



## Oatlands College Code of Behaviour

### Scope of Policy:

This policy applies to all students of Oatlands College and to all school related activities during and outside school hours. It applies on and off the school premises, and anywhere students are identifiable as students of Oatlands College, and in any situation where the student, although outside of the school, is still the responsibility of the school. The Oatlands College community is made up of students, parents/guardians, staff, past-pupils, and members of the Board of Management.

The Code of Behaviour was developed in consultation with teachers, parents/guardians, students and the Board of Management of Oatlands College. The Code of Behaviour was approved by the Trustees ERST and the Board of Management on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

### Rationale:

- To have a written Code of Behaviour.
- To ensure that it reflects the principles of the ERST Charter and reflects the religious and educational philosophy of the school as safeguarded by the BOM and Trustees.
- To maintain order in a large organization.
- To aid students in developing standards of self-discipline and good behaviour.
- To make all the partners in education (parents/guardians, students, staff (teaching and nonteaching), senior school management and the Board of Management) aware of procedures in dealing with misconduct and infringement of school rules.
- To promote positive behaviour and reward it.

### Link to Ethos:

Oatlands College is a Catholic School under the trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (E.R.S.T.). The school is governed by the ethos of the trust as set out in the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter. The mission of schools in the Trust is to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition and the vision is to support the personal, social and moral development of each student.

The Charter sets out what is viewed by the Trustees as the key elements of an ERST school: nurturing faith and Gospel values; creating a caring school; promoting partnership; excelling in teaching and learning; and inspiring transformational leadership.

### Link to Mission Statement:

The mission statement of Oatlands College states that the aim of the school is the religious, moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and social education of the students. The College seeks to provide a holistic education which is driven by a Catholic ethos. The College strives to create a safe and happy school environment which fosters inclusion, honesty, dignity and respect. The school community encourages the individual in the pursuit of excellence. We aim to promote among students a sense of pride in our school.

In keeping with this ethos, the school, as part of its Code of Behaviour, provides supports to ensure that each student reaches his full potential. This includes a well-developed pastoral care, guidance counselling and

learning support & resource services. The following are included as part of this service: a year head and tutor system, a care team, a resource team, a guidance service and SPHE classes (see website). The Code of Behaviour is further supported through the school policies on anti-bullying, acceptable use of the internet, substance use, homework and attendance, and child protection.

### **Policy Objectives:**

- To provide a framework where the principles of fairness and natural justice apply.
- The efficient operation of the school in a manner which enables the school's overall aims/ethos to be realised.
- The maintenance of good order throughout the school, promoting respect for each individual and for the school environment.
- The fostering of self-discipline in students, encouraging them in positive behaviour patterns which are based on consideration, respect and tolerance towards others.
- The development of interpersonal skills which will help students to work co-operatively, give them the ability to solve problems, develop relationships and resolve conflict appropriately.
- To support the school's Classroom Code which is displayed in every room (see Appendix I) and facilitate a positive learning environment.
- That all (parents/guardians, students and staff) are aware of the standards of behaviour expected by the school.

The Code of Behaviour is connected in its operation to other policies that currently operate in Oatlands College and that will operate in the future. These are:

- The Classroom Code (Appendix I).
- The School Rules (Appendix II).
- The Child Protection Policy.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy.
- The Substance Use Policy.
- The Homework Policy.
- Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

### **1.0 Behaviour:**

Politeness, courtesy and respect for all members of the school community including teachers, non-teaching staff and fellow pupils is encouraged, modelled in practice and regularly affirmed. A high standard of personal behaviour and loyalty to Oatlands College is expected from each student.

#### **1.1 Each student has a duty to:**

- Show courtesy, kindness and respect to all members of the Oatlands College school community. These courtesies are due also to all visitors to our school.
- Work to the best of his ability.
- Be guided by the advice and help of the staff and management.
- Wear the school uniform with pride and respect the good name of Oatlands College.
- Show care and respect for his own property and that of others.
- Respect the rights of others to participate in a caring and orderly school environment where they can reach their full potential.
- Be guided by the Oatlands College Classroom Code, Code of Behaviour, Anti-bullying policy and the Acceptable Use of the Internet policy.

Students are reminded of the permanent nature of postings on social media sites such as Facebook. Such postings will remain on the internet into the future. There are implications for career advancement, as employers in the future may look back and be able to access data posted in your name. Students are reminded that the posting of offensive material may result in the victim taking a legal case against the person who posted the material and/or the person(s) who control the account/site.

