



Code of Behaviour

Introduction

By sending your child to Comeragh College, it is understood that you have read and accepted the school Code of Behaviour.

Persons whose behaviour is deemed to be governed by this policy include staff, students, visitors and parents/guardians involved in school activities.

Our Code of Behaviour complies with statute and common law, in particular the Education Act 1998 Equal Status Act 2000, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, EPSEN Act 2004 and other relevant legislation. The whole school community including students, staff, parents and management developed our code.

Mission Statement

At Comeragh College, we aim to provide a quality education for life in an innovative responsive and caring learning environment.

In our school, students can attain the highest standards of excellence, academically and in all other aspects of their school activities.

Vision of the School

Comeragh College is non-denominational college of the Tipperary ETB. It is a college that:

- Has the highest ambitions and expectations in all aspects of school life and strive to nurture these qualities in every student.
- Ensures every student is treated as an individual.
- Is committed to equality of opportunity.
- Wants all students to fulfil their potential both academically and socially so that they leave with the widest range of choices open to them in a changing society.

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Purpose of School Rules and Regulations/Rationale

This code of behaviour is in place in order to:

- Ensure the safety of all members of the school community both on the school premises and on school activities
- Promote a successful teaching and learning environment
- Help students acquire good habits of discipline, behaviour and responsibility
- Prepare students for future responsibilities in the working environment and adult life and assist in developing good habits of citizenship
- Inform students and their parents/guardians of the procedures used by Comeragh College to address issues of behaviour in the school by defining standards of behaviour for students
- Informing students and their parents/guardians of the measures that the school may take to address student misbehaviour
- Informing parents/guardians of school procedures that will be followed before a student is suspended or expelled
- Explaining the grounds and conditions under which a suspension imposed on a student may be lifted
- Informing parents/guardians of their legal responsibilities relating to occasions when their child is absent from school
- Conform to the statutory obligation in Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, which obliges recognised schools to prepare, for the information of students and their parents/guardians, a code of behaviour in respect of students registered at the school.
- The support and cooperation of Parents/Guardians is essential to the effective operation of the Code of Behaviour.

Principles of Managing Behaviour

- To protect the basic rights of safety, learning and respect. The school owes a duty of care to all who are attending at it; this includes all students and staff.
- To create a climate where teaching and learning can flourish. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others or with the smooth running of the class and that affects negatively the work of the class is unacceptable.
- To promote positive behaviour.
- To set the boundaries in which students can achieve and feel successful
- To encourage students to behave in a socially appropriate manner
- To provide a transparent framework for the fair, consistent and equal treatment of all students
- Student behaviour is monitored for Health and Safety reasons by the use of CCTV within the school building and grounds.

The School's Plan for Promoting Positive Behaviour

The key features of a positive approach are:

- To acknowledge improvement in behaviour
- To place an emphasis on positive rather than negative statements
- Regular and sustained use of praise and rewards
- Teaching students the social skills they need to be successful
- Redirecting students towards success rather than highlighting their mistakes
- Rewarding students at end of year award ceremonies and Junior Cert award ceremony.

Roles and Responsibilities (Appendix 1)

1. The Subject Teacher/ Supervising Teacher

- The vast majority of behavioural matters are dealt with promptly and efficiently by the subject teachers/supervising teacher and have no long-term consequences
- Records will be written in a concise and factual manner.

2. The Parent/Guardian

Is involved where:

- There is a failure to achieve the necessary standards of behaviour. In this instance, the parent/guardian will be contacted with a view to seeking their assistance and co-operation in dealing with the matter. Parents/Guardians are contacted to make them aware of the issues and asked to work with the school to help their son/daughter achieve the standard of behaviour as set out in the code of behaviour.
- Parents/guardians must be available by phone when contacted by the school during the school day. (Health and Safety) Failure to be contacted may result in parents/guardians being asked to meet with the BOM.

3. Specified staff members for example class tutor and student support team

Are involved where:

- The subject teacher believes the student has not responded positively to his/her intervention a student's conduct has consequences beyond the class of an individual teacher.
- There are breaches of school rules outside the classroom
- Detention is indicated ([Appendix 7](#))

4. The Discipline Team

Are involved where:

- The subject teacher believes the student has not responded positively to his/her intervention a student's conduct has consequences beyond the class of an individual teacher.
- There are breaches of school rules outside the classroom
- Detention is indicated.
- Referral to management may be made

5. The Deputy Principal

Is involved where:

- There are serious breaches of school rules.
- There is persistent failure over a lengthy period to achieve an acceptable standard of work or behaviour.
- Detention is indicated.
- Suspension is possible. In this case, the matter is reported to the Principal.

6. The Principal

Is involved where:

- There are serious breaches of school rules
- The Principal may suspend any pupil for a limited period and shall report any suspensions to the Board of Management at its next ordinary meeting.

7. Ancillary Staff/SNA's

- As with all other members of the school community they need to be familiar with the code and be vigilant in ensuring standards are upheld.
- Report any violation of the code of behaviour

Core Expectations

The school's expectations provide the following framework for reasonable and responsible behaviour. The Code of Behaviour will be taught to students each year. It is the responsibility of all staff members to emphasise and apply the rules fairly and consistently. School Rules apply whenever students are wearing the school uniform or agreed PE gear as agreed per policy when they are representing the school or when they are engaged in any school activity.

