

Comeragh College



CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR



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“Think Positive, Be Positive and Positive Things Will Happen”

CODE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

INTRODUCTION

Comeragh College works hard to provide a safe and motivational learning environment to enable students to reach their potential and achieve their goals academically, socially and emotionally by providing a vast array of subject choice and also core programmes to enhance the social and emotional development of each individual student.

We promote the following 8 key skills and encourage the development of positive behaviour in everything we do. These key skills are embedded into our teaching and learning:

- Managing myself
- Being creative
- Staying well
- Being literate
- Being numerate
- Working with others
- Communicating
- Managing information and thinking

By sending your child to Comeragh College it is understood that you have read and accepted the school’s Code of Positive 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 Positive 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 a multi-denominational college of the Tipperary ETB. It is a college that:

- Has the highest ambitions and expectations in all aspects of school life and strives 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.

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOUR

An understanding of the factors that influence behaviour is key to understanding and implementing the school Code of Positive Behaviour. Each individual student comes to school with their own unique individual needs, personality and abilities. We are aware that external factors can also influence the behaviour of each individual student, such as home environment. Understanding these individual personal and external factors is key to helping students behave in a positive way and to reach their full potential. Therefore, we encourage parents/guardians to communicate with our directors when they have any concern regarding the behaviour of their child within the school environment. The importance of the relationship between school, parent and student is paramount in the development of positive behaviour through our school. Whilst the code of positive behaviour ensures clarity and equality for our students, we work with students as individuals. When working with students around their behaviour we try to take internal, external and interpersonal factors into account. We always hope to see our students reach their full potential academically, personally and socially so that they graduate from our school with the widest range of choices open to them.

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Purpose of School Standards and Regulations/Rationale

This positive code of positive behaviour is in place to ensure that we provide a *quality education for life in an innovative, responsive, caring environment*:

- 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 how we address issues of behaviour in Comeragh College and by highlighting our expectations of behaviour
- Informing students and their parents/guardians of the steps taken to identify, discuss and respond to student misbehaviour
- Liaise and inform 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.
- Inform parents/guardians of their legal responsibilities relating to occasions when their child is absent from school. It is a parent/guardian's duty to inform the school when their child is absent.
- Conform to the statutory obligation in Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 which obliges schools to prepare a positive code of positive behaviour for students/parents/guardians.
- The positive code of positive behaviour is in place to encourage the support and cooperation of Parents/Guardians. This is essential to the success of the Positive Code of positive behaviour.

Principles of Managing Positive School 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 (*see appendix 1 successful teaching and learning environment*). Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others or with the smooth running of the class and that negatively affects the work of the class is unacceptable (*see Consequences for these behaviours on page 17*).
- To model and promote positive behaviour within the whole school community by (explained in next section, *see The School's Plan for Promoting Positive Behaviour on page 7*).
- To use restorative practice in the school as a way to promote reflection, conversation and responsibility around behaviour. Restorative practice involves individuals answering a set of questions that allows each person to see things from the other's perspective along with giving each person an opportunity to reflect on their own behaviour and changes that may need to be made. This is used by some teachers in the school, and we are planning CPD to train teachers in restorative practice.
- To establish clear guidelines in each class for the students to achieve their goals and experience success.
- To encourage students to behave in a socially appropriate manner as promoted through Wellbeing classes. Provide students, if needed, with the student positive behaviour checklist (*see appendix 2 for checklist*). This allows students to take ownership of their behaviour and provides them with a template showing them how their behaviour can be improved in line with JC Key Skills – Managing Myself.
- To provide a fair, consistent and equal treatment of all students. Each student is treated as an individual.
- Student behaviour is monitored for Health and Safety reasons by the use of CCTV within the school building and grounds. Comeragh College's use of CCTV is in accordance with the Tipperary ETB Policy on the use of CCTV.

The School's Plan for Promoting Positive Behaviour

The key features of a positive approach are:

- To acknowledge consistent positive behaviour and improvement in behaviour.
- To place an emphasis on positive rather than negative statements. Promoting positive language and interactions.
- Developing class expectations with students and regularly reminding students of these expectations.
- Regular and consistent use of praise both inside and outside the classroom.
- Good use of class and school routine.
- Promoting positive relationships within the school community.
- Allowing students an opportunity to discuss and reflect on school systems and procedures through surveys, student council, class discussions in Wellbeing classes.
- Facilitating conversations with students around appropriate behaviour and expectations through tutor and SPHE classes.
- Allowing students to participate on teams within the school such as the Amber flag, Worldwide Global schools, student council, Active schools, mental health, Green school, student positive behaviour team. This gives students a leadership role and allows them to influence school culture and procedures.
- Giving students an opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and share advice with younger students through mentor programmes, buddy systems, surveys where results are shared for learning with younger students and parents where appropriate.
- Helping students to recognise their learning style and behaviour through World of Work and Guidance classes. This allows students to efficiently prepare for homework and tests and allows them to achieve to the best of their ability.
- Use of rewards system through our points system, tutors, directors.
- Helping students to grow and develop positive social skills through adult modelling, Wellbeing classes, use of student support structures if needed (*see appendix 5 for Student Support programmes*).
- Access to student support staff if needed.
- Using a restorative approach to help students reflect and restore positive behaviour rather than highlighting their mistakes.
- Rewarding students at end of year award ceremonies and Junior Cert award ceremony.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Positive Code of Positive Behaviour administrator oversees that the positive Code of Positive Behaviour records is correct for each student in the school.

