

Deansrath Community College

Code of Behaviour



An addendum to the Code of Behaviour to address the specific health and safety concerns imposed by COVID-19 was approved by the Board of Management on the 5th October 2020. It is contained in Appendix II.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Mission Statement

Our mission in Deansrath Community College is to create a safe learning environment within the community which acknowledges diversity, fosters mutual respect, celebrates achievement, recognises the needs of the individual, challenging all to meet their full potential.

Introduction

This Code of Behaviour has been developed over a two year period and ratified in 2015. This Code of Behaviour was reviewed in 2019.

Links with other Policies

Parents and students are advised that other related policies, listed below are available on request.

- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Uniform Policy
- Homework Policy
- Students' Electronic Devices, College ICT Devices, Systems and Web Resources Acceptable Usage Policies.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of Deansrath Community College's Code of Behaviour. School management and staff actively foster a school ethos, policies and practices that help to promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour.

Strategies to Affirm and Promote Good Behaviour

The day to day excellence of school management and classroom teaching will enable most students to behave in ways that support their own learning and development.

Teachers and other school staff in Deansrath Community College use a range of strategies to promote good behaviour at class and school level including:

Before Lesson:

- Being Prepared – On Time, Lesson Plan, Seating Plan, Extra Stationary
- Teaching Methodologies
- Having a Routine – e.g. Roll Call, Checking Journals, Books, Copies and Equipment are on desks

During Lesson:

- Clear Expectations – share learning goals
- Rule Reminders
- Check Homework
- Positive Reinforcement – notice and affirm good behaviour
- Focus on problematic *behaviour*, not the *student*

Relationships between Students and Teachers

The quality of relationships between teachers and students is one of the most powerful influences on student behaviour. For many students in Deansrath Community College, their teachers are a major source of support, pastoral care and adult empathy, and are hugely significant figures in their lives, promoting and modelling respectful behaviour. Teachers in Deansrath Community College take the time to get to know their students and build positive relationships with them both in class and during extra-curricular activities. Each student has a class tutor and a year head.

As adults and professionals, teachers have a strong capacity to develop good relationships with students. These relationships are mutually respectful and balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, fairness and consistency.

Promoting Positive Behaviour.

Deansrath Community College places greater emphasis on positive reinforcement than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long term, give better results. Awards are

accessible to all students and encourage, promote and recognise effort, improvement, high standards of achievement and attainment.

Student's achievements, academic or otherwise, are recognised in many different ways. Assembly is used as an opportunity to acknowledge achievements and to foster a sense of community. Examples of student's work and achievements are displayed in the classrooms and around the school. Affirmation of positive behaviour may be done in the following ways:

- Verbal Praise
- Tutor / Year Head – Positive Reinforcement
- Notes in Journal
- Postcards Home
- Phone Calls Home
- School Website
- Newsletter
- Intercom
- Assembly – Year Group / Whole School
- Reward Charts
- Attendance Awards
- Trips
- Celebrations
- Awards – Prize Giving
- Colm Higgins Student of the Year Award and Nominees
- Selection for Student Council, Prefects, Head Boy/Girl, Deputy Head Boy/Girl, Mentors

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

Teachers in Deansrath Community College use a respectful and problem-solving approach, even when a student's behaviour is difficult and challenging.

Most students behave appropriately, with the help of clear, consistent rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional, minor misbehaviour is attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher.

Some students need more active intervention to help them to manage their behaviour. Without additional help, they may be at risk of failing, behaviourally, educationally and socially.

As relationships are integral in any community the school aims to use Restorative Practice to repair damaged relationships when appropriate.

Sanctions are one of the ways in which Deansrath Community College seeks to positively intervene and assist students in achieving and choosing appropriate behaviour. The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour.

Sanctions used are proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour and are dependent on the following:

- **The frequency, duration and persistence of the behaviour**
- **Whether it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour**
- **The context of the behaviour**

The College's "Levels of Inappropriate Behaviour" describes the nature, intensity and persistence of inappropriate behaviours (this list is not exhaustive). This allows staff to locate behaviour on a continuum of seriousness, to notice patterns, to observe changes over time or in different contexts and to develop ways of responding based on this detailed knowledge.