Expectations and responsibilities of parents/guardians and staff can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Core Expectations of Students

1. I will come to school every day for the full day and arrive on time.

This means:

- That you attend every day unless it is unavoidable.
- That you arrive before 8.40 a.m. and are punctual for all classes.
- That you arrive to school in sufficient time to prepare for your classes.
- That if you arrive late you sign in with the school office before going to class.
- A note in the journal explains that lateness from parents or guardians.
- That if you drive your own vehicle to school that you do not park in school car parks.
- That you will only be on school grounds after school hours under the supervision of a staff member e.g. Homework club, supervised study, extracurricular activities.
- That, in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, absences must be explained by completing the note for explanation of school absence provided in the back of the School Journal, dated and signed by parents/guardians. This note must be presented on the day you return to school. ([Appendix 4](#)) ([Appendix 6](#))

Because:

- Time missed is hard to make up.
- Punctuality displays courtesy to your teachers and fellow students and is a life-skill for adulthood and the world of work.
- Good attendance and good timekeeping helps everyone to do well.
- School carparks are reserved for staff and school visitors due to health and safety concerns.
- The school must be given a written explanation for absence by the parents/guardians as per Section 18 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

- The school is responsible for you during school time.

2. I will come to school in full uniform, clean and tidy

This means:

- That you wear the school shirt tucked in and the school tie visible above the 'V' of the school jumper.
- That you wear navy or black leather shoes as specified in the uniform policy and during practical classes.
- That you do not wear jewellery except for discrete stud earrings (one in each ear). You may be asked to remove piercing and jewellery in some classes due to Health and Safety reasons. Tongue/nose studs/facial piercings are not permitted.
- That you do not display visible piercings.
- That you have your PE uniform and suitable footwear for PE class.
- That you do not wear non-uniform tops coats, jackets and other non-uniform accessories in class.

Because:

- The school uniform is agreed to by parents/guardians, students and the school authorities.
- The school uniform ensures all students present in the same way – regardless of their family's income.
- We all have a responsibility to maintain the image of the school.
- We must all contribute to and maintain high standards of Health and Safety in the school.

3. I will come in properly prepared for all my subjects, with all class materials and on time for my classes.

This means:

- That you go to your locker at official break times only and before and after school.
- That you have correct books completed homework, pens, copies and exercises.
- That you bring any special equipment needed e.g. school PE gear, drawing equipment etc.
- That you respect your school journal and use it appropriately.

Because:

- You waste class time if you are not properly prepared for class.
- You cannot participate fully without the appropriate books, materials and equipment.
- The journal is a means of communication between school and home.

4. I will co-operate and participate in the classroom and have a positive attitude to classwork, homework as well as all curricular and extra-curricular activities.

This means:

- That you attend all timetabled classes and participate fully in all class activities.
- That you listen to your teachers.
- That you do not disturb the class. That you put up your hand if you wish to speak.
- That you always carry your journal and note your homework for each subject.
- That you do your homework each night to the best of your ability and hand in assignments on time.
- That you present a note from your parent/guardian for no homework or incomplete homework.
- That you do not eat or drink in class. (*except in exceptional circumstances*)

Because:

- Attendance and participation is important to succeed.
- The teacher has a right to teach.
- The other students have a right to learn.
- Your journal helps you to organise your homework so that you will succeed in school.
- Homework builds on the work done in class and homework that is done well will help you succeed.

5. I will have respect and consideration for other students, teachers, staff members, visitors and local residents.

This means:

- That you are fair and honest with everyone.
- That you help other students if they need support e.g. younger students finding a classroom.
- That you do not pick on, victimise or bully others and that you must report any incidents of bullying to a staff member. [*Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Victimisation is the singling out of a person for cruel or unjust treatment.*]
- That you do not make offensive remarks.
- That you do not fight or threaten to fight in or out of school.
- That you respect the property of others and that of the school.

Because:

- Mutual respect and support helps to make a positive school experience for everyone.
- You would like to be shown respect and consideration by others.
- Bullying and victimisation can cause fear, hurt and misery. We want our school to be a safe space.
- It is important to report any incidences of bullying to staff so they are aware and can help the victim.
- Aggressive behaviour could cause serious injury or accidents.
- Damaging school property is destructive and shows a lack of respect for the school community of which you are a member.

6. I will show respect for others in the way I speak, in the language I use and in the way that I behave.

This means:

- That you cooperate fully and willingly in the classroom.
- That you are not aggressive in behaviour or language.
- That you carry out instructions in a co-operative manner.
- That you show courtesy, consideration and good manners in your behaviour and language.
- That you behave respectfully towards others on any school activity in or outside of the school.

Because:

- Mutual respect and support helps to make a positive school experience for everyone.
- Positive behaviour contributes to a positive school experience for everyone.
- Aggressive behaviour or language has no place, and will not be tolerated, in our school community.

7. I will respect the school environment, school property and equipment.

This means:

- That you contribute to keeping the school clean and free of litter.
- That you place litter in appropriate bins.
- That you do not chew gum while in school.
- That you do not use tippex/correction fluid or indelible markers
- That food is eaten in designated locations only and that you ensure this area is tidy after you have used it.
- That food is consumed at designated times and never in class.
- That you store school bags properly in the assigned bag store. At no time should bags be left on corridors, as these will be removed by supervising staff.
- That students will not congregate in corridors or in toilets.
- That you remain indoors at lunchtime on wet days.
- That you reports and accidents to supervising teacher.

- That any damage you cause to school property will be replaced/paid for by your parents/guardians.
- That you do not return to the school grounds outside of school hours without the school's explicit permission.