1. The Subject Teacher/ Supervising Teacher

- The majority of behavioural matters can be dealt with promptly and efficiently by the subject teachers/supervising teacher and have no long-term consequences. Where a situation in a classroom has escalated a student may be referred to management as explained in implementation of points system/immediate referral to management
- Records will be written in a concise and factual manner
- Liaises with tutor, director and student support to devise a plan to support students in class if needed (appendix 3 may be referenced here)

2. The Parent/Guardian/Over 18 student

Is involved where:

- There is a failure to achieve the core expectations (*see list of Core Expectations in the next section on page 9*). In this instance, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and their assistance and co-operation

will be requested 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 core expectations as set out in the positive Code of Positive 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 (see appendix 9 for details on procedures when a parent is uncontactable).
- A third-party number must be given in the event that both parents/guardians are unavailable. The third party must be aware that they are nominated as such.

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 and the conduct has consequences beyond the class of an individual teacher.
- There are breaches of school rules outside the classroom, for example interfering with lockers, rough or boisterous behaviour on the corridors, littering, refusal to follow instructions from a teacher. Some breaches may require extra support or intervention from a student director to advise on response or actions to be taken.
- Detention is indicated (reasons for detention outlined in section 7 Consequences).

4. The Student Director Team (AP1 Team)

Are involved where:

- Positive interventions by class teacher, tutor or members of the student support team have been unsuccessful to resolve and restore positive behaviour.
- There are serious breaches of school rules outside the classroom and/or affect the health, safety and wellbeing of other students and staff in the school.
- Detention has proven to be an unsuitable intervention for the student.
- Referral to management may be made.

5. The Deputy Principal

Is involved where:

- There are serious breaches of school rules and detention may be indicated.
- To support director at an earlier stage with interventions.
- There is persistent failure over a lengthy period to achieve an acceptable standard of work or behaviour.
- 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. *See section on [Consequences](#) on page 17* for details on what are serious breaches.
- There is persistent failure over a lengthy period to achieve an acceptable standard of work or behaviour.
- The Principal may suspend any pupil for a minimum of one day to a maximum of 5 days depending on the seriousness of the breach of school rules. The principal 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 Positive Behaviour.

Core Expectations

Our school's expectations can be summarised by the 4 Rs - Be Ready, Be Responsible, Be Respectful and Reach. The school's expectations provide the following framework for reasonable and responsible behaviour. The Code of Positive 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. The Code of Positive Behaviour will be taught to students each year by their designated tutor through a standardised PowerPoint. It is important for current and new staff to refresh and familiarise themselves with the Code of Positive Behaviour to ensure an effective level of consistency. School rules apply whenever students are wearing the school uniform or agreed PE gear- in school, at the bus stop and 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 4. This appendix outlines how the school works in partnership with parents/guardians. At induction meeting parents/guardians will have an opportunity to see what the students have been taught in relation to the Code of Positive Behaviour.

Core Expectations of Students

These will be taught to our students through their tutor class. These expectations are linked to the 8 key skills which are embedded in our teaching and learning. Each core expectation will be taught through the standard PowerPoint.

1. Attendance and Punctuality ---- 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 (i.e., illness, urgent family reason, medical appointment or bereavement).
- 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. See Attendance Policy for further details.
- That if you drive your own vehicle to school that you do not park in school car parks without a written agreement from school management.
- 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 9)

Late for School

- **Under 18:** If arriving late for school, students **under 18 years** and those adult students who have consented to share access to their personal data should present a note from his/her parent/guardian providing an explanation for the late arrival, and sign in, in accordance with the school's procedures. If no note is presented, parent/guardian will be contacted by school personnel. Students without a note may not be allowed interrupt a class that has already started.
- **Over 18:** If arriving late for school, adult students who have not consented to share access to their personal data, should present a note providing an explanation for the late arrival, and sign in in

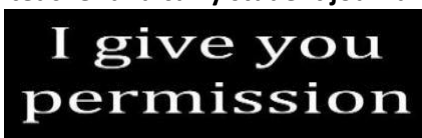
accordance with the school's procedures. In such cases, the student may be required to report to the Principal or Deputy Principal. The school may seek evidence of absence, e.g., doctor's note.

- **Arrivals without valid reason for being late will be sanctioned in accordance with the code and students may not be permitted to interrupt a class that has commenced.**
- **Absences – Over 18:** A note explaining the reason for their absences written by the adult in the case of those who have not consented to share access to their personal data must be provided on return to school.

