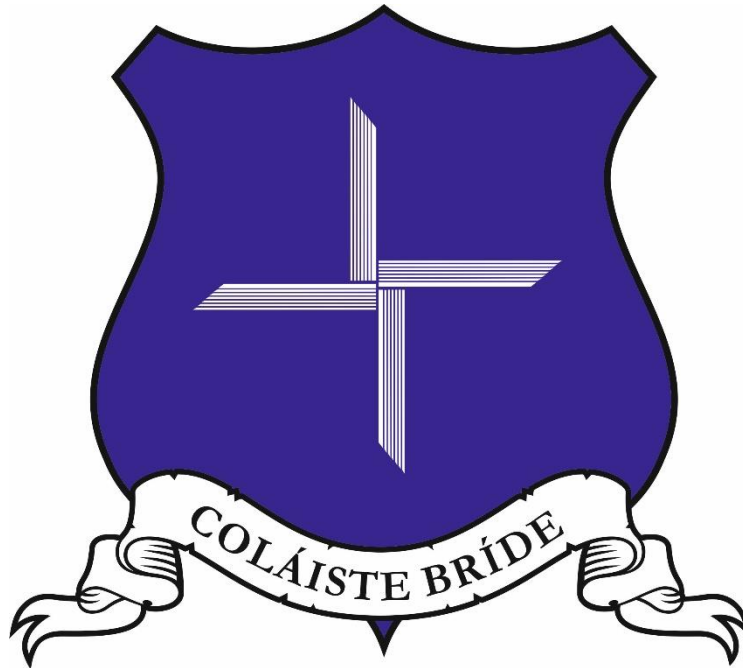


Suspension & Expulsion Policy



Coláiste Bríde, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Ratified by the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Chairperson,
Board of Management

Review Date: 13th May, 2019

Signed: _____
Secretary,
Board of Management

MISSION STATEMENT

*“We are working to promote a secure and caring environment,
Where Respect, Responsibility and Christian commitment grow,
Drawing forth the positive of each individual”*

Coláiste Bríde is a Catholic School founded by the Mercy Order under the trusteeship of CEIST. It has a long tradition of academic excellence and is committed to the development of the whole student. It offers a curriculum designed to meet fully the needs of the student.

The school wishes to cater for the academic, spiritual, moral, aesthetic, interpersonal and physical needs of the student. The characteristics of the school are the pursuit of tolerance, compassion and a sense of justice and equality for all.

We aim to develop in each student, confidence, self-respect and respect for others.

The school and its staff value its partnership with parents in meeting the personal and educational requirements of students and staff alike.

The core values of CEIST are:

Promoting Spiritual and Human Development

We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning

We are committed to excellence and to continually improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Showing Respect for Every Person

We respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person.

Creating Community

Our schools are faith communities of welcome and hospitality where Gospel values are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

Being Just and Responsible

We seek to act justly and responsibly in all our relationships

Introduction

Through our Code of Behaviour and guided by our Mission Statement we aim to create a calm and ordered atmosphere in a caring and supportive working environment based on respect for self and respect for others. When a student fails to observe the Code of Behaviour it may result in the student incurring sanctions including suspension or expulsion where warranted.

This policy document sets out procedures to be applied when the Suspension or Expulsion of a student is being considered. These sanctions affect a student's access to education and must be applied having regard to the rights of the individual student.

The Board of Management of Coláiste Bríde exercises its authority to suspend or expel in a fair and non-discriminatory manner having regard to its responsibility to the whole school community and to the principles of natural justice. The suspension and expulsion procedures include two essential parts:

- The right to be heard
- The right to impartiality

For the purposes of this policy:

- **suspension** is considered to be the withdrawal of permission from a student to attend school for a specified period of time.
- **expulsion** is considered to be the permanent exclusion of a student from the school.

This Suspension & Expulsion Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Email & Office 365 Policy
- Substance Use Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all of our students:

- during the school day.
- while on school related activities.

Rationale

Our rationale for this policy is as follows:

- To satisfy the legislative requirements associated with:
 - Sections 15(2)(d), 28(1) and 29(1) of the Education Act 1998.
 - Sections 23 and 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
 - Section 7(2)(d) Equal Status Act.
- To provide a transparent framework for the fair application of the sanctions of suspension and expulsion.

Policy Content

(a) Suspension

- The authority to suspend is vested in the Principal or, in the absence of the Principal the Acting Principal, subject to the right of the parents/guardians (or a student who is 18 years and over) to appeal to the Board of Management.
- The period of suspension shall be proportionate to the breaches of school rules. A student will not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a longer period is needed to achieve a particular objective.
- When a student is being suspended for six days or more, the Principal will inform the Educational Welfare Officer in writing.
- The Board of Management may impose a longer period of suspension. Where a student has been suspended for a total of 20 days in any school year, the suspension is subject to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act.