## **1.2 Students have a right to:**

- Be guided through various options in curriculum in a three-year Junior Cycle and two-year Senior Cycle leading to public examinations.
- Pastoral care and counselling.
- Career guidance and counselling.
- A caring and orderly school environment where students can reach their full potential.
- Respect as a person in their own right and as a member of Oatlands College school community.
- Appropriate discipline, consistently applied and compliant with fair procedures.

## **1.3 Role of parents/guardians**

Parents/guardians are responsible for emphasising at home the need for good behaviour at school and for supporting the school's efforts in creating and maintaining a school climate where effective learning and teaching can take place. Parents are expected to monitor the homework journal on a regular basis to check for correspondence from teachers and to communicate with the school as needed.

## **1.4 Promotion of a positive learning environment:**

Oatlands College promotes self-discipline and a positive learning environment through encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour where applicable. This positive school environment is created by:

- Verbal praise and affirmation.
- Written notes in homework journal.
- Christmas, Mock and Summer reports.
- Regular assemblies.
- Awards Night.
- Intercom announcements to school community.
- LCD/plasma screen notices.
- Website
- Display of students' work.
- Participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Oatlands College Anti-bullying Charter

## **1.5 Levels of intervention**

### **1.5.1 Support for all**

Students are given clear guidance on classroom rules and behaviour. Accordingly, minor misbehaviour is dealt with effectively by the class teacher. Incoming First-Year students receive an induction programme on behaviour and the classroom code. Students are reminded of the rules by the class teachers on a regular basis. The school and teaching staff implement an agreed approach to classroom management.

Parents who have concerns in relation to a behavioural matter or who wish to make a complaint should contact the Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, or Principal through the College office on 2888533.

### **1.5.2 Additional support**

Students who need extra support may need intervention by the Year Head. Monitoring of records by Year Heads will identify these students. Strategies employed to assist these students include:

- Meet parents/guardians.
- Refer to pastoral care team.
- Put on daily class report.
- Individual Behaviour Plan.
- Agree on behaviour plan for class (if class group issue).
- Acknowledge improvements.

### **1.5.3 Specialised support for challenging behaviour**

Parents who have concerns in relation to a behavioural problem should contact any of the following:

Subject teacher, Class Tutor, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal, or Principal. An appointment may be arranged by contacting the College Office on 2888533.

For students who fail to respond to the Code of Behaviour or who show particularly challenging behaviour:

- The Principal and staff may call on the school guidance counselling team and NEPS (National Educational Psychological Services), and/or outside counselling services and supports.
- The school may seek a psychological report on students if needed and liaise with SEN (Special Educational Needs Dept) of the school.

**Once these interventions are exhausted and the school can no longer facilitate the needs of the student, the student will be referred to the Board of Management.**

#### **1.6 Role of the subject (class) teacher:**

Oatlands College encourages good relationships between staff and students. Teachers bring their professional abilities as teachers and classroom managers to promote learning and positive behaviour, their experience of what works well and understanding of the school community.

Breaches of discipline such as hindering teaching and learning, failure to do homework or bring in books and arriving late for class are primarily dealt with by the teacher. In dealing with such issues the teacher may employ strategies from the following range of options:

- Reprimand - during or after class. Frequently, it is only necessary to point out the inappropriate behaviour to the student and the situation is resolved.
- Move the disruptive pupil to another seating position.
- Prescribe an amount of extra subject specific work.
- Contact parents/guardians through use of the homework journal, telephone, email or letter or arrange a meeting with parents/guardians.
- Keep a written account of the incident(s).
- Detain with prior notice given to parents/guardians (Teacher Detention) - giving appropriate work/study for the period of detention.
- Liaise with other staff as appropriate i.e., Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal, Principal.

**Note:** Persistent minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour are deemed a serious breach of behaviour and are referred to the relevant Year Head.

#### **1.7 Role of the Year Head:**

The role of the Year Head is to oversee the welfare of a Year group so that learning at every level is supported. As part of these duties, the Year Head may, with respect to an individual student:

- Liaise with the subject (class) teacher in dealing with persistent minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour, or with serious breaches.
- Interview the student and make recommendations.
- Request regular report(s) from subject (class) teachers.
- Meet with parents/guardians.
- Put student on class-by-class report ('On Report').
- Detain with prior notice given to parents/guardians (Year Head Detention) - giving appropriate work/study for the period of detention.
- Draw up a contract with the student.
- Refer to the Deputy Principal.