Because:

- Everyone benefits from working in a safe, pleasant and clean environment.
- We are all responsible for maintaining a clean school.
- Chewing gum is difficult and costly to remove.
- Tippex and indelible markers can damage school property.
- Schools on corridors are a health and safety risk.
- If the weather is wet, this is bad for the condition of the school and your health.
- All accidents must be recorded in an accident book and parents must be notified.
- It is your responsibility to cover the cost of any damage you cause.
- Students should only congregate in assigned areas, such as the general-purpose area, for health and safety reasons.
- The school is private property.

8. I will keep my phone switched off at all times during school hours

This means:

- That you keep your mobile phone switched off at all times whilst in the school building or on the school grounds.
- That your phone is switched off at all extra-curricular and school related activities.
- That your phone is out of sight at all times and stored in school bag or locker.
- That you do not use digital / electronic media in school (e.g., iPods, MP3 players).

Because:

- Teachers are entitled to teach without interruptions.
- The Office phone is available if you need to make an essential call or if your parents/guardians need to contact you during school hours.
- Students who contact home via mobile do so without office knowledge and this may become a health and safety risk.

- It is important that students be in a safe environment free from distraction, bullying (*through texting*).
- The use of digital video/photos and other recording devices can lead to an invasion of privacy.
- Use of electronic devices during break time can lead to isolation and limit the opportunity for socialisation.
- Use of electronic devices can increase peer pressure to have the latest model.

9. I understand that the use of addictive/intoxicating substances is not allowed.

This means:

- That you do not possess, use, distribute or sell cigarettes including electronic cigarettes/vaping materials, alcohol, stimulating or illegal drinks/substances/solvents at any time on school campus or during school related activities.

Because:

- The possession use and sale of addictive substances is illegal and poses a serious Health and Safety concern.
- It is illegal to smoke in all public places under the Public Health (Tobacco Acts).
- The school is responsible for the protection and safety of all the school community

Note:

If anyone is found using, or in possession of illegal substances, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately, and the Gardaí will be notified.

10. I will not bring into the school or have on my person objects likely to cause injury or harm.

This means:

- That you do not bring, or facilitate the bringing into the school campus, or on any school related activity, any object likely to cause injury such as blades, knives, syringes, fireworks, bangers, stink bombs, lighters and other dangerous objects. This also includes jewellery likely to pose a threat to safety.

Because:

- Such objects can present a serious threat to the Health and Safety of the School community.

11. I will only leave class/ school with permission of class or supervising teacher.

This means:

- That if you are feeling unwell you will report this to your class or supervising teacher. Parents/guardians will be contacted if necessary.
- That toilets should be availed of before, after school, and at designated break times.
- That only in exceptional circumstances you will be allowed out of class and in such cases students will wear the teacher hall pass.
- That you do not leave the school building without permission

Because:

- The school is responsible for you during school hours and it is of utmost importance we are aware of your whereabouts for health and safety reasons.

Rewards

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this policy. Rewards have the ability to change behaviour. Examples of rewards are:

- Signal/sign e.g. thumbs up
- Smile/nod of approval
- Verbal praise – one to one
- Explain why a compliment is given – “Good, you have waited your turn to speak”
- Acknowledge/praise outside the classroom
- Class competitions
- Positive comments on written work
- The use of merit stickers
- Written praise to Tutor/parent/guardian/management
- Record in homework journal
- Display of students work throughout school
- Award of a commendation e.g. improved result
- Public recognition at class/school assemblies when it is more than one student
- Referral of praise to principal/deputy principal
- Use of school newsletters to give congratulations
- Certificates for attendance, punctuality and other areas of effort and achievement
- Acknowledgement at Award Ceremony
- Watching a video
- Prizes
- Term reports

Consequences (*Sanctions*)

It is the responsibility of the school authorities:

- To maintain a classroom and school environment that is safe for students, teachers and other staff.
- To maintain a classroom and school environment that is supportive of the learning of every student and ensures continuity of education.

It is the policy of the school to intervene early and positively when a student's behaviour does not meet, the standards expected.

This section sets down the code of behaviour and sanctions applicable to all students in Comeragh College during the school year. Parents/Guardians and students are requested to study it carefully.

- The classroom teacher aims to foster an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning. When dealing with issues of indiscipline the teacher will deal with the matter as s/he deems appropriate.
- Points may be imposed.
- The student may be formally interviewed by staff members and/or school management in the hope of preventing a repetition of misbehaviour.

Points System

- The "Points System" is the name given to the graded system of sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.
- Discipline commences in the classroom. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline in his/her own class while sharing a common responsibility for good order within Comeragh College.
- The "point's system" has been developed over many years as a support to effective classroom management. In general, teachers deal with discipline issues themselves and apply the system if it is deemed appropriate.
- Discipline programme entails collaboration among all staff members, students and parents/guardians
- The school reserves the privilege of school trips for students who are of good behaviour generally, as they inevitably involve in an extra degree of trust, confidence and camaraderie between the students and the staff who give voluntarily of their time to organise and promote such activity.
- Where a student acquires more than one detention a week due to an accumulation of points, management reserves the right to proceed directly to step seven on the Points System.

