not interfere with teaching and learning.
- Do not disturb the class.
- Sit in an orderly manner at all times.
- Do your homework each night, written and oral and do so to an acceptable standard.
- Always have your journal with you and take down your homework in it (Date, Time and Question numbers).
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to review the student's journal/VSware on a weekly basis.
- If you need to leave your classroom, you must get permission from your teacher with a note of explanation in your journal.
- If you are required by another teacher, that teacher must note this in your journal and you must present this note to your timetabled teacher at the start of the class.
- Help keep your classrooms tidy.

Rationale

1. The teacher is trying to help you.
2. Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn.
3. It is dangerous to swing back on two legs of your chair.
4. Homework helps to reinforce the work done in class.
5. Your journal helps you remember what you have to do.
6. Having your journal and VSware reviewed by your parents / guardian allows them to see how you are getting on.
7. Getting your journal signed to leave the classroom helps keep a record of your time missed and lets other teachers know that you have permission to be out of class.

8. It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves.
9. Being prepared for your subjects by having all the relevant materials, means you learn the most from your classes.

5. That students come in properly prepared for their subjects. Therefore:

- Have the proper pens, books, copies etc required for each class and that you bring in any special materials/equipment needed for class.
- All bags, books and your journal be kept in good condition and free of graffiti.
- Be responsible for your own property.

Rationale

1. Time is wasted if you have not got your correct materials for class.
2. It is impossible to do the subject without the materials/equipment needed.
3. Having items not needed for class cause distractions and wastes time.
4. Graffiti can offend. Neatness helps students stay organised.
5. Students are responsible to look after their own property.

6. That students act in an appropriate manner around the school. Therefore:

- Proceed quickly and quietly to each class, keeping to the left.
- Wait quietly for your teacher while lining up outside the classroom in single file.
- Should avoid loitering in the toilets during break times or at any other times.
- Eating and drinking is allowed within the school building only at specified times and areas.
- Take your break in the manner and area specified and obey the instructions of the teacher on duty.
- Don't break, damage or deface school property.
- Report to a teacher should you notice graffiti or damage to school property and especially if you notice graffiti on your own desk or chair.
- That chewing gum is totally forbidden in the school building and grounds.
- Do not bring cigarettes, lighters or matches to school.
- There is an absolute ban on any type of offensive or illegal weapons.
- Mobile phones must be powered off from 8.20am and until students have left the school premises at the end of the school day.

- Production, display or circulation e.g. via facebook and internet, of written words, pictures or other materials which may intimidate, embarrass or erode the reputation of another person is totally unacceptable.
- Alcohol and illegal substances are totally forbidden.
- You may not photograph or record in school without your teacher's permission.

Rationale

1. The one way system avoids confusion and accidents.
2. Lining up in single file is safer and ensures the corridor is not blocked for others.
3. Loitering in toilets leads to congestion.
4. Specified times and places for eating/drinking helps to keep the school clean and pleasant.
5. Obeying break time rules and teachers instructions is safer and helps with supervision.
6. Others have to use the school property and repairs/replacements are expensive.
7. Everyone is responsible for helping to keep the school environment pleasant.
8. Internet safety is of paramount importance and students need to be aware of this and the repercussions of their online actions for themselves and others. Any content or comments are permanent and cannot be removed.
9. Chewing gum destroys flooring, school furniture, tarmac etc.
10. Smoking on the school premises is prohibited by law.
11. The use of mobile phones is disruptive during school time.
12. Matches and lighters are dangerous.
13. Offensive weapons are dangerous and illegal.
14. Substance abuse is dangerous, addictive and may also be illegal.