(b) Suspension is a serious sanction and may be considered in the following circumstances:

- Repeated and sustained incidents of indiscipline/misbehaviour.
- Where the student's behaviour repeatedly interferes with the teaching and learning environment for fellow students.
- Serious incidents that damage the school's property or endanger the welfare of others e.g. a threat to the safety of students or staff of the school.
- Breaches of the Coláiste Bríde Substance Abuse Policy.
- Serious breaches of the Acceptable Use Policy.
- Incidences of Bullying to include Cyberbullying.

(c) Suspension Procedure

1. When a suspension is being considered, the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head interviews the student who is given the opportunity to respond.
2. If it is decided that a suspension should take place, the parents/guardians are informed by letter and/or by phone.
3. All suspension decisions include a formal letter of notification that will include:
 - Notice of the suspension
 - Effective date of the suspension
 - Duration of the suspension
 - Procedure on return to school
 - Reasons for the suspension
 - Information regarding the right to appeal the suspension to the Board of Management.
 - A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of parent/guardians while suspended.
4. Pending the implementation of the suspension, the student may be withdrawn from class.

(d) Appeal to the Board of Management

- A parent/guardian has seven days in which to lodge an appeal. If the student appealing suspension is 18 years or older, she may appeal in their own right.
- The school may insist that the student remain at home while the appeal proceeds. The grounds for the appeal must be made in writing.
- The appeal will be considered at the next Board meeting or at an extraordinary meeting of the Board, which the parents/guardians can attend at a specific time, subject to giving two days notice of their intention to attend the meeting.
- At the Board meeting, the Principal outlines the reasons for his/her recommendation.
- The Parents' appeal is then heard by written submission and/or orally.
- The Principal may take no further part in the discussion other than to clarify matters raised in the parents/guardians' appeal. The Principal and parents (if present) leave.
- The Board makes its decision and communicates it to the parent/guardian.
- The Board may agree that another sanction is applied.
- In the event that an appeal is successful, the suspension will be lifted and if the suspension has already been served, it will be expunged from the student's record.

(e) Suspension Completion

- Upon completion of a suspension the student will be met by the Principal/Deputy Principal on return to school.
- After suspension the following procedures may also apply for the formal reintroduction of the student into the school:
 - Parents/guardians may be requested to attend with the student upon her return to school.
 - A written or verbal apology may be required from the student for her misbehaviour.
 - The student may be required to enter into a contract of good behaviour or other conditions that may be specified before returning to school.

(f) Expulsion

- The authority to expel a pupil rests with the Board of Management.
- Expulsion may be recommended in cases where, as a result of a student's gross misbehaviour, the educational rights of other students are being interfered with and/or denied and/or there is a significant threat to Safety or the Health and Welfare of members of the School Community is at risk. The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of other or to the teaching process.
- There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence.
- 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, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

(g) Expulsion Procedure

1. The student is interviewed by the Principal and given an opportunity to respond.
2. The parents/guardians are informed, in writing, of the grounds upon which expulsion is being considered and the nature of the evidence being relied on.
3. The parents/guardians are provided with an opportunity to consider the evidence and to offer evidence in rebuttal.
4. If the Principal decides to recommend to the Board of Management that the student can be expelled, the Principal must:
 - Inform the student's parents/guardians by registered post of the decision.
 - State the reason(s) for the recommendation.
 - Give at least five days notice of the Board meeting at which the recommendation will be considered.
 - Inform the student's parents/guardians of their right to make representations to the Board of Management on behalf of the student.
 - Prepare a report for the Board containing all the relevant material relating to the case.
 - Send out a copy of the report by post to the parents/guardians of the student.
5. Parents are required to give two days notice to the Secretary of the Board of Management of their intention to make such representations to the Board of Management, after which they are invited to attend the meeting at a particular time.

(h) Meeting of the Board of Management

- The Board will examine the report and will seek clarification (if any) from the Principal.
- The Chairperson will give the parents sufficient time to respond to the report and make representations on behalf of the student.
- The Principal may take no further part in the discussion other than to clarify matters raised in the parents/guardians appeal. The Principal and parents leave the meeting.
- The Board makes its decision and communicates it to the parents/guardians.

If the Board expels the student:

- The parents/guardians (or the student who is over 18 years of age) must be informed of their right to appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education & Science under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.
- The Board informs the designated Educational Welfare Officer of its decision. The student shall not be considered expelled before the passing of twenty school days from the receipt of such notification by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- The Board may decide to suspend the pupil from school during this period.

If the Board decides not to expel the student:

- The Board will prepare an alternative sanction in consultation with the Principal.