Implementation of Points System

Incident	Procedures/ Responses
Repeated failure to have required books or materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verbal- once 2. Written note in journal to be signed 3. Text or phone call to parent and details of detention in journal 4. Text or phone call to parents/guardians to ask them to arrange time to meet teacher and detention details in journal 5. Written referral to class tutor to be presented to Discipline Team and meeting scheduled with parent and student 6. Referred to Deputy -5 points 7. Referred to Principal – suspension and referral to BOM
Interruptive behaviour	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verbal- once 2. Written note in journal to be signed 3. Text or phone call to parent and details of detention in journal 4. Text or phone call to parents/guardians to ask them to arrange time to meet teacher and detention details in journal 5. Written referral to class tutor to be presented to Discipline Team and meeting scheduled with parent and student 6. Referred to Deputy -5 points 7. Referred to Principal – suspension and referral to BOM
Ongoing failure to present homework	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verbal- once 2. Written note in journal to be signed 3. Text or phone call to parent and details of detention in journal 4. Text or phone call to parents/guardians to ask them to arrange time to meet teacher and detention details in journal 5. Written referral to class tutor to be presented to Discipline Team and meeting scheduled with parent and student 6. Referred to Deputy – 5 points 7. Referred to Principal- suspension and referral to BOM

Implementation of Points System

Incidents	Points Awarded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littering • Non-compliance with Uniform Rule- no note Late for class no reason • Non-compliance with Jewellery Rule • Journal not signed where required • Misuse of student's own journal or another student's journal • Student not sitting in assigned seat in class • Entering classrooms without permission • Interfering with another student's locker • Interfering with another student's property • In a locker area not designated for own student year group at break times • Bringing in football, sliotars etc. to school with no permission • Not in assigned area in canteen • Day of suspension for any reason 	<p>1 point per incident</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile phone turned on- phone handed into office • No Student Journal • Chewing gum • No PE clothes as per policy/suitable footwear for PE class, no note (unable to participate) • Not signing in at front office when arriving late or returning to school after appointment. • Loitering in toilets • Not using fastest route between classes and arriving late • Eating in unassigned area • Playing sports in areas not designated for sport • Skipping queue in canteen 	<p>2 points per incident</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non- attendance in class (phone call home) • Mobile phone use in school (phone handed into office) • Leaving school without permission (phone call home) • Writing notes under false pretences/ forging notes from parents/guardians 	<p>5 points per incident</p>

Management Direct Interventions: -

- Refusal to take instruction “Are you refusing to take instruction?”
- Refusal to accept correction
- Dangerous behaviour
- Physical fighting or assault
- Bullying behaviour
- Found in possession of, involved in the supply of, under the influence of alcohol, cigarettes/e-cigarettes, vaping materials or other illegal substances
- Abusive language to a teacher or member of staff
- Deliberate damage to school property including graffiti
- Interference with school and/or other people’s property
- Misuse of ICT/Social Media
- Misbehaviour in detention

Accumulation of Points and Sanctions

- An accumulation of points may result in exclusion from participation in ECA’s (Extra-Curricular Activities).
- Management reserve the right to refuse student permission to attend ECA activities or school trips etc.
- Students may be limited to particular area in school during breaks where management have concerns for student or other students Health and Safety.
- Medical Issues- students may have to stay in assigned areas where staff are concerned for their wellbeing.
- These points may be accumulated in one school year. Each student starts with no points at the beginning of the school year.

No of Points	Sanction	Communication	Follow up	Other
10	Detention	Parents/guardians informed – detention slip		
20	Detention	Student interview with management Phone call to parents/guardians	Report Card- 2weeks (white)	Interventions
30	Detention	Student interview with Parents/Guardians & Management	Report Card—2 weeks (yellow)	Interventions
40	Suspension -2 days	Meeting with the BOM – Parent/Guardian and student	Report Card – 3 weeks (orange)	Intervention
50	Suspension- 2 days	Student interview with Parents/Guardians &Management	Report Card – 4 weeks (red)	Interventions
60	Suspension -2 days	Meeting with BOM Contract of Behaviour will be drawn up and signed by Student and Board of Management	Comply with Contract	
70	Suspension –indefinite	Review from the Board of Management Expulsion		

Follow up Procedures explained:

1. Detention:

- The Principal, the Deputy Principal and/or student coordinator will impose detention after a student has failed to reach the required standard of behaviour.

Procedure:

- Teacher's record points on Vsware
- When a student reaches 10/20/30 points, the code of behaviour administrator contacts the student and parent and sends them details of the detention in writing.
- The class tutor speaks with the student and parent.
- A list of students on detention is given to the Detention Supervisor
- A student who accumulates 10/20/30 points will be detained on the following Thursday evening from 3.15-4.15p.m.
- All detentions are supervised
- Detention takes precedence over all other activities
- Students may be asked to complete a reflective exercise examining the reasons that have led to their detention.
- Under no circumstances will homework be completed during detention time.
- Failure to attend detention will result in the student being suspended for 1 day.
- Saturday detention may be imposed if management deems it necessary.

2. Report Card

- The Report Card is a blank week's timetable and, if issued, a student is required to have it signed by the relevant teacher for each class period for the duration of a week with a relevant comment. Points Code 1 – 5 is used (from excellent five to no improvement/unsatisfactory – one).
- The Report Card is issued for a serious offence or an accumulation of offences.
- Code of Behaviour administrator has responsibility for issuing Report Card
- The Report Card must be signed each night by parents/guardians.
- The student returns the Card to the Code of Behaviour Administrator on Friday evening. Progress is discussed with student.
- If there is no progress after the week, the Discipline Team may issue Report Card again for the following week
- Report Card is filed on student VSware after the week.

Stage 1 White -Card at 20 points. 10 consecutive school days (Detention)

Student behaviour will be reviewed after one week. If the student's behaviour has improved to a satisfactory level then they will come off report. However if the students behaviour is not satisfactory, the student will remain on the white card for another week until the behaviour improves or else they will be moved onto Stage 2 Report Card – Yellow. If the student's behaviour improves on stage 1 and then at a later stage display a pattern of poor behaviour they will be places on Stage 2.