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 time keeping help everyone to do well.
- School carparks are generally 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. **Absences from class----- I will only leave class/school with permission of the class or supervising teacher and carry student journal or toilet/hall pass**



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. Students must use the designated toilets for their year group unless otherwise stated.
- 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.
- Students who wish to leave the school during the day due to illness must speak with their director, when director is absent the student will go to a member of senior management, and arrangements to contact home and the student to be collected by a parent/guardian who signs him/her out at School Reception.
- Students who wish to leave the school during the day for reasons other than illness, must present their student director with the note at an agreed time with a signed note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence. The information will be recorded on VSware for class teacher. The student will then be signed out at the office by their parent/guardian. If the student is driving home, a signed note from their parent/guardian needs to be presented to the student director, the student's parent/guardian needs to phone the school giving permission for their son/daughter to leave, and the student presents the signed note at the office and signs out.
- Over 18-Absences during the school day - Adult students who have not consented to share access to their personal data and who wish to leave school during the school day must bring a signed and dated note to the Student Director or senior management which explains the reason for impending absence. Note will be signed by the Student Director or senior management. The student will then present the signed note at reception before signing out. To avoid disruption to learning and teaching students may not leave to sign out during class. These absences should be for valid reasons and where students misuse this they will be subject to the Code of Behaviour.

Because:

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

3. School Uniform ----- 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/black leather footwear as specified in the uniform policy.
- That you do not wear jewellery except for discrete stud earrings. 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. Students will be asked to remove or cover these piercings (until it can be removed properly).
- That you have your PE uniform and suitable footwear for PE class on the stated day. PE uniform is not allowed on any other day.
- That you do not wear non-uniform clothing, coats, jackets and other non-uniform accessories in class or in the building. These or any other extra items of clothing can be stored in the locker.

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. It is important that we take pride in our school uniform and how we present ourselves. This gives us a sense of community and prepares us for the world of work.
- We must all contribute to and maintain high standards of Health and Safety in the school.

4. Class Materials etc.-----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. Organisation is key and students need to be responsible for bringing the items needed for each class. The teachers clearly state what is needed for class and student organisation is taught and improved on in tutor classes.
- 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. The school journal is an official school resource and can be looked at by a teacher at any time. It therefore needs to be neat and tidy and only used for school purposes.
- Phoning home for lunches and school gear is not considered an emergency and it is the responsibility of the student to be prepared for the school day.

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.
- Managing myself is a key skill and I must learn to organise myself for each school day.

5. Co-operation and participation ----- I will co-operate and participate in the classroom and engage positively to classwork, homework, as well as all curricular and extra-curricular activities. See student positive behaviour checklist in appendix 2.

This means:

- That you attend all timetabled classes and participate fully in all class activities.
- That you listen to your teachers, engage positively with your teachers and develop the 8 key skills that are embedded in teaching and learning in Comeragh College.
- That you do not interrupt the lesson unnecessarily. That you put up your hand if you wish to speak, follow the rules for each class. Teachers display and outline their specific class agreement.
- That you always carry your journal and note your homework for each subject.
- Write down homework in each class or note the work covered during the class period.
- 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 energy drinks in class. Water is the only drink permitted in classrooms (except in exceptional circumstances where there is a medical reason).
- Ask for support where you are finding things difficult.

Because:

- Attendance and participation are 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.
- Communication is very important; your class teacher needs to know if you are finding things difficult so he or she can support you.

6. Respect----- I will have respect and consideration for other students, teachers, staff members, visitors and members of the community

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 speak disrespectfully, make fun of or pass comments, 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.*] Reference: Anti-bullying policy which outlines school procedure and protocols for dealing with such incidents.
- Comment on use of social media – the use of social media is not permitted in or on school grounds, school trips or any occasion where a student is in school uniform of any type. This includes bus stops, matches, workshops or any school organised event.
- That you do not make offensive remarks. An offensive remark is speaking to intentionally hurt or upset someone. Students are reminded that if you do not like something said about you, do not say it to others.
- That you do not fight or threaten to fight in or out of school - verbally, online or communicate same via another person.
- That you respect the property of others and that of the school.

Because:

- Mutual respect and support help to make a positive school experience for everyone.

- You would like to be shown respect and consideration by others.
- Every student has the right to access a quality education for life, in an innovative, responsive and caring learning environment.
- Bullying and victimisation can cause fear, hurt and misery. We want our school to be a safe space where everyone feels a sense of belonging. Bullying behaviour is never ok.
- It is important to report any incidences of bullying to staff so they are aware and can help the victim. In order to investigate, help or support a student, the school needs to be informed of all incidents or concerns that you may have. Every student is encouraged to report or share their concerns about bullying within the school (surveys, tutor class, student support team, class teacher).
- Aggressive behaviour could cause serious injury or accidents and can have long lasting impact on others.
- Damaging school property is destructive and shows a lack of respect for the school community of which you are a member.

7. Behaviour----- 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 come to class ready and willing to learn.
- You are mindful of your tone, language and body language when communicating with others.
- That you follow instructions in a co-operative manner with an open mind and willingness to learn.
- That you show courtesy, consideration and good manners in your behaviour and language. You are considerate of your teachers and other students in the school. You display good manners and positive behaviour.
- That you behave respectfully towards others and their personal space on any school activity in or outside of the school.

Because:

- Mutual respect and support help 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.
- Saying please and thank you/taking turns and tidying up after yourself can make a huge positive difference to the classroom environment.
- Allow students to enjoy school and feel comfortable in their learning environment.

8. Respect for school environment etc.-----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 located in all areas of the school. Green means recycling, brown means compost and blue means general bin.
- That you do not chew gum while in school. It damages property and it is difficult for the cleaning staff to remove and can cause health problems including digestive issues.
- That you do not use tippex/correction fluid or permanent markers in a manner that is not designed for their use.
- That food is eaten in designated locations only and that you ensure this area is tidy after you have used it. Food is to be consumed in the canteen area unless otherwise stated.
- That food is consumed at designated times and never in class unless otherwise stated or if there is a medical reason for doing so.

