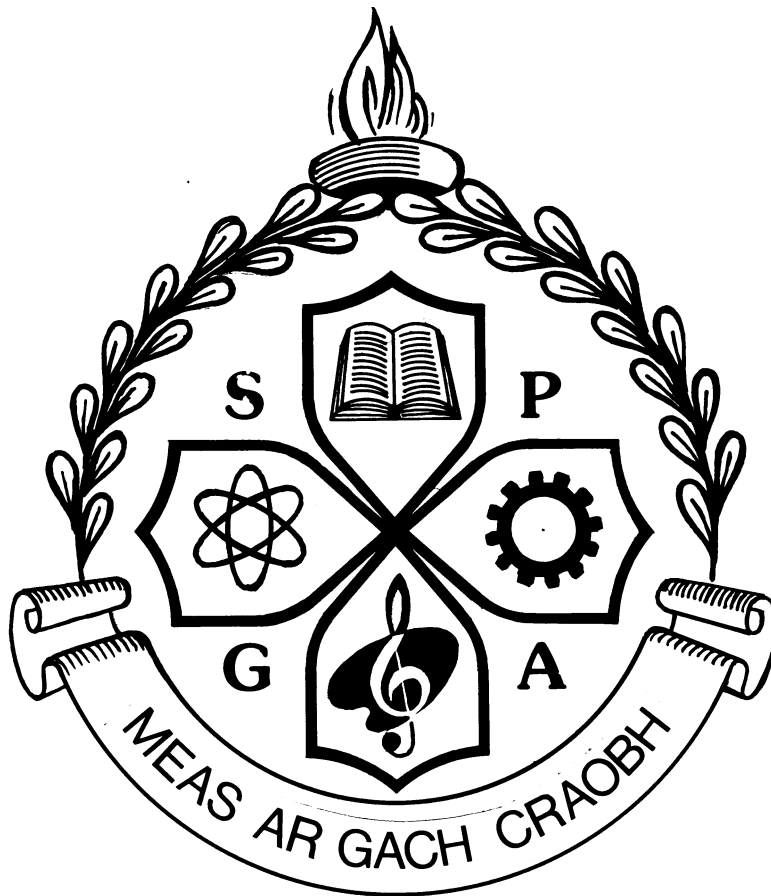


# Code of Behaviour



# Mayfield Community School

## Code of Behaviour

The Teaching Staff in consultation with the Parents Association, Students Council and the Board of Management have expressed a strong desire that the school's Code of Behaviour should:

- (a) Be progressive, in line with Dept. of Education & Skills and NEWB guidelines.
- (b) Encourage the student with behavioural difficulties to obey the code.
- (c) Provide for effective teaching in a calm and orderly environment.
- (d) Work in tandem with the established Pastoral Care and Guidance /Counselling support systems within the school.

The school Code of Behaviour exists not because of a desire to punish the student who is having difficulties but because of the ultimate objective to bring about a change in the behaviour of the student.

The Teaching Staff are responsible at all times for the behaviour of children within sight or sound of them and are required to respond promptly and firmly to any instances of unacceptable behaviour.

Parents/guardians and a supportive home environment play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes, which produce good behaviour in schools.

The following strategies as recommended by the Dept. of Education & Skills have been used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour and are incorporated in the code of Behaviour:-

- (a) Reasoning with the pupil;
- (b) Reprimand (including advice on how to improve);
- (c) Temporary separation from peers, friends or others;
- (d) Loss of privileges;
- (e) Detention during a break or after school hours;
- (f) Prescribing additional work;
- (g) Referral to Principal;
- (h) Communication with parents;
- (i) Suspension (Temporary).

The ultimate sanction for unacceptable behaviour and failure to abide by the Code of Behaviour is dismissal from the school. The right of appeal against a suspension or dismissal is available to parents through the Board of Management and the Dept. of Education & Skills in the event of an appeal to the Board of Management being unsuccessful.

# School Rules

1. That you come to school every day and arrive on time.
2. That you come to school in uniform, clean and tidy.
3. That you have respect for people and property
4. That you do your best in class and at your homework.
5. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects.
6. That you act in a proper manner around the school.

A more detailed explanation of these rules and the reason for their existence is outlined in more detail in the student's journal. Parents and teachers will discuss these rules with students at the beginning of each school year.

A Discipline Charter contains the following key elements;

## Teachers have the right to:

*Establish a safe learning environment.*

*Expect and receive appropriate student behaviour.*

*Ask for help from fellow staff, parents, the Deputy Principal, Principal and the Board of Management.*

## Teachers are responsible for:

*Providing work which is of a suitable nature.*

*Providing activities that are suitable to the student's abilities and social development.*

*Respecting the dignity of the students.*

## Students have the right to:

*Be safe.*

*Receive an appropriate educational experience.*

*Be treated in a dignified, reasonable and fair manner.*

## Students are responsible for:

*Working in a safe way.*

*Behaving in a way that does not interfere with the freedoms and rights of other students.*

*Behaving in a way that respects the dignity of other students and staff.*

Mayfield Community School believes that its Code of Behaviour is firmly rooted in mutual respect, justice, the common good, and concern for health and safety.