Practise to encourage Positive Behaviour

In our school, students will be encouraged in their endeavours to uphold the Code of Positive Behaviour by use of the following measures:

- (a) The Code of Positive Behaviour is published in the student Journal. Every September students and parents are asked to read it and to sign their agreement with the content. By doing so they acknowledge their support and cooperation with it. This is to ensure that parents and students understand what our rules are, why they must be adhered to and what procedures will be followed if the rules are not upheld. The Code of Positive Behaviour is also available on the Donabate Community College website. Aspects of the code are explained at the information meeting held each year for parents of incoming First Years. Parents are encouraged to contact their son/daughter's tutor or Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator if they wish to raise a concern.. Parents are invited to get involved in the Parent Council or to avail themselves of the meetings/workshops organised by the association.
- (b) At the start of Term One each year, as part of our induction process, each class is brought through the Code of Positive Behaviour and any amendments to it are highlighted. This is done so as to give students the opportunity to learn and understand the rules so that they can understand what the Code of Positive Behaviour means for them.
- (c) The Code of Positive Behaviour is given to all teachers. At the beginning of the school year Teachers are brought through the main aspects of the implementation of the code. This promotes consistency of practice. Specific rules and aspects of the code are highlighted by management throughout the year as they arise.
- (d) In our school we recognise that effective teaching and learning are closely linked to good behaviour. When students are engaged and motivated to learn, it is more likely that their behaviour will be positive. Teachers are encouraged to participate in continuous professional

development. Within school, staff development includes exploring different teaching methods e.g. Assessment For Learning, differentiation and Team Teaching. Regular Subject Department meetings address curriculum needs and promote collegiality among staff.

(e) If a student is in breach of a rule, he/she may be asked to explain (orally or in writing) the rule he/she has breached, to describe what effect this breach has had on members of the school community, and how he/she could act differently in the future to avoid being in breach of the rule. This is to develop the student's sensitivity and consideration for others and to assist them in upholding school rules in future. The principles of Restorative Justice are also applied where possible. Students are encouraged to speak to their tutor or Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator if they wish to raise a concern about a behavioural matter.

(f) School rules and the reason for them are discussed as part of the school's pastoral care programme or as part of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE). The notion of tolerance for others, self-control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are also discussed as part of the Life Skills programme in the school. Some of this work also takes place in Civic, Social, Political Education (CSPE) since it is the foundation of good citizenship.

(g) Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism, Harassment, Violence, Substance Misuse etc are discussed with the students during their time in our school, using current legislation, current affairs and / or outside speakers. This is to help the students better understand these issues so that they can base their thinking, understanding and action on factual information and in the line with the values espoused in our school.

(h) The school's Anti-Bullying policy, available in the student Journal and on the school website, sets out the actions taken in relation to alleged breaches of the Policy. Each year in the school we have an Anti-Bullying week, which focuses the school community on promoting positive behaviour.

Students with Special Educational Needs:

Subject teachers, resource teachers and special needs assistants will check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with special educational needs can understand.

Rewards

In our school teachers may use some of the following methods to reward students for upholding the Code of Positive Behaviour:

- Verbal praise of student by teacher privately.
- Positive comment regarding the student to tutor or Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator .
- Positive comment on VShare.
- Verbal praise of student at assembly.
- Leadership role given to students e.g. Team leader for special project or class rep.
- Class outing related to the curriculum.
- Positive note/Commendation Slip/phone call or text to parents.
- Highlight curricular/extra curricular achievements on notice board in classroom.
- Display of student's work around the school.
- Acknowledgement of student's work on school website and school Facebook page.
- Highlight curricular/extra curricular achievements in school newsletter.

Students with Special Educational Needs:

Rewards for students with special educational needs should take account of their particular learning styles. For all students and especially those with learning difficulties, a reward will have an impact when it is closely linked in time to the behaviour that is being rewarded.

Strategies and Sanctions

The purpose of these strategies and sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour. They help students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable and to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour. The following strategies and sanctions are used so that our students understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences. They are scaled so as to take account of the nature of the incident, the situation leading up to the incident and are implemented the staff of the school in accordance with our 'ladder of referral'.

Teacher Actions

- Verbal reprimand/warnings.
- Noted on VSware.
- Move seats.
- Speak to student outside room re-acceptable behaviour.
- Extra work given.
- Class teacher Detention given.
- Subject report completed.
- Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator consulted regarding phone call home.
- Incident report form completed.
- Year Head /Programme Co-ordinator informed.

Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator Actions

- A fine to cover the cost of repair or replacement.
- Removal of privilege.
- Detention – 24 hour notice.
- Consultation with class tutor.
- Phone call to parents.
- Removal of student from class or scene of incident while under Year Head's / Programme Co-ordinator's supervision.
- Referral to Deputy Principal or Principal.
- All sanctions are in line with the Code of Positive Behaviour and subject to the approval of Deputy / Principal.

Strategies and sanctions for more serious misdemeanors or for consistent breaches of our Code of Positive Behaviour include the following:

These may be applied but not necessarily in the order listed.

- Giving the student a piece of written work to do in which they have to outline in writing the rule/rules they breached, the effects this breach had on themselves and on other members of the school community and how they can avoid a repeat of this behaviour.
- Subject Report Form.
- Refer student to Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator /Deputy Principal.
- Lunch/subject teacher Detention.
- Official Detention.
- Removal of student from class and referral to Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator / Deputy Principal.
- Telephone call to parents by Year Head /Programme Co-ordinator / Deputy Principal.
- Formal letter home from Year Head /Programme Co-ordinator / Deputy Principal.
- Meeting with parents.
- Suspension from School.

SPECIFIC SANCTIONS

ISSUES AND SANCTIONS

<u>Mobile Phone</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Time: Note in Journal/VShare • 2nd Time: Detention and Parent/Guardian informed via text or phone call • 3rd Time: Phone is no longer allowed in school
<u>Lateness:</u> Q(a) School (b) Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) Refer to Punctuality Policy • (b) To be dealt with by Class Teacher sanctions (Role of Class/Subject Teacher)
<u>Littering</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up duty
<u>Chewing gum</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Time: Note in Journal/VShare • 2nd Time: Clean up duty
<u>Uniform</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Time: Note in Journal/VShare • 2nd Time: Parent/Guardian informed and official Detention • 3rd Time: Contact with home and Student sent home
<u>Defacing School Property</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note in Journal/VShare plus cost of repair or replacement/Class Teacher sanctions (page 3) • Official Detention • Litter duty or similar civic minded activity
<u>Smoking (in or out of school, whilst in uniform)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Day Suspension.
<u>Inappropriate language / behaviour between students</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal reprimand, note in Journal/VShare, Class Teacher sanctions (Role of Class/Subject Teacher)
<u>Abusive language/threatening, inappropriate behaviour or fighting student to student or student to teacher</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal from class or area and referral to: • Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Management • Parents notified • Possibly Prohibited from school excursions, activities etc • Suspension
<u>No Journal in class</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to office for journal sheet • Note on VShare • Class Teacher sanctions (see Role of Class/Subject Teacher)
<u>Truancy (classes/school)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School duties/Community Service • Class Teacher sanctions (see Role of Class/Subject Teacher) • Internal Suspension • External Suspension
<u>Inappropriate use of Ipad</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note on VShare • Ipad withdrawn • See Ipad usage policy

Referrals

The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour/breach of school rules are referred to as our 'ladder of referral'.

- The basic principle of this ladder of referral system is that the higher up the ladder an incident is dealt with, the more serious it is viewed.
- The ladder of referral involves all staff in the implementation of the Code of Positive Behaviour in a day-to-day and practical way. It gives an ownership of the policy to all staff and it is appropriate that they be involved because they are the on the ground practitioners who operate it on an ongoing basis.
- If a student has an issue or difficulty which is contributing to their inability to uphold the Code of Positive Behaviour then the following referrals may be made in this order:
 1. Referral to Tutor
 2. Referral to Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator
 3. Referral to Deputy Principal/Principal
 4. Referral to Guidance Counsellor / Care Team
 5. Referral to the school's psychologist for testing and / or help in behaviour modification.

Ladder of Referrals

Step1: The Subject Teacher

The subject teacher is the frontline source of help for students. As a leader of learning and someone with an established relationship of trust, the subject teacher will have a strong influence with students. Each teacher has the responsibility for managing behaviour in their own classroom and will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies. (See table titled “Roles and Responsibilities”). Where a subject teacher has concerns on the pastoral care of a student impacting on behaviour they should go to Step 2. More serious offences should be dealt with under Step 3 of the ladder of referral.