- That you store school bags properly in the assigned area. At no time should bags be left on corridors, as these will be removed by supervising staff.
- That student will not congregate in corridors or in toilets.
- That you remain indoors at lunchtime on wet days.
- That you report any 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.
- School bags on corridors are a health and safety risk.
- Gathering in large groups can be intimidating for other students especially in bathroom areas.
- 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.

9. Phone-----I will keep my phone switched off at all times in the school building. I will not bring phone to school unless absolutely necessary

This means:

- That you keep your mobile phone switched off at all times whilst in the school building or on the school grounds.
- That you do not record or take pictures of any student in school uniform, this includes in the class, in the toilet, at the bus stop, on the bus or on school grounds
- That you do not record or take pictures of any teacher or staff member at any time in or outside of school.
- 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 the locker, if you need to bring the phone to school.
- That you do not use digital / electronic media in school (e.g., iPods, MP3 players) unless directed by special education needs coordinator.
- That you will not use mobile phone for contacting home during the school day even in emergencies - you will always go to your student director.

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 and/or bullying (*through texting*).
- The use of digital video/photos and other recording devices can lead to an invasion of privacy.
- Students have a right to feel comfortable on school grounds, at the bus stop and when taking the bus.

- The bus stop is still considered to be on school grounds and therefore all school rules apply.
- Teachers have a right to privacy.
- Taking and sharing of inappropriate images or content without a person's permission is an offence and An Garda Síochána will have to be notified.
- 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.

10. Social Media

Everyone is entitled to his/her dignity and has a right not to be subjected to insulting or demeaning commentary or depiction from students either inside or outside school. School owes a duty of care to all who are attending at it, this includes all staff and students.

Isolated or once off intentional negative behaviours including a once off hurtful or offensive text message or other private messaging posting of such material on the internet may be a once off action but the whole nature of that platform is that the viewing of it is intended to be as widespread and repeated as possible.

Even a single posting or support /approval for a posting of a kind which in the reasonable view of the school management is deemed to be an affront to a person's dignity will result in the invocation of the code and the imposition of such sanction as may be deemed appropriate to the circumstances and content of the offending material up to and including permanent exclusion from the school.

Bystanders - Students added to groups where negative behaviours described above are also subject to the code of behaviour - once a student becomes aware that a posting is an intentional negative behaviour that can cause hurt or offence to another person, it is expected they report this behaviour and remove themselves from this group immediately.

Students are expected to be cooperative in all investigations of any such incidents conducted by the school and failure to cooperate will be viewed as not complying with the expectations of the school.

All incidents where social media causes upset to other students will result in suspension and referral for restorative practice with the student support team where deemed appropriate.

11. Substances----- I understand that the use of addictive/intoxicating /alternative substances (this includes vaping) is not allowed.

This means:

- That you do not possess, use, distribute or sell cigarettes including electronic cigarettes/vaping materials, alcohol, or illegal drinks/substances/solvents at any time on school campus or during school related activities.
- Prescription medication - if a student is on prescribed medication the school needs to be notified and a plan for managing their medication during school hours will be put in place as per health and safety guidelines.
- Stimulating drinks are not permitted within the school as per healthy eating guidelines.

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.
- Vaping is an extremely addictive substance and the legal age in Ireland to buy vaping products is 18. Vaping is not permitted on school grounds.

- The school is responsible for the protection and safety of all the school community.
- The school needs to be notified immediately if a student has prescribed medication on his/her person.

Note:

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

12. Health and Safety----- 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 jewelry likely to pose a threat to safety.

Because:

- Such objects can present a serious threat to the Health and Safety of the School community.
- Every student has the right to feel safe in the school environment. We do not wish any student to harm themselves or others.
- Using materials found on school property to make dangerous items is prohibited.

13. Extra-curricular Activities

It is a feature of extra-curricular activities that the students involved are of good behaviour generally, as the activities inevitably involve a degree of extra trust, confidence and camaraderie between the students and the staff who give voluntarily of their time to organise and promote such activity.

Rewards

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this policy.

The role of the Tutor in Comeragh College is to promote positive behaviour with their students. Every class group is assigned a tutor. They are a significant adult in the students' school life.

Rewards have the ability to change behaviour. A student focus group has been consulted about our reward system in school. Some feedback includes the desire for each year group to have a clear goal to work towards such as having a school trip. These positive goals will allow for students to take ownership of their own 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

- School trip
- Positive behaviour comment on VShare
- Positive phone call home-it is important for parents/guardians to see when their child is doing well
- 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

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 reaching each student's potential and is respectful of others and their needs. The school has a duty of care to all students, and we strive to provide a quality education in a caring learning environment.
- It is the policy of the school to intervene early and positively when a student's behaviour does not meet the standards expected.
- All behaviour is a form of communication and it is important that the school engages with students to restore positive behaviour and communication.

This section sets down the code of positive behaviour and the consequences applicable to all students in Comeragh College during the school year. Parents/Guardians are requested to read this section of the positive code carefully so they are aware of expectations and consequences that may impact their son or daughter. Students also need to read this section carefully to enable them to see consequences that can be taken if the positive code is not followed.