An essential element of this is good, open communication between the partners. The school believes that such an approach will be beneficial for students, teachers, management, parents/guardians and the Board of Management alike. The Code of Behaviour will have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all the parties concerned within the school.

Praise and positive consequences are seen as more important by the teachers in maintaining a good relationship with students than punishment and negative consequences.

## **PROCEDURES/STAGES OF REFERRAL**

Each student is expected to contribute positively to the teaching and learning environment in every class.

Each teacher is responsible for maintaining a positive teaching and learning environment in his/her classroom and is expected to have a system to promote positive behaviour and also to have a system to deal with misbehaviour and breaches of class rules.

### **Each teacher should insist on:**

- Good timekeeping
- Order and respect for others and their property
- School Journal on the student's desk at the beginning of each class
- Homework being completed on time
- All student coming to class with all necessary books, copies etc.
- No eating or drinking in class
- Mobile phones must be powered off and out of sight
- An atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning

### **Each Teacher can promote Positive Behaviour by:**

- Positive written comments in official school journal
- Verbal praise from teacher or tutor
- Affirmation of student's self-esteem and self-worth
- Record system showing progress as well as high grades
- Complimenting good behaviour, initiative, courtesy, neat appearance etc.
- Praise for progress as well as achievement
- Catching people doing something good or helping someone else
- Agreeing rewards with students or class for better effort or better behaviour – a quiz, an outing, a discussion, lunchtime DVD or music etc.
- Green Card system
- Postcard system
- Certificate system/celebration
- Gradam School Awards

## **STAGE 1**

**Student is in breach of class rules**

**Action:**

- **Request co-operation**
- **Inform student of the teacher's right to teach the class**
- **Verbal warning stating that the behaviour is inappropriate and advises the student to make a sensible choice and return to task**
  
- **Use positive behaviour strategies such as;**
- **Affirmation of student's self-esteem and self-worth**
- **Record system showing progress as well as high grades**
- **Complimenting good behaviour, initiative, courtesy, neat appearance etc.**
- **Praise for progress as well as achievement**
- **Catching people doing something good or helping someone else**

## **STAGE 2**

**Student continues to be in breach of class rules**

**Action:**

- **Student is given a second verbal warning**
- **Moving position in class (e.g. sitting at the front of the class)**
- **Further request for co-operation**
- **Inform student of the teacher's right to teach the class**
  
- **Use positive behaviour strategies such as;**
- **Affirmation of student's self-esteem and self-worth**
- **Record system showing progress as well as high grades**
- **Complimenting good behaviour, initiative, courtesy, neat appearance etc.**
- **Praise for progress as well as achievement**
- **Catching people doing something good or helping someone else**

<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Teacher may assign extra work</b>
<b>Support</b>	<b>Teacher may contact parent/guardian by journal/phone/letter</b>

## **STAGE 3**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour**

<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Teacher issues DL1 + Red Card</b>
	<b>Teacher may assign extra work</b>

**Support**                      **Speak to student**  
**Teacher may contact parent/guardian by journal/phone/letter**

**An alternative Green Card system exists which allows for subject teachers to acknowledge improved or good behaviour, cooperation with teachers or one off participation in activities, which should be recognised.**

**The thrust of the system is to allow and encourage teachers to acknowledge ‘positive’ behaviours and so provide a balance to the Red Card system. Very often the use of positive incentives can have a greater effect on all concerned than a solely punitive approach.**

**The Green Cards will be submitted in the same way as the Red Cards and be processed and recorded in a similar manner. The green card system will inform the Gradam Nomination system.**

**Formal acknowledgement would take place by the sending of a ‘well done’ post card to the student’s home by the Year Tutor. Having accumulated Green Cards a student would receive a formal certificate from the school. Students would also participate in a prize draw at the end of each school term.**

**The Year Tutors in consultation with the class teachers will identify students who may be written to by the Principal/Deputy Principal acknowledging a particular achievement or improvement in behaviour during school time.**

#### **STAGE 4**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour**

**Sanction**                      **Teacher issues DL1 + 2<sup>nd</sup> Red Card**  
**Teacher issues extra work**

**Support**                      **Speak to student**  
**Teacher must contact parent/guardian for meeting**

**Guidelines for conducting successful meetings with parents are included in the staff handbook.**

**Positive behaviour strategies should still be considered as a method of altering behaviour and forming a better working relationship with the disruptive student.**