Deansrath Community College staff follows an agreed ladder of intervention in response to inappropriate behaviour. This allows for consistency among staff and ensures that all staff follows a planned approach to helping students change their own behaviour.

The Principal and staff of Deansrath Community College have very strong links with local support services that are able to assist in responding to the needs of a student with behavioural difficulties. Sources of support include the National Educational Psychological Service, HSE Community Care & Psychology Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, and the National Council for Special Education, Child Guidance Services, Adolescent Mental Health Services, Garda Diversion Unit, DDLETB Alternative Learning Programme, Carline, and Youth reach.

The Behaviour Support Classroom provides an intensive, short term, individualised response for students who have not responded to the other supports available in the school. The overall aim of the BSC is successful reintegration of the student into subject classes.

Arrangements for Recording Behaviour

Deansrath Community College uses a simple recording system that allows the school to track, systematically and consistently, any student's behaviour that is a cause of concern. The record notes interventions tried and how the student has responded to them.

Roles and Responsibilities

"All staff should consider themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and should respond promptly and firmly to any instance of unacceptable behaviour." Circular M33/91

Subject teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with instances of minor misbehaviour • Records instances of misbehaviour on behaviour referral form when necessary and passes on to Tutor • Keeps parents/guardian informed through use of the journal
Tutor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows care and concern through listening • Talks to student about difficulties helping to effect a change in behaviour • Provides background information when sanction being imposed • Informed if a sanction is being imposed by Year Head / Deputy Principal / Principal • Communicates with parents/guardians through journal and by phone • Monitors students' journals and follows up where necessary
Academic Year Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds supportive relationships with students and parents/guardians regarding academic progress • Monitors punctuality and assigns appropriate sanctions regarding lates • Contacts parents/guardians regarding lates • Keeps parents informed
Year Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds supportive relationships with students and parents/guardians • Deals with moderate and serious misbehaviour referred in written format on behaviour referral form • Imposes sanctions • Contacts parents and arranges formal appointments • Consults with Deputy Principal and Principal when suspension is being considered • Consults parents regarding suspension • Sends formal notification of suspension • Files copy of notification of suspension • Ensures study work is assigned for period of suspension • Completes entry in suspension book • Assists in student's reintegration on return from suspension •
Deputy Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advises Year Head when dealing with incidents of serious misbehaviour or repeated incidents of misbehaviour which affect teaching and learning of others
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures all staff members administer the Code of Behaviour consistently and fairly to all students • Has sole authority to impose suspension.

Chaplain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral role
Counsellor / Psychotherapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides time and space to help students showing particularly challenging behaviour, recognise and respond to their feelings and deal with the issues. • Make referrals to outside agencies
Home School Community Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain strong links with the community agencies, developing a positive learning environment
Behaviour Support Classroom Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses the needs of students with particularly challenging behaviour. • Devises action plans, defining, analysing and addressing behaviour issues. • Reintegrates students back into mainstream class. • Keeps parents/guardians informed

Appendix 1

Levels of Inappropriate Behaviour & Interventions and Responses to Inappropriate Behaviour

Minor Misbehaviour

- Once off unexplained absence
- Once off non-compliance with uniform
- Once off late for registration or class
- Once off in class without books or equipment
- Invading personal space
- Excluding others
- Noisy/Unruly behaviour.
- Using inappropriate language
- Disrupting the learning environment
- Once off homework/classwork of poor quality
- Defacing journals and books.
- Inappropriate disposal of litter
- Inappropriate use of property without permission
- Damage to own property

Interventions and Responses to Minor Misbehaviour include:

- Use of teacher strategies in Guidelines for Staff
- The desired behaviour is stated clearly to the student
- Rule reminder
- Using language of choice and reminder of consequence
- Placing the student's journal on teacher's desk as a warning
- Writing note in student's journal
- Moving the student to another seat
- Assigning additional written work
- Meeting with tutor

Moderate Misbehaviour

- Unexplained absences and truancy
- Repeated non-compliance with uniform
- 2 or more lates in 1 week
- Repeated occasions in class without books or equipment
- Nudging, pushing
- Verbal put down
- Using inappropriate language to someone
- Using inappropriate language
- Repeated disruption of the learning environment
- Refusing to carry out a reasonable instruction
- Repeated occasions of homework/classwork of poor quality
- Graffiti on other people's property
- Inappropriate use of property without permission
- Minor damage to work or property