Stage 2 Yellow Card at 30 points. 10 consecutive school days (Detention)

Student behaviour will be reviewed after one week. If the student's behaviour has improved to a satisfactory level then they will come off report. However if the students behaviour is not satisfactory, the student will remain on the yellow card for another week until the behaviour improves or else they will be moved onto Stage 3 Report Card – orange . If the student's behaviour improves on stage 2 and then at a later stage display a pattern of poor behaviour they will be places on Stage 3.

Stage 3 Orange Card at 40 points. 15 consecutive school days (2 days suspension)

Student behaviour will be reviewed after one week. If the student's behaviour has improved to a satisfactory level then they will come off report. However if the students behaviour is not satisfactory, the student will remain on the orange card for two other weeks until the behaviour improves or else they will be moved onto Stage 4 Report Card – red. If the student's behaviour improves on stage 3 and then at a later stage display a pattern of poor behaviour they will be places on Stage 4.

Stage 4 Red Card at 50 points. 20 consecutive school days (2-day suspension)

Student behaviour will be reviewed after one week. If the student's behaviour has improved to a satisfactory level then they will come off report. However if the students behaviour is not satisfactory, the student will remain on the red card for 3 another weeks until the behaviour improves or else they will be referred to the Board of Management. If the student's behaviour improves on stage 4 and then at a later stage display a pattern of poor behaviour, they will be referred to the Board of Management.

3. Interventions

These are strategies to help prevent student re offending and give specific help to those having difficulty adhering to the Code.

- Interview between the student and specified staff members and/or management. The purpose is to instil in the student a better understanding of the rules s/he has broken. To help the student understand how his/her actions are affecting others members of the community. To advise the student how to behave appropriately and avoid a reoccurrence
- Students complete a self-assessment form.

- Student can be referred to the guidance counsellor/ school completion programme/ Home School Liaison/ SEN Department or anger management sessions
- Referral to the school psychologist for testing and/or help in behaviour modification. Referrals may also be made to GP and/or CAMHS or other agencies.
- Referral to outside professional agencies for assistance in behaviour modification.
- Other in school interventions/programmes include Friends for Life, The Alert Programme, Check and Connect, Restorative Practice, Homework Club, Lunchtime Library support, Supervised study and other extra-curricular activities.

4. *Suspension (Appendix 8)*

When the graduated steps in the Report System are being tried and are failing to modify the student's behaviour, a student may be suspended.

Suspension is defined as:

Requiring the student to absent themselves from the school for a specified, limited number of school days.

- A student who accumulates **40/50/60/70 points** may be suspended from school. The school will notify parents/guardians and the School Board.
- An undertaking of good behaviour signed by the student and their parents/guardians must be received by the school after suspension.
- During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school.
- During the period of suspension, students will be expected to complete assigned work from the school.
- As part of the Code of Behaviour, the Board of Management of Comeragh College has a policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension, which are in line with NEWB guidelines.
- A student who is not on a Report Card due to an accumulation of points, and is suspended for other reasons, will complete a Progress Report Card to monitor their behaviour on return to school for one week. This card will be in the back of the school journal.

Authority to Suspend

Only the Principal and the Board of Management of Comeragh College have the legal authority to suspend a student. The Principal may suspend any pupil for a limited period and shall report any such suspension to Board at its next ordinary meeting.

Grounds for Suspension

Suspension is a serious sanction and normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that;

- 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

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension

Determining the appropriateness of suspending a student

Where the purpose of a proposed suspension is clearly identified, and that purpose cannot be achieved in any other way, suspension can have value.

As part of a behaviour management plan suspension can

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and their parents/guardians
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions
- Impress on a student and their parents/guardians the seriousness of the behaviour

In determining the appropriateness of suspending a student, the school is informed by the NEWB Guidelines on developing a Code of Behaviour.

Suspension Procedures

Suspension is a serious sanction. Before considering suspension, the school will investigate the complaint thoroughly and be guided by the principles of natural justice and fair play. These include the right of the student and their parents/guardians to be heard and to respond to the complaint and the right to impartiality.

Normally involved would be the Year Head and the Deputy Principal. They may seek assistance from other members of staff not involved in the incident. The investigation will include meeting all those concerned and giving them every opportunity to present their case. Where there has been a very serious breach, the Deputy Principal will be immediately informed.

On completion of the investigation the results and evidence are given to the Principal

Implementing Suspension

1 Informing the student and parents/guardians that suspension is being considered

The school will let the student and their parents/guardians know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents/guardians may be informed by phone or in writing, depending on the seriousness of the matter.

2 Opportunity to respond

Parents/guardians and student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed, If a student and their parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school will record the invitations made to parents/guardians and their response.

3 Proceeding with suspension

The Principal will notify the parents/guardians and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- The reasons for the suspension
- The arrangements for returning to school , including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents/guardians
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. Only when the total number of days reaches twenty does the right to appeal under Section 29 come into play. This appeal is to be made “within a reasonable time from the date the student/parent/guardian was informed of the decision”(Education Act, Section 29)
- Any other relevant matter

4 After the suspension ends

On completion of the suspension, the school will make every effort to re-integrate the student into school life. The student will be expected to take responsibility for catching up on any work missed. Successful re-integration goes beyond academic work, however. The student will be expected to follow the school Code of Behaviour and to honour any commitments he/she or his/her parents/guardians may have made as a condition of their returning to school. Where necessary, a designated member of staff will provide support to the student during the re-integration

5 Clean Slate

The student will be given the opportunity and the support for a fresh start. A record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, however, once the sanction has been completed the school will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Forms of Suspension

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of a 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 will still be applied.