#### **1.8 Role of the Deputy Principal:**

The role of the Deputy Principal, in conjunction with subject (class) teachers, Year Heads and the Principal, is to coordinate the implementation of the Code of Behaviour; specifically:

- Liaise with the care team.
- Liaise with the Year Heads, on a regular and formal basis during Year Head meetings.
- Liaise with all staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Provide support and advice to Year Heads and subject (class) teachers.

- Consult and inform the Principal on serious behaviour issues.
- The Deputy Principal may, with the parents’/guardians’ permission, refer the student to counselling, the pastoral care team or to an outside agency if deemed appropriate as a means of supporting the student before sanctions are applied.
- Meet with Parents/Guardians/Support Services as required.
- To liaise with the Principal.

### 1.9 Role of the Principal:

The role of the Principal, in conjunction with subject (class) teachers, Year Heads and the Deputy Principal, is to coordinate the implementation of the Code of Behaviour; specifically:

- Liaise with the Care Team.
- Liaise with the Year Heads, on a regular and formal basis during Year Head meetings.
- Liaise with all staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- Provide support and advice to the Deputy Principal, Year Heads, subject (class) teachers.
- In consultation with the Deputy Principal, relevant Year Head and subject teacher(s), take a lead role in resolving serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour, when appropriate.
- Consult and inform the Deputy Principal on serious behaviour issues.
- Meet with Parents/Guardians/ Support Services as required.
- The Principal may, with the parents’/guardians’ permission, refer the student to counselling, the pastoral care team or to an outside agency if deemed an appropriate means of supporting the student before sanctions are applied.
- To lead the consultation process in the periodic review and development of the Code of Behaviour and to include students, parents/guardians and staff, under the direction of the Board of Management.

### 2.0 Teaching and Learning:

The school insists that all students perform to their potential in a positive and calm learning and studying environment. To promote this, Oatlands College requires that:

- 2.1 Students must adhere to the Classroom Code and support the teachers.
- 2.2 Students arrive each day with all books, copies and classroom equipment.
- 2.3 All personal electronic equipment (including Mobile Phones, Smart Phones, iPods, smart watches etc, and any such equipment) must be turned off and out of view while on school premises, unless in exceptional circumstances when given permission to use them by a member of staff. The use of personal recording devices, of any type, is **strictly forbidden** in the school and grounds or on any school activity.  
Parents/guardians who need to contact students in case of an emergency should telephone the school office (01 - 2888533).
- 2.4 iPads are strictly for use in the classroom only and must only be switched on when requested by a teacher. Students must ensure their iPad is fully charged for school each day.
- 2.5 Homework must be done punctually and to an acceptable standard (see Homework Policy published in Journal).
- 2.6 Mobile phones must be switched off upon entering the school grounds.
- 2.7 Earphones, earbuds and headphones etc. must be removed upon entering the school grounds.
- 2.8 Each student must own a Journal and bring it to school each day. Journals up to Junior Certificate level must be signed daily by parents/guardians. All journals must be maintained to a high standard.
- 2.9 Persistent failure of a student to apply himself to studies is liable to serious sanction.
- 2.10 All students are expected to have the appropriate gear, both indoor and outdoor, for Physical Education classes (i.e., shorts, tracksuit, t-shirt, non-black soled runners, boots and shin guards).  
Note: See Policy on PE for sanctions.
- 2.11 Lockers (see Policy on Lockers).
  - 2.11.1 Each student must supply his own padlock and key.
  - 2.11.2 Students should keep all valuables in the locker.
  - 2.11.3 Lockers may not be accessed between classes to minimise disruption to teaching and learning.  
Students can collect equipment before lessons commence or at break times i.e., 8.20 a.m., 10.40 a.m., 1.25 p.m.  
(Years 1-3) and 2.05 p.m. (Years 4-6).

2.11.4 Lockers remain property of the school. The school reserves the right to search lockers if they have good reason to do so and should inform the student of the reason for the search.