Step 2: The Class Tutor

Each class is assigned a teacher with defined responsibility for them. He/she has a pastoral role to play with this class group.

Step 3: The Year Head /Programme Co-ordinator

Each Year Group is assigned a teacher with special responsibility for them. He/she has a pastoral and disciplinary role.

Step 4: The Deputy Principal / Principal: Students whose behaviour has not been modified despite the school's best efforts will be referred by the Year Head / Programme Co-ordinator to the Deputy Principal / Principal. If the Deputy Principal / Principal decide that a suspension is warranted the procedures in our policy on suspension and exclusion will be followed. Completed welfare notification forms and report cards are filed, as are copies of letters home relating to sanctions and interventions.

Step 5: Board of Management: This is the final tier in the discipline structure in Donabate Community College. The Board of Management may delegate to its Discipline Sub-Committee in order to address certain incidences. The Board of Management will adjudicate each issue brought to them on its own merits and will make a decision in the spirit of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour ensuring that all parties have been treated fairly and natural justice has prevailed. The Discipline Sub-Committee of the Board of Management is an additional tier in the support structure in Donabate Community College. The Discipline Sub-Committee may be delegated from the Board of Management to deal with individual incidences where students violate our Code of Positive Behaviour.

Step 6: DDLETB

Students / Parents have the right to appeal decisions of exclusion to the DDLETB.

Implementation of the Code of Positive Behaviour

All registered students of the school have a copy of the Code of Positive Behaviour in their Student Journal. The Code of Positive Behaviour is published on the school website and is also available from the school upon request. At the start of Term One each year, as part of our induction process, each class is brought through the Code of Positive Behaviour and any amendments to it are highlighted. This is done so as to give students the opportunity to think and talk about behaviour, learning and rules so that they can understand what the Code of Positive Behaviour means for them. At the beginning of the school year Teachers are brought through the main aspects of the implementation of the code. This is done to promote consistency of practice.

A Success Criteria/Monitoring

This Code of Positive Behaviour was drawn up in consultation with the parents, students, staff and management of our school and was ratified by the Board of Management in _____ and will be reviewed every two years. The code will be monitored on a regular basis. Aspects of the code will be discussed formally at management meetings, at Year Head/Programme Co-ordinator meetings each term and informally at frequent meetings between members of staff. Teachers are encouraged to communicate concerns and suggestions to the pastoral team. Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of our Code of Positive Behaviour and will be communicated to the members of the school community in writing.

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION POLICY

In Donabate Community College all students have the right to learn in an orderly and caring environment. Our Code of Positive Behaviour sets out the expectations of student behaviour. All students, teachers and support staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination. There will be cases of unacceptable behaviour where it will be in the best interests of the school community or the student involved, that student be removed from classes or the school for a period of time or completely. Suspension or exclusion are the options available to the Principal in these situations.

SUSPENSION POLICY:

- Suspension allows the student time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for the behaviour, which led to the suspension and to accept responsibility for changing his/her behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future.
- It also allows time for school personnel to plan appropriate support for the student to assist with successful re-entry.
- It is most effective when it highlights the parents'/guardians' responsibility for taking an active role, in partnership with the school, to work with their child to enable the child's behaviour to change. The school will work with parents/guardians with a view to assisting a suspended student to rejoin the community as quickly as possible.

The following steps are taken as part of the suspension policy.