Suspension during a State Examination

This sanction is normally approved by the Board of Management and will only be used where There is

- A threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
- A threat to the safety of other students and personnel
- A threat to the right of other students to do their examination in a calm manner

This sanction will be treated like any other suspension, and the principles and fair procedures governing suspensions will be applied. (The DES Best Practice Guidelines concerning Certificate Examinations offer guidance to schools on this matter)

Automatic Suspension

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

- Fighting, assault, or violence.
- Physical or sexual assault.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Reasonably suspected possession of or dealing in drugs, alcohol, addictive substances (un-prescribed drugs) or illegal substances.
- Serious damage to school property.
- A serious breach of the schools Acceptable Use Policy (ICT)
- Smoking

Rolling Suspension

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

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

Open-ended suspension

Students will not be suspended for an indefinite period

Records and Reports

Records of Investigation and decision-making:

Formal written records will be kept of;

- The investigation (including notes of all interviews held)
- The decision making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension

Report to the Board of Management

- The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of management of Comeragh College, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension

Report to NEWB

- The Principal will report suspensions in accordance with the NEWB reporting guidelines (Education Act 2000, section 21(4) (a))

Grounds for removing a suspension

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

Review of the use of suspension

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

Expulsion

A student is expelled from school when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude them from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. As part of the Code of Behaviour of Comeragh College, the Board of Management of the school has a policy on, and procedures for expulsion, which are in line with NEWB guidelines

Authority to expel

The Board of Management alone has the authority to expel a student. Only extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour will warrant consideration of expulsion.

Grounds for expulsion include:

- Behaviour that is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of themselves, other students or staff members.
- Serious damage to property.

Misconduct that might lead to a proposal to expel will be very serious examples of those that could lead to suspension.

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/guardians, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a sanction. (Due process and fair procedures still apply)

Expulsion for a first offence

A single act of serious misconduct might form the basis of a proposal to expel.

Such misconduct could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another person.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Sexual assault.
- Possession or dealing drugs or illegal substances

Determining the appropriateness of expelling a student

Given the seriousness of expulsion as a sanction, the Board of Management will undertake a very detailed review of a range of factors in deciding to expel a student. In this, they will ensure fair procedures and be guided by the NEWB guidelines (Ch. 12 p 82) on “Factors to consider before proposing expelling a student”.

Procedures in respect of expulsion

The school is required by law to follow fair procedures and the principles of natural justice. To that end, the school will follow the procedures in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008)*, paragraphs 10.3-10.6, pages 67-68 and paragraph 11.5, pages 74-75., as may be amended or updated by the NEWB.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. The Principal directs a detailed investigation. This includes informing the student and their parents/guardians, in writing, of the nature of the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The Principal will assure the student and parents/guardians that they will be given every opportunity to respond before any decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. If a student and their parents/guardians fail to attend a meeting, the Principal will write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a rescheduled meeting and failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to parents/guardians and their response.
2. The Principal recommends to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The parents/guardians and the student are informed, in writing, of the decision and the grounds to recommend expulsion. They and the Board are provided with all relevant documentation. A hearing is arranged to which the student and parents/guardians are invited. This will be held at a time and date that will allow time for the parents/guardians and the student to prepare their presentation. They can make a written and oral submission to the Board.
3. The Board considers the Principal’s recommendation and arranges a hearing at which the student and their parents/guardians may put their case forward. As a first step, the Board will consider the manner of the investigation and assure itself that all procedures were followed properly and in accordance with the principles of fairness and natural justice. No party who has had any direct involvement in the case, or a close connection with a party to the case will be allowed to participate in the Board’s deliberations.

If the Board decides to consider expulsion it will hold a hearing that is properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing, the Principal, the student, and their parents/guardians each put their case in the presence of the other. Each side is allowed to

question the other. The Board is impartial as between the Principal and the student. If parents/guardians wish to be accompanied, the Board will make every reasonable effort to facilitate this.

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

4. Following the hearing the Board deliberates and acts. The Board has the responsibility of deciding, first, whether the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether expulsion is the appropriate sanction. If the Board does decide to expel it will, as required by law, notify the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing. The expulsion cannot take effect for twenty school days from the date the EWO receives notification.

The Board informs the student and parents/guardians, in writing, of its conclusions and the next step in the process.

5. The EWO engages in consultations with all parties. This will happen within 20 days of receipt of notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled. Pending the consultations the Board may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and the safety of students is secured. (Education Welfare Act 2000 s24(5) These steps may include suspension if there is a likelihood that the continued presence of the student in the school will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other students or staff.

6. Proceeding with expulsion If, after the twenty day period of notification to the EWO has elapsed, the Board remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board will formally confirm the decision. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately, and told of the right of appeal. A formal record will be made of the decision to expel the student.

Appeal

A parent, or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act, 1998, Sec 29)

Review

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

Procedures for raising a concern or bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter

Any member of staff who has a concern or complaint on a child protection issue must inform immediately the Principal who has been appointed the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), as required by the Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary and Primary Schools (Department of Education and Science, 2013).

Any parent or individual who has a concern or complaint on a child protection issue may contact the Gardaí, the local duty social worker or any member of staff. In the latter case, the member of staff will immediately inform the DLP.

Associated Policies

The following policies have a bearing on the Code of Behaviour.