### Sanctions

- Journals with graffiti or not maintained in good condition may be confiscated and replaced at a cost of €5.
- Mobile phones/personal electronic media equipment will be confiscated and may be collected by the student from the Deputy Principal after school on the same school day with a resulting Saturday Detention. Subsequent breaches of the Code in class will be deemed as a continued disruption of Teaching and Learning and a breach of the Code of Behaviour and will result in further sanctions to include Suspension. (**Note: the SIM card, battery, earphones or any other attachments are defined as part of the mobile telephone.**)
- Any usage of the internet, digital media, social media sites or mobile phone which intrudes on the privacy and dignity of staff, students or their families is deemed a serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour and/or Anti-bullying Policy and may result in a sanction up to and including expulsion.
- Disruption of teaching and learning is considered a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and may result in Suspension in the first instance. Persistent disruption of Teaching and Learning may result in a student being referred to the Board of Management.
- The use of personal recording devices, of any type, which is **strictly forbidden** in the school and grounds or on any school activity, is considered a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and may result in a sanction up to and including expulsion.

### 3.0 Uniform:

- 3.1 The school uniform must be worn at all times during school hours and at all school-related activities.
- 3.2 Pupils are required to be neat of dress and appearance.
- 3.3 With the exception of a regular watch and medical bracelet, all jewellery is prohibited. This includes earrings, bars, studs and smart watches. This also applies on non-uniform days.
- 3.4 The school uniform is grey trousers, grey jumper (juniors) black trousers, grey jumper (Transition Year) black trousers, black jumper (seniors) and collared white shirt and tie.
- 3.5 Black formal shoes must be worn as part of the uniform. Runners, sports shoes or canvas shoes are not permitted.
- 3.6 The school jacket is compulsory for all students.
- 3.7 Directions given by P.E. teachers on the suitability and appropriateness of P.E. uniform must be followed.
- 3.8 Clothing which displays offensive imagery or language is considered a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and will be dealt with appropriately.
- 3.9 Hairstyles should be neat, tidy and properly maintained. Dyed, bleached or extreme hairstyles are not permitted. Shaved part or full head and symbols/designs cut into hair are also not allowed. For health and safety reasons, students with long hair may be asked to tie back their hair particularly in practical classrooms. In all cases, the College authorities are the arbiters of hairstyle.
- 3.10 Oatlands College musical hoodies can be worn during Transition Year only.
- 3.11 Oatlands College branded extra-curricular tops can be worn on Fridays only and with the regular school trousers and shoes.

### Sanctions:

- Non-uniform items including jewellery will be confiscated (hoodie jackets will be confiscated) and may be collected by Parents/Guardians after 3.30pm. If the clothing/jewellery is not collected within a calendar month, the College reserves the right to dispose of the property.

Persistent breaches of the uniform code can lead to detention and parents/guardians may be asked to attend at the school to discuss the matter.

### 4.0 Attendance and Punctuality:

- 4.1 Regular attendance is expected and encouraged.
- 4.2.1 A pupil who is absent from school must on return provide a written note as provided for in the

Homework Journal; confidential information can be communicated directly to the Year Head/ Deputy Principal by sealed letter or by telephone to the school office (01-2888533).

4.2.2 In the case of long-term absences, parents/guardians should notify the Year Head/ Deputy Principal by telephone or in writing.

4.3 Medical and dental appointment cards are to be presented to the class teacher at the time of leaving school, signed and the student must then present to the main office to sign out.

4.4 School begins at 8.40 a.m. Students should arrive not later than 8.20 a.m. and are expected to have organised books and equipment for the first set of classes in time to arrive promptly for the start of their first lesson. This also applies at 10.50 a.m., 1.30 p.m. (Years 1-3) and at 2.10 p.m. (Years 4-6).

- Students are encouraged to use the toilets before 8.40 a.m., at 10.40 a.m., and at lunchtime. Students with a medical condition will be allowed to use toilets as required.
- Truancy is not tolerated and is seen as a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.

#### Sanctions:

- Students who arrive late (without a written note) will receive a late stamp and will be given a detention. Students who persistently fail to produce written notes will be referred to the Year Head for sanction.
- the following morning at 8.10 a.m.
- If there is no improvement Saturday Detention (8.40 a.m. - 9:40 a.m.) will apply. Prior notice will be given to Parents/Guardians.
- If there is no improvement in punctuality, parents/guardians will be required to attend at the school to discuss the matter.
- Any form of truancy is a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and is dealt with by the Year Head, referred to the Principal and requires the student's parents/guardians to attend at the school. **Note** Education Welfare Act.