Interventions and Responses to Moderate Misbehaviour include:

- Assigning additional written work
- Talking to student privately in his / her time
- Carrying out a useful task in the College
- Detention
- In certain circumstances, removing the student from the class to a supervised location
- Referral to Year Head
- Referral to Deputy Principal / Principal
- Referral to the Care team
- Phone call to parents/guardians by Tutor/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal (or AYM regarding lates)
- Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the student in a supportive way
- Behaviour contracts
- Repairing damage to property (e.g. cleaning graffiti etc)
- Imposition of a penalty (deliberate damage to property)
- Meeting with parents/guardians
- In school suspension
- Suspension

Serious Misbehaviour

- Persistent unexplained absences and truancy.
- Persistent non-compliance with uniform
- Persistent lateness
- Absent from class without permission
- Refusal to attend class
- Leaving school building without permission
- Persistent failure to bring in books or equipment
- Threatening violence
- Using violence
- Verbal harassment
- Physical aggression
- Repeated use of inappropriate language
- Directed abusive language
- Persistent time wasting and disruption
- Smoking
- Use of prohibited substances
- Repeated instances of refusing to carry out a reasonable instruction
- Persistent failure to present homework
- Persistent occasions of homework/classwork of poor quality
- Serious deliberate damage to school property

Interventions and Responses to Serious Misbehaviour include:

- Meeting with Year Head
- Meeting with Year Head / Deputy Principal
- Meeting with Deputy Principal / Principal
- Meeting of student and parents / guardians with Deputy Principal / Principal
- Intensive intervention by a member of the counselling team
- Referral to Behaviour Support Classroom
- Referral to outside support agencies in consultation with Deputy Principal / Principal
- Referral to Gardaí
- Meeting of student and parents / guardians with the Board of Management
- Imposition of a fine (deliberate damage to property/smoking)
- Restorative Practice Conference
- Suspension
- Exclusion

Appendix II

COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY CONTROL MEASURES

Introduction

The Health and Safety Control of COVID-19 Policy for students has been devised by the Department of Education and is set within the context of the existing Code of Behaviour. It should be read in the context of the COVID-19 Response Plan that outlines in detail all infection control and safety measures being implemented in the school in response to the pandemic.

It is the aim of the College to create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning in the particular context of COVID-19. Every effort is made to ensure that all students understand the public health requirements as they relate to the school context.

Students are encouraged at all times to take personal responsibility for their actions in all aspects of their behaviour and to recognise their individual roles in contributing to a positive learning environment for all. The requirements and expectations around standards of behaviour with specific reference to COVID-19 are outlined below.

Face Coverings

Wearing a face covering or mask does not negate the need to stay at home if symptomatic.

Wearing of face coverings – a requirement

Staff and students, at post-primary level, are required to wear a face covering. The exemptions to this are set out below.

Cloth face coverings

Cloth face coverings are recommended for staff and students. Cloth face coverings act as a barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face covering coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice. Cloth face coverings are therefore intended to prevent transmission of the virus from the wearer (who may not know that they are infected) to those with whom they come into close contact.

Face coverings must not contain any slogans/logos/images that may cause upset or be deemed offensive to any member of the school community.

Visors

Cloth face coverings are more effective than visors. In the limited circumstances where a cloth face covering cannot be worn clear visors must be considered. The alternate use of a clear visor can also be considered when a staff member is interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties.

Exemptions

A medical certificate to certify that a person falls into a category listed below must be provided to the school by, or on behalf of, any person (staff or student) who claims that they are covered by the exemptions below:

- any person with difficulty breathing who cannot wear a cloth face covering or a visor
- any person who is unable to remove the cloth face-covering or visor without assistance
- any person who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the cloth face covering or visor, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.

In circumstances where a medical certificate is not provided that person (staff or student) will be refused entry to the school.

Whilst staff and students may wish to utilise their own face covering on a day-to-day basis, the school has a stock of additional disposable or multi-use face coverings (or if appropriate, visors) for staff and students in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day or where required on an ongoing basis.