- The classroom teacher aims to foster a caring and effective teaching and learning environment and atmosphere. When dealing with issues that impact the classroom environment and atmosphere, the teacher will deal with the matter according to the code of positive behaviour and in some cases may need to seek advice from management. Teachers strive to be aware of students' learning needs and follow advice from the special education needs coordinator - recommendations available on student VShare profile. Students are treated as individuals in each class and their circumstances are taken into consideration.
- Points may be imposed in line with the code of positive behaviour and where necessary.
- The student may be requested to meet with designated staff members or school management in the hope of preventing a repetition of misbehaviour.

Range of Consequences

- Issue a clear instruction and a second clear instruction
- Verbal warning
- Written warning - note in the student journal for parent/guardian to sign followed by a text sent home if note is not signed
- Use of points system
- Movement within the classroom - the seating plan may be adjusted at any time by the teacher
- Additional Work - students to catch up on work not completed or relevant work assigned by the teacher

- Formal Written Report to Director (Red Flag on VSware - *see appendix 11 for template on Reporting an Incident to Student Director*)
- Time-out or pass as part of the Behaviour for Learning programme. This will be pre-arranged with the BFL teacher and only used after all positive strategies have been implemented
- Speak to student(s) after class
- Subject teacher assigned detention - either lunchtime (at the discretion of the teacher) or after school detention or a lunchtime programme
- Suspension
- Student placed on various Report Cards
- Students may be refused permission to represent the school at school competitions /events
- Parents brought in to review student behaviour
- Daily Reporting to Student Director, Deputy Principal and Principal
- Withdrawal of school excursions privileges
- Notify Tusla
- Referral to school psychologist
- Referral to relevant authorities including the Gardaí
- Referral to GP, CAHMS, etc.
- Referral for counselling or support
- Referral to Board of Management
- Expulsion

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 an extra degree of trust, confidence and camaraderie between the students and the staff who voluntarily give 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	1. Verbal
	2. Written note in journal to be signed
	3. Phone call to parent to discuss issue. (Check with Student Director for clearance to phone)
	4. Detention with written work, text or phone call to parent with details of detention.
	5. Parents to attend meeting with Student Director and subject teacher (Placed on Report). Extra-curricular privileges may be removed.
	6. Meeting with Deputy Principal and Director 5 Points (Placed on Report)
	7. Meeting with Principal, Deputy and Director 5 Points
Interruptive behaviour - see Core Expectations	1. Verbal
	2. Written note in journal to be signed.
	3. Phone call to parent to discuss issue. (Check with Student Director for clearance to phone)
	4. Detention with written work, Text or phone call to parent with details of detention.
	5. Parents to attend meeting with Student Director and subject teacher (Placed on Report). Extra- curricular privileges may be removed)
	6. Meeting with Deputy Principal and Director 5 Points (Placed on Report)
	7. Meeting with Principal, Deputy and Director 5 Points
Ongoing failure to present homework	1. Verbal (Missed work to be presented for next timetabled class)
	2. Written note in journal to be signed (Missed work to be presented for next timetabled class)
	3. Phone call to parent to discuss issue. (Missed work to be presented for next timetabled class). Check with Student Director for clearance to phone)
	4. Detention with written work, Text or phone call to parent with details of detention. (Missed work to be presented for next timetabled class).
	5. Parents to attend meeting with Student Director and subject teacher. (Extra- curricular privileges may be removed)
	6. Meeting with Deputy Principal and Director 5 Points
	7. Meeting with Principal, Deputy and Director - 5 Points

Implementation of Points System	
Incidents	Points Awarded and Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late for class no reason Non-compliance with Jewellery Rule Journal not signed where required – parent/guardian to be notified by text Misuse of student's own journal or another student's journal Student intentionally and repeatedly not sitting in assigned seat in class Entering classrooms without permission Loitering in a locker area not designated for own student year group at break times Using football slottars etc. within the school building or not in an appropriate way outside Not in assigned area in canteen Chewing gum Non-compliance with Uniform Rule 	<p>Detention and 1 point per incident Extra- curricular privileges may be removed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Littering Mobile phone turned on- phone will be handed into office No Student Journal Interfering with another student's locker Interfering with another student's property 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 – this creates an intimidating atmosphere in the toilets Not using fastest route between classes and arriving late Eating in unassigned areas Playing sports in areas not designated for sport- such as corridors, walkway Skipping queue in canteen 	<p>2 points per incident and repeated incidents may warrant a detention Extra- curricular privileges may be removed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a mobile phone to contact home during the school day without permission In an unassigned toilet at any stage during the school day Taking the wrong route deliberately to class and arriving late Uniform – teacher has already asked student to remove additional items of clothing or fix uniform and student reverts back after teacher leaves or during the school day 	<p>3 points per incident and repeated incidents may warrant a detention Extra- curricular privileges may be removed</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 but returns back in after short time following incident in school (phone call home) Writing notes under false pretences/ forging notes from parents/guardians Stealing 	<p>5 points per incident and repeated incidents may warrant a detention Extra- curricular privileges may be removed)</p>

Assistant Principal and Senior Management immediate referrals

A student will be referred to senior management in the case that early interventions have been unsuccessful (student behaviour plan, student and teacher positive behaviour checklists, BFL teacher) and further interventions are deemed necessary. The following incidents are red flags on VShare:

- Refusal to take instruction
- Very dangerous behaviour
- Physical fighting or assault
- Leaving school without permission, school may have to contact Gardaí if parent/guardian cannot make contact with the student.
- Bullying behaviour - ref: Anti-Bullying Policy
- 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
- Interfering with teaching and learning in class where it effects the environment and wellbeing of others
- Failure to comply with the school uniform – with no valid reason - including not wearing correct footwear. Parents will be invited to a meeting and the student will be removed from extra-curricular activities until uniform compliance is in practice.