#### 5.0 Care of the School:

Oatlands College is a Green School and we expect to work in a pleasant environment, free from litter and graffiti. The whole school community shares a responsibility for maintaining a clean and safe environment conducive to learning.

5.1 Chewing gum is not allowed anywhere on school property.

5.2 Eating or drinking is prohibited in classrooms.

5.3 Littering or graffiti are not acceptable.

5.4 Students are expected to respect the property of others and school property including lockers.

5.5 Deliberate vandalism of school or student property is deemed a serious offence and will be dealt with under Section 7, 8 and 9 of the Code of Behaviour.

5.6 Erasure fluid (for example Tippex) is not allowed anywhere on school property.

#### Sanctions

Students will be required to cover the costs of any damage or spoilage done to school property or to the property of other students.

Students may also be asked to perform tasks in the school appropriate to the misbehaviour.

#### 6.0 Health and Safety:

School is a place of safety for all. Members of the school community are encouraged to participate in creating an awareness regarding health and safety issues within the school and on school activities off-premises.

6.1 All forms of bullying are unacceptable and should be reported to a member of staff (see Anti-Bullying Policy).

6.2 Safety notices are posted around the school buildings and should be adhered to at all times. Students are expected to read these regularly and conduct themselves in a safe manner.

6.3 Students are required to walk on the left-hand side of the corridors and to behave in an orderly, quiet manner. Students are expected to show due respect to staff in corridors and stairways.

6.4 Students are required to follow all safety instructions given by teaching or non-teaching staff

6.5 Students must pay attention to and obey all safety regulations. Science laboratories, the Gymnasium, Art, Technology, the Lunchroom and Home Economics rooms are areas which require high awareness of safety.

6.6 Interference with firefighting or any safety equipment, or any action that leads to the evacuation of the school is treated as a serious offence (gross misbehaviour).

- 6.7** The possession, use or consumption of alcohol or of non-prescribed drugs is forbidden at all times. (see Substance Use Policy).
- 6.8** Smoking, vaping and the use of e-cigarettes are forbidden at all times on school premises, when on school tours and when in school uniform in the vicinity of Oatlands College.
- 6.9** Riding of bicycles, scooters, e-bikes etc within the College grounds is forbidden. Students should dismount upon entering the school grounds. It is students' responsibility to ensure their bike/scooter etc is locked securely as the college cannot be held responsible for any damage or theft.
- 6.10** Parking space is limited. Students who drive to school are forbidden from driving onto or parking in the school grounds.
- 6.11** Any behaviour which endangers the health and safety of any members of the school community is treated with the upmost seriousness by the Principal and Board of Management.
- 6.12** Any usage of the internet, digital media or mobile phone which intrudes on the privacy and dignity of staff, students or their families is deemed a serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour and/or Antbullying Policy. Students are reminded that the posting of offensive material may result in the victim taking a legal case against the person who posted the material and/or the person(s) who control the account/site.

### **7.0 Procedures for Detention:**

Teacher Detention is a sanction applied by subject (class) teachers for minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour or for incidents of a more serious nature. Year Head Detention is a sanction applied by the Year Head for serious issues of misbehaviour which have not yet been resolved, which have been referred by a subject teacher, or for issues which the Year Head deems serious.

In the case of Teacher or Year Head Detention, a standard form is sent to the parents/guardians outlining the following information:

- The reason for the detention.
- The date, time and location of detention.
- Work set for the detention.
- Signature of parent/guardian is required.

Students who arrive late for school will have their journal stamped and will be given detention unless the student has a written note explaining the reason for the late arrival in school.

**Note:** failure to attend detention without a satisfactory explanation is deemed a serious offence.

### **8.0 Suspension**

Grounds for suspension include: (Note: This is not an exhaustive list. Any breach of the Code of Behaviour of a serious nature may result in suspension)

- A student's behaviour is a cause of disruption to the learning of others or the teaching process.
- A threat to the safety of others.
- Serious damage to property or theft of property.
- A student's behaviour brings the name of Oatlands College into disrepute.
- Truancy, including leaving the school grounds without permission.
- Showing disrespect to a member of staff of Oatlands College.
- Inappropriate use of any social media or internet site.

Oatlands College is required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student (see TUSLA guidelines for more detail).

#### **8.1 Suspension Procedure:**

**8.1.1.** The Principal or the Deputy-Principal, in the absence of the Principal, has the authority to suspend a student. This sanction should be imposed with reference to the Code of Behaviour policy and to the specific incident.