Under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, DDLETB, as employer of Deansrath Community College is required to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees of the school. The employer is further required to manage and conduct the school in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that individuals at the place of work who are not employees, such as students, parents/guardians, visitors to the school, are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare.

This policy is influenced by the need to minimise the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into the school community and to prevent its spread. Although it is acknowledged that no single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19 transmission, adherence to this policy will contribute to the reduction of that risk of transmission.

In accordance with this policy students are expected to comply with the standards of behaviour set out in this policy or as directed by the school to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19. The COVID-19 control measures are consistent with current advice from the HSE, the Health and Safety Authority, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Foreign Affairs and, as such, may be subject to change. Students and parents/guardians will be notified of any changes to the control measures.

Students are expected to comply with all directions from school staff in relation to the school's COVID-19 control measures. Any failure or refusal to comply with this policy or to follow instructions of school staff will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

Parents/guardians are required to supply the school with a phone number/s of available person/s who can be contacted at all times and who will be available to collect a student from the school should the need arise.

1. Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to symptoms of cold or flu. The most common symptoms are:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath
- loss of sense of smell or taste

More information regarding the most up-to-date signs and symptoms of COVID-19 is available on the HSE website, <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>.

2. Standards of Behaviour expected of students to help prevent the introduction or spread of COVID - 19 in the school

- Students are expected to comply with any control measures directed by the school to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19, including, but not limited to:
- maintaining a social-distance of at least 1 metre and where possible, 2 metres, from other students and staff;
- wearing a face covering (applicable at post-primary level). All students at post-primary level, are required to wear a face covering subject to a limited number of exceptions set out in relevant Department of Education guidance. Face coverings must not contain any 3 Page | 3 slogans/logos/images that may cause upset or be deemed offensive to any member of the school community.
- performing hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser on entering the school.
- repeating hand-hygiene at regular intervals throughout the school day and when directed by school staff;
- maintaining good respiratory-hygiene. In this regard students should:
 - cover nose/mouth with a tissue when coughing/sneezing and dispose of used tissue in waste bin and perform hand hygiene
 - cough or sneeze into the inner elbow (upper sleeve) rather than into the hand, if no tissues are available.
 - keep contaminated hands away from the eyes and nose
 - carry out hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials
 - not spit or deliberately cough or sneeze at or towards any other person in the school
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- not sharing materials or stationery, such as pens, calculators, rulers, etc. with other students;
- not attending school for 14 days after returning from travel out of the country in line with Government guidelines for travel;

- not attending school if displaying COVID-19 like symptoms and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- not attending school where tested positive for COVID-19 and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- not attending school if identified by the HSE as a person who has been in contact with another person who has contracted COVID-19 and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice;
- not attending school if a member of the student's household is displaying COVID-19 symptoms and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- telling a teacher or other member of staff where a student feels unwell at school. In that regard –
 - the student will require to be collected from the school as soon as possible by a parent/guardian or a person designated by the parent/guardian for such purpose.
 - parents must ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details so that they can be contacted by the school if required.
- complying with any other such directions as advised by the DES and/or HSE and communicated to the school community.

Note – this list will be reviewed and items adjusted or added where necessary having regard to changing circumstances.

Students should be aware that the above is a non-exhaustive list. Students are expected to follow all instructions from staff which aim to prevent the introduction COVID-19 into the school and minimise its spread.

3. Failure to comply with the standards of behaviour

Failure by a student to comply with the standards of behaviour expected to help prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 will constitute a breach of the Code of Behaviour of Deansrath Community College and s/he may be subject to sanction up to and including suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any actions or sanctions taken in respect of alleged breaches of the code of behaviour will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the school's code of behaviour, the requirements of the EWS Guidelines on Developing a Code of Behaviour and relevant requirements of the Education and Welfare Act 2000. Sanctions will be proportionate to the nature, seriousness and context of the behaviour.

A student engaging in aggressive, threatening or unacceptable behaviour that creates or increases the risk of COVID-19 infection for staff, other students or visitors to the school may be removed from class and, if necessary, from the school premises with immediate effect, pending any further action to be taken in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.