Accumulation of Points and Sanctions

- An accumulation of points or suspensions may result in exclusion from participation in ECA's (Extra-Curricular Activities). **10 points** Management reserve the right to refuse student permission to attend ECA activities or school trips etc. Points and behaviour will be taken into consideration here.
- Students may be limited to a particular area in school during breaks where management have concerns for student or other students Health and Safety.
- Students may be requested to attend for extra homework support at lunchtime.
- Medical Issues - students may have to stay in assigned areas where staff are concerned for their wellbeing.
- Each student starts with no points at the beginning of the school year, however in exceptional circumstances where a student has been high on the points on previous academic year and shows no improvement in their behaviour and the school has exhausted its supports services for the students and the student continues to interfere with teaching and learning - this student's points can be reverted to the stage where they finished at the end of the previous academic year and code be implemented from that point forward.
- Students who have accumulated 40 points or more, or in exceptional circumstances i.e., health and safety concerns for staff or students etc. will be required to meet the board of management or in exceptional circumstances, i.e., health and safety concerns for staff or students etc.

Follow up Procedures explained

Detention

- The Principal/Deputy Principal/Student Director and/or Subject/Supervising Teacher will impose detention after a student has failed to comply with the Code of Positive Behaviour or core expectations.

- Detention is recorded, tracked and monitored by post holder.
- When a student reaches 10/20 points, the code of positive behaviour administrator notifies the appropriate Student Director who contacts the parent and sends them details of the detention. The student support team will be notified if necessary.
- A list of students on detention is given to the Detention Postholder.
- A student who accumulates 10 or 20 points will be detained by the Student Director on the following Tuesday or Thursday evening from 4.00-5.00 p.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.
- Students will complete written educational work whilst on detention.
- Under no circumstances will homework be completed during detention time.
- Failure to attend detention will result in the student being placed on detention on the next Tuesday or Thursday with a penalty of 5 points.
- Friday afternoon detention may be imposed if management deems it necessary.

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 or an accumulation of points.
- The code of positive behaviour administrator notifies the appropriate Student Director when a student reaches 30/40/50/60 points.
- Student Director, Deputy Principal or Principal has the responsibility for issuing Report Cards.
- The Report Card must be signed each night by parents/guardians. If not signed a follow up text will be sent from VShare.
- Home and school need to work together to ensure that the report card works successfully.
- The student produces the Card to Student Director, Deputy Principal or Principal at the end of every 5 days. Progress is discussed with student. Code of positive behaviour administrator keeps a copy of all report cards.
- If there is no progress after each week, the student may be moved to the next level of report.
- Report Card is filed on student VShare after the week by the student director.

REPORT CARD PROCEDURE-			
Code of Positive Behaviour administrator assigned to oversee the report card stages are followed correctly at all times.			
Stage	Report No.	Action	Key People
1	If a student accumulates 10 points, the Student Director will place him/her on Report No.1. A Student Director/Senior Management may also place a student directly onto report for a more serious incident. This report will be monitored by the Student Director.		
		Parents informed-Phone call Detention for 1 Hour Report for 1 week (5 consecutive days)	Student Director
2	If a student accumulates 20 points, Student Director will place him/her on Report No.2.		
		Parents informed- Meeting Detention for 2 hours Report for 2 weeks (10 school days)	Student Director
3	If a student accumulates 30 points, the Student Director & Deputy Principal will place him/her on Report No.3. This report will be monitored by the Student Director & Deputy Principal.		
		Parents/Guardians Informed-Meeting Behavioural agreement to be signed Suspension for 2 days Report for 3 weeks (15 school days)	Student Director, Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor
4	If a student accumulates 40 points, the Principal & Deputy Principal and Student Director will place him/her on Report No.4. This report will be monitored by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Director.		
		Parents/Guardians informed, Meeting Behavioural agreement reviewed and signed Suspension for 3 days Report for 4 weeks (20 school days)	Student Director, Principal, Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor
5	If a student accumulates 50 points, the student will meet with the Board of Management. The board in conjunction the Principal will place the student on Report No. 5. This report will be monitored by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Director.		
		Parents to meet with Board of Management. Behavioural Agreement to be agreed and signed Suspension for 5 days Report for 5 weeks (25 consecutive days)	
6	If a student breaches the behavioural agreement, the student will be meet the Board of Management again with expulsion considered.		

Students who lose their school journal must restart the period of time spent 'on report' or may move up a stage in the discipline process.