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Admissions and Participation Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Uniform Policy
- PE Policy
- Substance misuse Policy
- CCTV Policy
- School Tours
- Children First & Safeguarding

Appendix 1

Expectations and Responsibilities for Parents/Guardians and Staff

Expectations and Responsibilities of Parents/guardians (Appendix 5)

- The support and co-operation of Parents /Guardians is essential to the effective operation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Parents/Guardians need to work in co-operation with Comeragh College to create a positive and caring learning environment.
- Comeragh College is confident that if support and co-operation are received from Parents/Guardians that this Code of Behaviour will help enable your son/daughter to achieve their full potential while attending Comeragh College

In particular, Parents/Guardians should:

1. Monitor your sons/daughters behaviour, progress, attendance and punctuality by regularly checking the Student Journal.
2. Ensure that your son/daughter attends school regularly, on time, in full uniform and is in possession of all materials necessary for their education.
3. Contact the school if you are concerned about any aspect of your child's behaviour and/or progress.
4. Provide all necessary information to Comeragh College. Medical etc.
5. Provide a note, using Student Journal, explaining a student's absence from school as required by the Education welfare Act 2002.
6. Make appointments through the school office 051- 640131 to request a meeting with a teacher, Student Coordinator, Deputy Principal or Principal.
7. Attend meetings as requested by Comeragh College, especially all Parent Teacher meetings.
8. Follow school guidelines with regard to procedures for signing in and out of school.
9. Read and become familiar with all Comeragh College policies and procedures.
10. Highlight the importance of Respect to your son/daughter.
11. Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.

12. A note is required to explain no homework or incomplete homework. If homework is a cause of worry for your son/daughter, parents/guardians are asked to contact the teachers. Ensure all notes are in the school journal.
13. Sign homework journal as requested.
14. Provide suitable place at home for student to complete homework and praise student when homework is done.
15. Help pack school bag for the next school day.

Expectations and Responsibilities for staff

- Keep up to date records - contact numbers for each student
- Arrange special meetings for Parents/guardians on areas of special interest to parents/guardians re the development of their daughters/sons.
- Present information/pastoral
- Talks on matters of curriculum & development e.g. Open Day for new 1st years, [\(Appendix 2\)](#) First Year pastoral meeting, Senior Cycle Options for Third Year parents/guardians
- Encourage Parental involvement/attendance at all sporting, cultural and other events
- Elect parent representatives to Board of Management and Parent Council when required
- Keep Parents/guardians informed of all school activities.
- Arrange Parent/Teacher meetings once a year for each year group
- Make available academic reports twice yearly for each class group
- Teachers will be punctual and well prepared for class
- Be fair and just in their classroom management
- Be aware of the individual needs of students
- Correct homework assigned
- Be vigilant in study areas to ensure a good learning atmosphere
- Teacher takes his/her own roll call at every class
- Follow up on unexplained absences

Appendix 2

First Year /Transfer Students

First Year Students

Comeragh College is very conscious that entry into secondary school is a major change in a young person's life. First year students can take time to adapt to the new circumstances and requirements of secondary school. To make the adaptation as easy and smooth as possible, the school takes the following additional measures:

- Information meetings for First Year parents/guardians are organised before the start of the school year and a subject selection meeting is scheduled at the end of September.
- In the first days of school, students are shown around the school and all that is required of them is carefully explained.
- The J.C.S.P. programme is organised to support students transfer into secondary school.
- Class tutors are timetabled for two class periods and available for one other period each week to support their assigned students.
- The Student Support Team are available to support students with issues.

Parents/Guardian

The school believes the full support of parents/guardians for the Code is essential. Values at home and parental attitudes make a positive contribution to student's learning and behaviour. Parents/guardians are expected to model the standards that students are asked to respect.

The school provides many opportunities for parents/guardians to be familiar with the standards and to understand the importance of expecting students to behave in accordance with these standards.

The school maintains regular communication with parents/guardians and if necessary, parents/guardians will be invited to discuss their child's behaviour, with the objective of achieving an agreed common approach.

Meetings between parents, student and school staff should help confirm

1. issues that need to be addressed
 2. objectives of the meeting
 3. agree steps to help resolve the issue- parent and student sign the agreement and date
 4. Agree a time to meet to review if the issue has been resolved.
-
- Familiarising themselves with the code and encouraging their son/daughter to abide by it.
 - Contacting the school to discuss student behaviour when invited to do so.
 - Keep the school informed of any traumatic events happening in the student's life.
 - Monitoring their son /daughter's progress/behaviour by checking and signing the school journal at least once per week.
 - Ensuring that students attend school regularly, punctually, in full uniform and ready for work.
 - Encourage their children to achieve their full potential and to act and behave responsibly

Appendix 3

School Journal

Student Journal

Students must have their school journal in school each day.

The Student journal is designed to:

- Monitor the student's attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor the day-to-day behaviour of each student.
- Provide a number of permission forms, which require the signature of the student's parents/guardians.
- Provide a journal in which students will organise homework on a daily basis.

The benefits of a Student Journal for students are many. It maintains close and immediate contact with parents/guardians on issues of permissions and behaviour.

Parents/guardians are requested to check their son's/daughter's Student Journal at least once a week during the school term. First and Second Year Parents/guardians are asked to sign journal daily.

- Each student is responsible for maintaining the journal in excellent condition(no graffiti)
- Each student is required to have his/her Student Journal with him/her in all classes. In order to facilitate entries in the "Absence Record" or "Permission to leave School" sections and to facilitate parents/guardians checking the Student Journal. **It is essential that students bring home the Student Journal each evening.**
- Each student it responsible for the safe keeping of his/her Student Journal. Loss of the Student Journal must be reported immediately to your tutor/student coordinator.
- The current replacement cost of the Journal is €10.
- The Journal must be on the desk during each class. The Journal must be available for the classroom teacher, Tutor, Student coordinator, Deputy Principal or Principal on request.