Suspension

<u>Suspension of less than five days</u>	<u>Suspension of more than five days</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decision made by Principal / Chairperson of Board of Management ● Tutor/Year Head/Programme Co-ordinator / Deputy Principal/Board of Management informed ● Principal informs parents ● Appeal to Board of Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommended by Principal to Board of Management ● Deputy Principal/Year Head/ Programme Co-ordinator/Tutor informed ● Parents informed ● Welfare Officer informed ● Appeal to Board of Management ● The names of any suspended students will be given to the Board of Management
<p>The names of any suspended students will be emailed to inform staff.</p>	

PRIOR TO SUSPENSION:

The Principal/Deputy Principal will:

- Ensure the student is given the opportunity to give a detailed account of the event/incident.
- Ensure all discipline options under the Code of Positive Behaviour have been applied and documented.
- Ensure all appropriate support personnel internal and external have been involved.
- Ensure that discussion has occurred with the student and parent/guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to suspension.
- Ensure that diagnostic assessments have been carried out where appropriate (i.e. NEPS), particularly where unacceptable behaviour is ongoing and consistent (except in cases of very serious misconduct) Ensure a formal written warning detailing these behaviours is provided, as well as clear expectations of what is required of the student in the future.
- Ensure all action taken is recorded.
- Ensure all correspondence is copied
- Immediate suspension may occur in some circumstances e.g. violence, threats of violence, presence of weapons, illegal drugs, etc. The school will endeavour to make contact with a parent or guardian prior to suspension.

PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION:

Principal/Deputy Principal makes decision on the basis of the reasons set out in the Code of Positive Behaviour.

1. The student is informed of the grounds which give rise to the suspension.
2. Parents/Guardians are informed by phone, with written follow up by post, and requested to come to the school for a meeting.
3. Students will never be sent home during a school day, unless collected by parent/ guardian; otherwise they will be supervised until suspension takes effect.

4. If a student is suspended for a cumulative total of 20 days or more in one school year, the Principal must inform the Education Welfare Officer.

5. The formal letter of notification when appropriate may include:

- ☐ Notice of the suspension
- ☐ Effective date of the suspension
- ☐ Duration of the suspension.
- ☐ Reasons for the suspension
- ☐ Expectations of the student while on suspension (Study Programme may be attached)
- ☐ Importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter
- ☐ A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians while on suspension
- ☐ A statement that the Education Welfare Board has been informed (If the suspension is longer than 6 days, or the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year to date)
- ☐ Information on Appeal rights (internal school appeal /Section 29 Appeal).
- ☐ Requirements which need to be in place when student returns (e.g. written apology, completed assignments, etc.)
- ☐ If consideration is being given to proceeding to exclusion, then the letter must make this clear.

6. Procedures for the formal re-introduction of the student into the school may include:

- Parents attending with the student on the day of their return to school
- Undertakings of good behaviour requested in writing
- Agreed conditions (e.g. counselling, referral to NEPS, other pastoral supports) signed by parent and pupil.

GROUND FOR REMOVING A SUSPENSION

- During a meeting with the parents, the Deputy Principal/Principal/Board may agree that another sanction be applied.
- Successful appeal to the Principal/Board of Management.
- New circumstances come to light.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

The Principles of Natural Justice demand that there should always be an appeal available to a higher authority. The practicalities of school life mean that having a formal appeal to the Board of Management on short suspensions (less than 5 days) may be inappropriate, very time consuming and render the suspension meaningless. In Donabate Community College the following appeals system is in place.

(1) For a suspension less than 5 days:

In this case the parents/guardian can make an appeal to the Principal. The following steps can be taken:

- Parents contact school to notify of their intention to appeal the suspension.
- When appropriate the Deputy Principal supplies Principal with:
 - A record of all the action taken.
 - A copy of all correspondence.
- Principal meets with parents to discuss the above
- Principal makes a decision.

Such an appeal may take a number of days. During this time the student remains at home. In the event of a successful appeal, the student returns to school immediately and the suspension is removed from the student's record.

2. For a 5 day or greater suspension:

In this case the parents/guardians can make an appeal to the Board of Management. The following steps can be taken:

- Parents/Guardians contact school to notify of their intention to appeal the suspension
- A sub-committee of the Board are then informed of the appeal
- The Principal supplies the sub-committee of the Board with
 - (a) A record of all the action taken.
 - (b) A copy of all correspondence.
- The sub-committee of the Board meets with parents to discuss the above
- The sub-committee of the Board makes a decision and reports to the full Board of Management

Such an appeal may take a number of days. During this time the student remains at home. In the event of a successful appeal, the student returns to school immediately and the suspension is removed from the student's record. Such an appeal may take a number of days. During this time the student remains at home.