Interventions

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

- **Restorative meeting** between the student and specified staff members and/or management. The purpose is to give the student a space to develop a better understanding of how his or her actions have led to this meeting. To help the student understand how his/her actions are affecting other members of the community. To advise the student how to behave appropriately and avoid a reoccurrence. To discuss positive changes in behaviour going forward and to reflect on what they could have done differently.
- Students complete a **self-assessment** form.
- Student can be referred to Student Support Team (Continuum of Support) and appropriate interventions agreed by the team provided to the student.
- 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.

School interventions include Friends for Life, The Alert Programme, Check and Connect, Restorative Practice, Homework Club, Lunchtime support, Supervised study and other extra-curricular activities.

Suspension

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. A letter to parent/guardian is sent see Appendix 12.

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 30/40/50 points will 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.
- 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
- A student who is suspended 3 times (not due to an accumulation of points) will be brought before the Board of Management

Authority to Suspend

Only the Principal or person acting in principal capacity 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 the 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. This is where a student causes a high level of upset, anxiety, trauma, intimidation and/or physical threat
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to the safety of the school community
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.
- It has been uncovered that a student has been involved in bullying or threatening behaviour that effects the wellbeing of another student or the teacher

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 achievable behavioural goals with the student that their parents/guardians can support
- The student support team is available to advise and supplement on wellbeing aspects of the behaviour management plan
- 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 (National Education Welfare Board) Guidelines on developing a Code of Positive 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 Student Director 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. On completion of the investigation the results and evidence are given to the Principal.

Implementing Suspension

1. **Informing the student and parents/guardians as 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 Positive 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. A report card may be issued at the discretion of the Director.

5. Learning from the experience

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. It is important for the student to move on from the behavioural incident, learn for the experience and apply this learning to future behaviour.

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/ Vaping
- Use of social media where pictures or videos are recorded or shared without consent

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 positive 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 has 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 consequences, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents/guardians, teachers and students, that particular named behaviours incur expulsion as a consequence. (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 positive 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 (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 positive behaviour.

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

Policy Adoption and Review

Student directors and management will monitor the implementation of this policy. Student directors and management will review the policy on a yearly basis.

Policy reviewed by Board of Management

Board of Management Chairperson

Secretary to the Board

Date

Date

Appendices:

APPENDIX 1

A Successful Teaching and Learning Environment (Director & Subject Teacher)

As teachers our main goal is to have a successful teaching and learning environment. We want to be able to share our passion for our subject with the students sitting in our classroom. But how do we know we are achieving such an environment? The following factors are indicators that we are succeeding in establishing a successful and positive environment in our classroom.

- Students and teacher are punctual for class
- Students come to class with a greeting/a smile - I try to make eye contact/greet students on entering the classroom
- Students have what is needed for class and prepare themselves for class. I encourage this through repetition and praise
- Students show an interest in my class through following work, asking questions, discussing topics, wanting to learn more, seeking further information on tests and final exams
- Homework is completed and interest is shown in the work they have done through questions/queries/discussion - I check work completed and use praise to encourage students, acknowledge queries and provide help where needed
- I clearly set out the learning outcomes for the class to allow students to be aware of the expectations for the class
- Students ask relevant questions and feel comfortable asking for help. If I notice a student struggling, I approach them where possible. I encourage students to ask questions and ask for help
- Students' complete classwork and show an interest in the work
- Students help each other through peer and group work
- Students demonstrate their learning through answering questions, tests etc. I make sure to include all students in answering questions and differentiate my questions to students
- Students write down their homework clearly in their school journal
- Students are reaching their ability in my class, if students are not reaching their ability, I discuss this with them and tell them what needs to happen for them to reach their ability
- Students are clear what they have to do to reach their target in my class and they are aware what their target is

If the majority of students in your class are doing the above, you have created a positive and successful teaching and learning environment in your classroom.

APPENDIX 2

Student Positive Behaviour Checklist

Student Name: _____

Class: _____

How I behave is my responsibility. Every student has the power to change their behaviour for the better. Behaving in a more positive way will make sure that school is a nicer place for me and will allow me to learn to the best of my ability. This checklist will help students on the path to adapting positive behaviour skills.

- ☐ I am on time for school and class
- ☐ I greet my friends and teachers in a nice way
- ☐ I am dressed in the correct school uniform
- ☐ I use basic manners- saying please, thank you, staying on the correct side of the corridor, not pushing/shoving
- ☐ I bring what is needed to class-including journal, books, copies, pencil case
- ☐ I follow what is happening in class and
- ☐ I ask questions if I do not understand
- ☐ If a teacher asks me to do something, I answer in a positive way
- ☐ I try my best to do all classwork and homework. If I do not understand I ask the teacher for help
- ☐ If I feel that I am about to answer back the teacher, I count to 10 and take some deep breaths to help stop myself before my behaviour results in me getting in trouble
- ☐ I write down my homework in my school journal
- ☐ At breaks I queue correctly in the canteen, I stay in the designated area for my year group, I am nice and polite to canteen staff and supervising teachers and I tidy up my snacks/lunch
- ☐ At home time I make sure to go to my locker to leave books that I do not need, and I bring home what is needed

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 3

Positive behaviour encouragement in class

Teacher
Name: _____

Student
Name: _____

Class: _____

While following the code of positive behaviour it is also important to ensure that we are positively encouraging students to behave in a way that allows them and others to achieve their best in class. The following are ways in which we can promote positive behaviour in our classrooms while following procedures in the code of positive behaviour.