#### **STAGE 5**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class(es)/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour**

**Student receives Red Card from subject teachers. When a student has received between 3-5 Red Cards**

**Sanction** Year Tutor issues DL2. Detention 1  
Student loses all privileges for the week when detention is assigned  
Work is assigned to be completed on detention

**Support** Subject Teacher, Class Teacher and Year Tutor will speak to student and encourage positive behaviour  
Student will fill out Reflection Form on detention to be returned to Year Tutor

### **STAGE 6**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class(es)/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour  
Student receives Red Card from subject teachers. When a student has received between 6-8 Red Cards**

**Sanction** Year Tutor issues DL3. Detention 2  
Student loses all privileges for the week when detention is assigned  
Work is assigned to be completed on detention

**Support** Subject Teacher, Class Teacher and Year Tutor will speak to student and encourage positive behaviour  
Student will fill out Reflection Form on detention to be returned to Year Tutor  
Year Tutor with Subject Teacher will meet parent/guardian  
Student will be referred to the Care Team  
DL5 to be issues after completion of second detention (DL5 warning of near suspension)

### **STAGE 7**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class(es)/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour  
Student receives Red Card from subject teachers. When a student has received between 9-11 Red Cards**

**Sanction** Year Tutor and Deputy Principal will meet the parent/guardian  
1 day suspension is imposed  
Student loses all privileges for the week when detention is assigned  
Work is assigned to be completed on suspension

**Support** Year Tutor and Deputy Principal will meet the parent/guardian  
Student will fill out Reflection Form to be returned to Year Tutor  
Student will be referred to the Care Team

**Student will be placed on report for the week to help them focus on their goals  
Students will be reintegrated into class using positive behaviour strategies and supports**

### **STAGE 8**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class(es)/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour  
Student receives Red Card from subject teachers. When a student has received between 12-14 Red Cards**

<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Year Tutor and Deputy Principal will meet the parent/guardian 2 day suspension is imposed Student loses all privileges for the week when suspension is imposed Work is assigned to be completed on suspension</b>
<b>Support</b>	<b>Year Tutor and Deputy Principal will meet the parent/guardian Student will fill out Reflection Form to be returned to Year Tutor Student will be referred to the Care Team Student will be placed on report for the week to help them focus on their goals Students will be reintegrated into class using positive behaviour strategies and supports</b>

### **STAGE 9**

**Student continues to be disruptive in class(es)/continuous breach of the Code of Behaviour  
Student receives Red Card from subject teachers. When a student has received 15 or more Red Cards**

<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Deputy Principal will meet the parent/guardian 3 day suspension is imposed Student loses all privileges for the week when suspension is imposed Work is assigned to be completed on suspension</b>
<b>Support</b>	<b>Deputy Principal will meet the parent/guardian Student will fill out Reflection Form to be returned to Year Tutor Student will be referred to the Care Team Student will be placed on report for the week to help them focus on their goals Students will be reintegrated into class using positive behaviour strategies and supports Contract of learning</b>

**At this stage the subject teacher will continue to record misbehaviour on the Red Card and send the DL1 letter to parents. The matter will be picked up by the Year Tutor and Deputy Principal and dealt with under category 8 in Suspension:**

**Suspension will increase to 4 days at this level.**



**Each subsequent offence will be treated as an individual matter.**

**The Principal/Deputy will retain the right to consider the application of the Code of Behaviour based on the individual needs and circumstances of students.**

## ***Serious Incident Report***

In the event of a once off incident of a serious nature, a teacher may decide to issue a serious incident report which is sent directly to the Deputy Principal who in together with the teacher will investigate the incident and meet parents/guardians and the student. A period of suspension or expulsion from the school may follow as a sanction. Situations warranting the issue of a Serious Incident Report are;

- Striking/attempting to strike a teacher/school staff
- Threats of any kind to a teacher/ school staff
- Use of inappropriate language/gesture to OR in the presence of a teacher
- The use of foul or obscene language to a teacher/school staff
- Blatant refusal to carry out an instruction given by a teacher
- Possession/supply/use of alcohol/illegal substances in school or on a school related activity
- Bullying of any kind

The use of other school policies other than the Code of Behaviour in relation to the above behaviours is not excluded.

## ***Suspension***

Suspension is defined as requiring a student to absent himself/herself from classes for a specified, limited period of school days. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as one or more of the following:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property or theft.
- The student has been found guilty of abusive or bullying behaviour towards staff or other students.

## ***Grounds for Suspension***

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Certain breaches of the rules, if serious and self-evident, may lead suspension. Such breaches would include:

- Smoking
- Racist Behaviour
- Fighting
- Truancy
- Any other such misbehaviour that could incur a suspension.