EXCLUSION POLICY:

This is the ultimate sanction imposed by the school and is exercised by the Board of Management in extreme cases of indiscipline. In advance of any hearing, which could result in an exclusion, the school will investigate the matter in accordance with the Principles of Natural Justice.

1. PRIOR TO EXCLUSION

The Principal will:

- Ensure all discipline options under the Code of Positive Behaviour have been applied and documented
- Ensure all appropriate support personnel (internal and external) have been involved
- Ensure all other procedures, referrals, supports have been exhausted.
- Ensure that discussion has occurred with the student and parent / guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to exclusion
- Provide formal verbal and written warnings at appropriate times detailing these behaviours, as well as clear expectations of what was required of the student in their time remaining in school
- Record all action taken
- Copy all correspondence

2. PROCEDURE FOR EXCLUSION

Where the Principal recommends that the Board of Management should give consideration to expelling a student, the Principal will:

- Inform the parents and the student that the Board of Management has been asked to consider exclusion

- Ensure that parents have copies of correspondence, records of the student's behaviour, records of allegations against the student, records of the investigation and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider exclusion
- Provide the Board of Management with copies of correspondence, records of the student's behaviour, records of allegations against the student, records of the investigation and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider exclusion
- Inform the Education Welfare Officer

The Board will undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. The Board of Management will hold a hearing where the Principal and the parents put their case before the Board in each other's presence. In advance of the hearing the Board will:

- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board and invite them to that meeting
- Advise the parents that they can make a written submission to the Board
- Ensure that the parents have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the Board
- Ensure that the parents understand the purpose and process of the hearing

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

The Board may conclude that:

- The sanction of exclusion is not warranted
- Another sanction or intervention should be tried
- Exclusion is warranted

The Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions. If the Board is of the opinion that the student should be expelled the following procedure will be put in place:

- The parents will be told that the Board will inform the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) of its opinion and the parents will be advised to participate in the EWO consultation process
- The Board will notify the EWO in writing of its opinion to expel and the reasons for this opinion
- The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification
- The EWO will consult with the Principal, the parents and the student.
- The Board may consider it appropriate that a student should be suspended during this time

Following the EWO's consultations, the Board may decide, following a further Board meeting to proceed to expel the student. The decision to expel and the reasons for it will be notified to the parents and the student. The letter will include information about the right to appeal the decision to expel the student

3. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Dublin Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB).

In the event of an unsuccessful appeal to DDLETB the parents/guardians may then appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

APPENDIX
PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE/ RESTORATIVE PRACTISE

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 staffs) 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
- The right to an 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

As part of ensuring the right to be heard Principals should establish if parents / guardians require an interpreter and, if so, make arrangements for one to be available.

Principals should also ensure that students and parents / guardians have access to policies and procedures under which action is being taken.

While it is generally preferable for the functions of investigating and deciding to be carried out by different people, in the school setting this may not always be possible.

If the Principal is conducting both the investigative and decision making stages, he or she must be reasonable and objective. Ultimately, the Principal must act justly and be seen to act justly. While it is difficult to combine the roles of investigator and adjudicator, given the nature of

the Principal's responsibilities, there may at times be no alternative to the Principal exercising both roles.

Nevertheless, it is preferable to have another appropriate officer, such as a Deputy or Assistant Principal, carry out the investigation, if possible. The availability of a line of appeal to a more senior officer adds to the fairness of the process and offers a check in case there is a perception of a conflict of interest.

*To ensure the elements of procedural fairness are met, it is appropriate to provide 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 Principals be of the view that it is not appropriate to provide copies of statement, for example, because of a fear that witnesses may be intimidated, full details of the allegations outlined in the statements should be provided.

In matters where a long suspension or exclusion is contemplated, the gravity of the circumstances requires particular emphasis being given to procedural fairness. This includes the availability of a support person/observer at formal interviews, the key features of which should be taken down in writing.

Donabate Community College April 2017