**8.1.2.** Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- inform the student about the complaint and give the student an opportunity to respond.
- Parents/guardians will be informed by telephone and given an opportunity to respond.
- a meeting with parents/guardians and student may be arranged to explore the matter further.



**8.1.3** Where suspension may result from an investigation and a meeting with the student and parents/guardians has been arranged:

- it provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story.
- to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts.
- It may also be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for modifying the sanction.
- and for the school to explore with parents/guardians how best to address the student's behaviour.

**8.1.4.** Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted, a formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.

**8.1.5.** The Child and Family Agency (TUSLA) will be informed if the suspension is for six or more school days or if the student has been suspended for an aggregate of twenty or more days in the school year.

## **8.2 Period and Type of Suspension:**

**8.2.1.** In imposing a suspension and in deciding its duration, the following factors will be considered:

- the seriousness of the breach/breaches of school regulations.
- the severity of the behaviour, the frequency of its occurrence and the likelihood of its recurring
- the behaviour of the student up to the time of suspension.
- previous interventions.
- the age, state of health and special needs of the student.
- the possible negative impact of the student's behaviour on other students in the school.

## **8.3. Implementing the Suspension:**

**8.3.1.** The parents/guardians of a student being suspended will be contacted by telephone and an appointment made with the Principal/Deputy Principal.

**8.3.2.** At this meeting the Principal/Deputy Principal will discuss with the student and parents/guardians:

- the reason(s) for suspension.
- the length and dates of the suspension.
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.
- the expectations of the student while on suspension.
- a statement of the importance of parental assistance in resolving the matter including any commitments to be entered into by the student.
- arrangements for the return of the student to school.

**8.3.3.** During the period of suspension a student is not permitted to enter the school premises without prior permission nor is a student permitted to loiter in the vicinity of the school premises. The suspension may be lifted temporarily to facilitate a student to participate in a State Examination.

**8.3.4.** The student upon his return to school may be required to report to the Deputy Principal and/or Year Head before being permitted to go to class.

## **8.4 Grounds for removing a suspension:**

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

## **8.5. Appeal:**

**8.5.1.** Parents/guardians (and students aged 18 years or more) may appeal the decision to suspend to the Board of Management. They should furnish the Board in writing with full details of the appeal.

**8.5.2.** If the parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Board of Management, they may appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under *Section 29*

of the Education Act 1998. Such an appeal regarding suspension can only be made where the suspension period brings the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or more in any one school year.

#### **Review of use of suspension:**

The Board of Management 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 use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

#### **9.0 Expulsion (Permanent Exclusion):**

**9.1** Expulsion (Permanent Exclusion) is a sanction reserved for use in the most extreme cases of indiscipline or in serious cases of misbehaviour as determined by the Board of Management.

**9.2.** The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. A student is expelled when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him from the school, having complied with the provisions of *Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000*.

**9.3.1** Expulsion is the ultimate sanction available to the school. The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. Factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, failure on the part of the student to change his behaviour following other interventions, the effect on other members of the school community and/or the good name of Oatlands College, or the seriousness of a single breach of the Code of Behaviour will be determinants.

**9.3.2** The sanction of expulsion will be exercised by the Board of Management only in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour such as:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety to other users of the school campus.
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- the student is responsible for serious physical, emotional or psychological damage, through use of or threat of physical force, bullying, cyber bullying, sexting or any other means, to any member(s) of the school community, including staff and students. This includes the use of Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, X and other social network sites to bully a member of the school community or their families (see the Anti-Bullying Policy, and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, for definitions of Bullying, Cyber Bullying and Sexting).
- the student persistently fails to adhere to the Code of Behaviour Policy.
- The Board of Management reserves the right to expel a student for a first offence. The list below is an example but not exhaustive of the behaviour that may result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the Code of Behaviour:
  - a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
  - actual violence or physical assault.
  - possession of or supplying illegal drugs.
  - sexual assault.
  - usage of the internet, digital media, mobile phone, (including social network sites), which intrudes on the privacy and dignity of staff, students, or their families.
  - behaviour, both in school and 'out of school', that brings the name of Oatlands College into disrepute.

#### **9.4. Expulsion Procedures:**

**9.4.1.** A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal.

- Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Both parents/guardians and students will be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour.