These serious matters will be referred to the Deputy Principal and may incur a one to three day suspension from school as decided by the Deputy Principal.

Mayfield Community School recognises that the good relationship between teachers and students is paramount to the teaching and learning process. Where a student deliberately misbehaves in such a manner or deliberately targets teachers, teaching assistants or any other member of the school staff, sanctions will apply subject to the discretion of the Principal and with the sanction of the BoM where appropriate.

### ***Decision to Suspend***

Only the Principal and the Board of Management have the legal authority to suspend a student. The Principal/Deputy Principal of Mayfield Community School has authority from the Board of Management to suspend a student for up to three / four days, without immediate reference to the Board. Only in exceptional circumstances will there be consideration of a suspension longer than three days, and the Board will be notified.

A Board of Management may decide, 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 suspension as a sanction.*** However, a general decision to impose suspension for the named behaviours does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures  
**NEWB Guidelines p73**

In 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 in the school, or any other person. Fair procedures must still apply. **NEWB Guidelines p73**

### ***Suspension Procedure***

Before considering suspension, the school will investigate the complaint thoroughly and be guided by the principles of fairness and natural justice. These include the right of the student and his/ her parents/guardians to be heard and to respond to the complaint, and the right to impartiality.

The Deputy Principal and/or the Year Tutor/ Subject Teacher Would normally be involved in the investigation.

## ***Implementing Suspension***

Following a meeting with parents and the student the Principal will notify the parents/guardians and the student of the suspension by letter. The letter will include:

- The reason(s) for the suspension.
- The period of suspension, with relevant dates.
- Advice that the student should remain at home under parental supervision throughout the period of suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed and a request that parents/guardians sign the completed work.
- Arrangements for returning to school including any **commitments** to be entered into by the student and parents.
- Provision for an appeal to the Board of Management and to the Secretary General of the Department of Education. This appeal “ to be made within a reasonable time from the date the student/parent/guardian was informed of the decision” (Education Act 1998 Section 29)
- Any other relevant matter.

## ***Immediate Suspension***

In certain exceptional circumstances, the Principal may determine there are grounds for immediate suspension for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others.

Where appropriate the Principal will conduct a preliminary investigation to establish the case for suspension. The formal investigation will follow immediately on the imposition of the suspension.

In the case of immediate suspension, parents/guardians will be notified and arrangements made with them for the collection of the student. They will be informed that a more thorough inquiry is underway and will be asked to attend the school, with the suspended student.

## ***Re-integrating the Student***

On completion of the suspension, the school and its teachers will make every effort to re-integrate the student quickly into school life and to ensure that she catches up with any work missed. The student will be expected to apply themselves diligently to their work, to follow the Code of Behaviour, and to honour any commitments they or their parents/guardians may have made as a condition to their returning to the school. If appropriate, a designated member of staff will provide support to the student during the re-integration process.

## ***Reporting Suspensions***

The Principal reports all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for, and the duration of each suspension

## ***Expulsion Policy and Procedures***

In Mayfield Community School the ultimate sanction imposed by the school is expulsion and it is imposed by the Board of Management only.

This policy and its procedures are approved by the Board of Management, having been developed in consultation with all the educational partners, i.e. parents, students, staff and with the community. The policy has been developed in line with the NEWB.

### ***What does expulsion mean in Mayfield Community School?***

A student is expelled from school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school, having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

### ***The Grounds for Expulsion***

In Mayfield Community School we recognise expulsion of a student is a very serious step and will only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. Normally a range of other interventions to address the misbehaviour will have to be tried before a decision to expel is made:

- Meeting with parents and the student to try to find ways to help the student to change their behaviour
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist
- Ensuring other possible options had been tried
- Seeking the support of other agencies
- *A decision to expel requires serious grounds such as:*
- A 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 reasons for expulsion in Mayfield Community School***

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension but the seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour are the key differences. All possibilities for changing and/or improving the student's behaviour have been exhausted.

## ***Forms of Expulsion in Mayfield Community School***

Expulsion can be in one of two forms:

1. Automatic expulsion
2. The ultimate sanction after:
  - a) all relevant disciplinary options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented and
  - b) when support services have been offered and
  - c) discussions with parent(s) or guardian(s) relating to the serious misbehaviour have taken place

### ***Automatic Expulsion***

The Board of Management may decide, 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 automatic expulsion as a sanction.

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- Actual violence or physical assault
- Possession of or supply of drugs or illegal substances

In the case of automatic expulsion, due process and fair procedures will be followed by the Board of Management.

### ***Expulsion Procedure***

The procedures to be followed in the case of an expulsion are those as outlined in the case of a suspension. The procedures are those as set out in the NEWB 'Guidelines for Schools', Chapter 12, pages 80 to 86.