Appendix 4

Procedures for notifying the school about reasons for absence from school.

The school keeps a daily record of all students which is submitted to the NEWB at the end of the year

- Any absence from school should be unavoidable and for a very good reason.
- It is not acceptable that parents/guardians take students out of school for holidays, or for other non-essential reasons.
- It is the duty of parents/guardians to inform the school, in writing, if their child will be, absent for any period, giving the reason for the absence and its anticipated duration.
- If a student is absent and the school has not been informed, it reserves the right to contact the parents/guardians seeking a reason for the absence.
- If a student is, absent for twenty or more school days in one school year, the school is legally obliged to report this to the NEWB, and to give reasons for the absences.
- The school may notify the NEWB at any time if it has concerns about a student's absence.
- The NEWB has the right to investigate absence from school where it deems it appropriate.

Absence through illness

- If a student is, absent for more than three days parents/guardians should phone the school with a progress report, to be given to the Student coordinator. If student has a medical certificate to explain absences, parents/guardians should forward this to the school as soon as possible and before the student returns to school.

Return after absence

- On a student's return from absence, parents/guardians must complete and sign the Note Explaining Absence at the back of the journal, detailing dates absent, date of return, reason for absence and the number of days absent.
- The student must present the journal immediately on their return for signature.
- Where there has been a significant absence through illness the school may request a doctor's certificate.

Procedures for students leaving the school during the school day

- Students are encouraged to make medical appointments outside school hours. Where a student needs to leave the school during the school day, a note must be written in the school journal detailing the reason for absence. This must be signed and dated by a parent/guardian and presented to the office. The student must then sign out at Reception before leaving the building. Parents/guardians are requested to come to the school reception and collect the student.
- Where a student has to leave the school unexpectedly, for example in the case of illness, a parent/guardian must come to the school office to collect student and sign them out. A note in the school journal, detailing the reason for absence, must be presented at the following day. We are in *loco parentis* and, in emergencies, may take appropriate action where necessary, e.g. call a doctor or ambulance.
- Students must sign out at reception when leaving the school on school business.
- Students who are licensed drivers, and who drive to school, may not use their cars to take other students as passengers at any time during school hours.

- Students who are 18 years or more do not need a parent/guardian to collect them but must have a note from parent/guardian.

Doctor's Notes/Hospital Notes

Where the above are available, it is helpful to include them for reference.

Appendix 5

Procedures when a parent is uncontactable during the school day in relation to an incident – behaviour, illness or an accident.

Throughout a student's school years, it is inevitable that at some stage, a parent/guardian may have to be contacted and the student transferred to the care of their parents. Students are to be collected by their parents/guardians OR another relative/person that has been designated by the parents/guardians.

This document is to give guidance if the parents or designated other person cannot be contacted.

- When the office is unable to make contact with the parent/designated other person the safety and welfare of the child will be the paramount consideration in determining appropriate action.
- Parents are required to provide the school with their up to date contact details, name, address, home, work and mobile numbers.
- Parents should also provide the contact details of at least two other relatives/persons who can be called when the parent/guardian cannot be contacted in the event of incident taking place.

Procedure:

When a parent/guardian or the designated other person cannot be contacted via telephone or text message:

- This will be brought to the attention of the HSCL or DLP if the HSCL is not in the building; every effort must be made to make contact with the parents/guardians or designated relative/persons.
- The DLP will be notified that contact cannot be made and the DLP must keep a record of this.
- Any child welfare concerns arising out of such an incident will be dealt with in accordance with the child protection procedures of the school.
- This is to be reported to the Board of management also as per child protection standards.
- At least 2 staff should be present until responsibility for the child is handed over.

Comeragh College
Tinvane, Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 051-640131
Fax: 051-640720
Email: office@comeraghcollege.ie
Web: www.comeraghcollege.ie

Dear Parent/Guardian

On _____ at _____, there was no response when the school attempted to contact you _____ or the designated person _____ on your enrolment form.

In the event, we took the following action:

Please contact the school immediately.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Langton

Principal

Appendix 6

Comeragh College
Tinvane, Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 051-640131
Fax: 051-640720
Email: office@comeraghcollege.ie
Web: www.comeraghcollege.ie

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to express concern about _____ absences from school. As you may know, under current legislation the school is obliged to contact the National Education Welfare Board where students are under 16 and have absences of 20 days or more, or where any student concerns the school about patterns of non-attendance. I would appreciate it if you could contact me with regards this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Langton
Principal

To-date: _____ has been absent _____ days.

Appendix 7

Comeragh College
Tinvane, Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 051-640131
Fax: 051-640720
Email: office@comeraghcollege.ie
Web: www.comeraghcollege.ie

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your son/ daughter _____ will be detained on _____
From _____ under a teacher's supervision, due to a breach of school
discipline.

Yours sincerely,

Student Coordinator

Reason for Detention

- Accumulation of 10 or more points _____
- Behaviour _____
- Mobile Phone _____
- Unauthorised absence from school _____

Appendix 8

Comeragh College
Tinvane, Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary
Tel: 051-640131
Fax: 051-640720
Email: office@comeraghcollege.ie
Web: www.comeraghcollege.ie

Ref No: _____

Dear _____,

I wish to inform you that your son/daughter _____ has been suspended from school due to his/her failure to conform to the school's code of behaviour. He /She is suspended for _____ days.

_____ will return to school on _____.

Yours faithfully,

Kevin Langton
Principal

*As it is part of our school rules to notify parents of suspension, you are accordingly being informed. You have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management.