- ☐ I focus on positive behaviours even small ones *e.g., Thanking the student for putting up their hand, for waiting to pack their bag, for entering the classroom with a smile*
- ☐ I look for any improvements the student is making and recognise them *e.g., I noticed that you asked some questions today in class, you managed to complete most of the homework, that you answered my query with a positive tone, the layout of your work is neat*
- ☐ I check the students' understanding of class and homework. Could the student be acting out as they feel lost in class/find certain topics difficult?
- ☐ I remind the student to ask me for help with their class and homework by putting up their hand in class, stopping me as I pass by their desk or waiting until the end of class to ask me a question.
- ☐ When speaking to the student about their behaviour I try to use 'your behaviour' not 'you'. Talking to the student about their behaviour in the third person allows the student to see that they are not characterised by their behaviour and behaviour is something that they can improve, *e.g., Your behaviour in class today did not allow for other students to learn in a nice environment. Talking out of turn and moving around the room without permission interrupts the lesson and gives other students less time to understand the topic and what they have to do for homework. IN CONTRAST TO You are stopping other students from learning, you always talk out of turn, you are interrupting class and not letting students understand their homework.*
- ☐ When speaking to the student about their behaviour I try to also point out some positive attributes-like using 2 stars and a wish, *e.g., I can see that you can understand class content because when you do your homework it is well done, the result in this test you completed shows you have ability in this subject, I would like to see you try to follow the work in class, participate in class activities more and this would result in your overall understanding improving.* Another example. *I can see that outside of class you are smiling and greet teachers, you said hello to me the other morning on your way into school, I wonder if you brought some of that positivity into class would it allow you to enjoy the subject more.*
- ☐ I remind the student of other school supports that are in place if needed. Could the student be acting out due to other circumstances at home or with friends? *e.g., If there is anything going on that may be causing this behaviour there are supports in school that can help you, you can go to the student support teacher or I can give your name to her.* It is important in this scenario to not pry or pressure the student to tell you if there is something going on. If the student appears to become upset speak with a member of the student support team even if the student

says there is nothing going on. (Also check beforehand if the student is already engaging in student support - check if student is flagged on VShare or ask a member of the student support team)

- ☐ I remind the student that it is possible to start over, that they can have a clean slate after certain sanctions in the code, e.g., *I know that you have completed school detention so now we can start afresh in this class and hopefully your positive behaviour will ensure that you will not receive any more detentions. If you feel you have fallen behind in class, we can work together to improve your understanding and catch up on work missed.*

APPENDIX 4

Expectations and Responsibilities for Parents/Guardians and Staff

Expectations and Responsibilities for Parents/Guardians

- The support and co-operation of Parents /Guardians is essential to the effective operation of the Code of Positive 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 Positive 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 School 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 School 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 a 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 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 or pastoral talks on matters of curriculum & development e.g., Open Day for new 1st years, First Year pastoral meeting, Senior Cycle Options for Third Year parents/guardians
- Encourage Parental involvement/attendance at parent teacher meetings, parent association, information nights, cultural and other events

- Elect staff 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 5

Student Support Programmes

First Year Induction
Counselling
Meitheal [PPFS]
Breakfast Club
Homework Club
Supervised Study
Leadership programme [Foróige]
Pieta House Resilience Academy
Speakers
Anti-Bullying Week
School Wide Well-Being
Surveys for Anti-Bullying
Student Positive Behaviour Team
Workshops
Extra-Curricular activities
F-08 Room
Student Council
Courses for Parents [Maths/ Pilates/Fitness etc]
Home visits
Drug Awareness Workshop
Empathy Programme
Think About
BFL Programmes
Working Things Out
Check and Connect Programme
Friends for Life Programme
Amber Flag
WWGS- World Wide Global Schools
Active schools
Student Achievement Awards
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
Policy Formation- [Code of positive behaviour, CP Policy, CIM Policy, RE Policy, Substance Misuse Policy, RSE Policy, SPHE Policy, SEN Policy, Homework Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Attendance Policy]
SPHE Programme
Religious Education Programme
Personal Development Courses

APPENDIX 6

Positive Behaviour Support Plan

Name: _____

Start Date: _____

Review Date: _____

Reason for plan:

☐ Organisation

☐ Homework

☐ Punctuality

☐ Uniform

☐ Interruptive Behaviour

☐ Not engaging in Class

Other reason: _____

Targets: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Strategies: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Review of Plan:

What was successful? _____

Did the student engage with support plan? _____

What targets did the student achieve? _____

Does the student need further support? _____

Any other relevant information: _____

APPENDIX 7

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 adaption 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 October.
- 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 and 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. an agree 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 8

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 several permission forms, which require the signature of the student's parents/guardians.
- Provide a journal in which students will organise homework daily.

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 when asked.

- 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 is 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 support coordinator, Deputy Principal or Principal on request.

APPENDIX 9

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.
- 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.
- 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 10

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 who 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

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 11

Reporting an Incident to Student Director

Student: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Details of behaviour(s) to be reported:

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Student Director: _____

APPENDIX 12

Letter to parent/guardian re. Suspension

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 positive 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.