**9.4.2** Where expulsion may result from an investigation and a meeting with the student and their parents/guardians has been arranged:

- it provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story.
- to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts.
- It may also be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for modifying the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents/guardians how best to address the student's behaviour.

**9.4.3** If a student and his 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 inappropriate behaviour. The school will record the invitation issued to parents/guardians and their response.

**9.4.4.** Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal will:

- inform the parents/guardians and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- ensure that parents/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- provide the Board of Management with the same records as supplied to parents/guardians.
- notify the parents/guardians of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing.
- ensure that parents/guardians have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.
- advise parents/guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.

**9.4.5.** It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.

The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case. It will ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations (for example, a member of the Board who may have made an allegation about the student).

**9.4.6** The Board of Management will consider the Principal's recommendation. If the Board decides to consider expelling the student it will hold a hearing.

**9.4.7.** The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures.

**9.4.8.** At the hearing, the Principal and the parents/guardians, or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly.

**9.4.9.** The meeting may also be an opportunity for parents/guardians to make their case for lessening the sanction. In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are, and are seen to be, impartial as between the Principal and the student.

**9.4.10.** Parents/guardians may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board will facilitate this, in line with good practice and Board procedures.

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

**9.4.12.** Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing:

- having heard from all the parties, it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
- where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24(1)*).
- the Board of Management will not effect exclusion within 20 days of the Educational Welfare Board being notified. Suspension may be applied for this period.
- The Board will communicate its decision in writing to the parents/guardians and outline the next phase of the process involving the Educational Welfare Officer.

- Following the twenty-day notification period and intervention of the Educational Welfare Officer, and where the Board remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board will formally confirm the decision to expel in writing.
- Parents/guardians and the student will be informed of the right to appeal under the *Education Act 1998 Section 29* and supplied with the standard form.

#### **9.5 Appeals:**

A parent/guardian, or a student aged over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (*Education Act 1998 Section 29*). An appeal may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board on behalf of a student.

#### **9.6 Review of use of expulsion:**

The Board of Management 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 use of expulsion is appropriate and effective.

### **10.0 School Records**

Information relating to students is kept in a secure location in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

#### **10.1 Success Criteria**

Improvement in the classroom teaching and learning environment. Decline in the number of detentions and suspensions.

#### **10.2 Review and evaluation**

There will be a review of the policy every 2 years by the Code of Behaviour planning committee. A report each year will be made to the Board of Management on the implementation of the policy.

## Appendix I: CLASSROOM CODE

I will be on time for class.  
I will have the necessary books, materials and homework on my desk at the start of class.  
I will use my iPad appropriately and only when instructed.  
I will follow the instructions of a member of staff fully.  
I will respect the right of my fellow students to learn and of my teacher to teach.  
I will help to leave the classroom tidy  
..... because I am responsible for my own learning.

## Appendix II: COLLEGE RULES

1. A high standard of classwork and study will be required in all subjects. Each student shall have and maintain a Homework Journal.
2. Students shall attend all classes punctually. No student shall absent himself from any class period, or part of a class period, without the express permission of the teacher in charge.
3. Students shall not leave the College during school hours without permission. They shall bring a written explanation from their parents/guardians to their Class Tutor following any absence from school. Each student shall report his late arrival in school to the Deputy Principal.
4. Students shall show respect and courtesy to all members of the Staff and to one another. Intimidation and bullying of any kind are strictly forbidden.
5. Students shall be responsible for their own property. They shall also respect College property and the property of others.
6. Students shall comply with the directives of teachers in charge of laboratories, Physical Education, extracurricular activities, school outings and tours.
7. Students shall participate in Physical Education, except in the case of illness or for other medical reasons.
8. Students shall present themselves at all College functions, inside or outside the College, in the College uniform. The College Authorities will decide what is acceptable dress and hairstyle.
9. Smoking and vaping are forbidden whilst in uniform or near the College premises or grounds. Students may not loiter near the College.
10. No student may possess or consume alcohol within the College, or at any function or activity sponsored by the College.
11. Any involvement with illegal drugs by students of the College is absolutely forbidden.
12. Supplying of illegal substances to other students may lead to immediate expulsion.
13. Students shall, at all times, act in a manner conducive to safety. Within the school grounds they shall walk with their bicycles/scooters/ebikes. While travelling to or from school, they shall attend to their own safety and respect the rights of other road users. Students who drive to school are forbidden from driving onto or parking in the school grounds.