



**St. Gerard's School
Thornhill Road
Bray
Co. Wicklow**

ST. GERARD'S SCHOOL CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2025



ST. GERARD'S SCHOOL CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

1. Preamble

John James founded St. Gerard's School in 1918. His vision of education emphasised the dignity of each individual and the development of the whole person.

Thus it is appropriate that St. Gerard Majella, who espoused the belief that everything was within our power if we had faith in God and worked hard, is the Patron Saint of the school.

To uphold the principles of the Mission Statement and of the Code of Behaviour, all partners in the education of the student must work together with a unity of purpose in ensuring that the individual is encouraged to avail of the wonderful opportunities available at St. Gerard's.

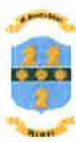
This Code of Behaviour is the result of a co-operative effort by the school community of St. Gerard's School; the students, parents, teachers, Senior Board of Education and Board of Directors. On the understanding that good order and discipline are necessary life skills and important foundations for learning, it is the aim of the code to affirm and support these principles of respect and tolerance that have been, and continue to be, the cornerstone of the spirit of St. Gerard's School.

This policy applies to all of the students of St. Gerard's School and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours; it applies both on and off the campus and anywhere students are clearly identified, or identifiable, as students of the school

2. Mission, Vision and Values

Our vision for St. Gerard's School can be summarised as follows:

- To provide an opportunity for each student to realise his or her potential in all areas: academic, moral, personal, physical, social, spiritual and sporting.
- To promote and sustain a happy, secure and encouraging environment in which positive relationships are highly valued and development and growth take place with the co-operation of all members of the school community.
- To instill a sense of mutual respect and care for all members of the school community.
- To foster honesty, integrity, self-discipline, respect, concern for others, self-esteem, maturity, inclusivity, social awareness and charity.
- To nurture an appreciation of our cultural heritage.
- In short, to develop educated, thinking and caring individuals.



3. St. Gerard's School's Expectations of Students

St. Gerard's School expects that students will:

- Attend school on all required dates and be punctual.
- Act with courtesy and respect towards every member of the school community and extended community.
- Be mindful of their own and others' dignity and personal safety.
- Respect all school charters.
- Follow all rules and instructions when engaged in school and extra-curricular activities.
- Respect all school property and that of the school community.
- Maintain at all times the highest standards of uniform and deportment.
- Adhere to the school's Internet Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.
- Adhere to all school policies and follow the specific school rules contained in the Code of Behaviour.

4. St. Gerard's School Attendance Policy

The St. Gerard's School Attendance Policy strives to set out the basic principles upon which the school attendance strategy will be implemented, sustained and evaluated in the school. The policy assists towards developing a school environment where all students feel valued and where their education and personal needs are met within the resources provided by the school.

*For further details please see the **St. Gerard's School Attendance Policy**.*

5. St. Gerard's School Anti-Bullying Policy

The St. Gerard's School Anti-Bullying policy is a whole school approach to bullying whereby parents, staff and pupils are vigilant and aware, promoting an environment where all pupils can be happy and secure in the school community. The school rules underscore this policy and promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility amongst all members of the school community. Staff members share a collegiate responsibility with the school management to act in identifying and preventing bullying behaviour by any member of the school community.

Definition of Bullying

Every pupil at St. Gerard's School is entitled to an education free from fear, intimidation and exclusion. Bullying is not tolerated at St. Gerard's School.

- Bullying is repeated, *unprovoked* aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another party.



- Bullying behaviour includes physical aggression; damage to or interference with property; extortion; intimidation; abusive telephone calls, texts or messages; social exclusion; name calling or malevolent "slagging".
- Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, although not condoned, *are not* defined as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.

*For further details, please see the **St. Gerard's School Anti-Bullying Policy and LGBTQ Policy**.*

6. Respect and Dignity Policy

This document outlines the policy and procedures of St. Gerard's School in relation to all forms of harassment, bullying and racism. Its purpose is to provide measures to protect the dignity of all members of the school community.

St. Gerard's School will make every effort to ensure that its environment gives all staff and students the opportunity and freedom to do their work/study without having to suffer any form of harassment, bullying or racism.

All members of the school community should be aware that harassment, bullying and racism are unacceptable forms of behaviour and are in breach of school policy.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School Respect and Dignity Policy**.*

7. Personal Safety

Students are expected to show concern for the personal safety of themselves and other members of the school community at all times.

Students should not engage in boisterous activity where they themselves and others may be adversely affected. This includes play fighting, running through public areas and interior corridors, or engaging in potentially harmful conduct.

*For further details see the **Health and Safety Statement**.*



8. Substance Use Policy

This policy has been developed with a clear and consistent message that drug misuse in St. Gerard's School is not acceptable and it will not be condoned under any circumstances. The school will not accept the mis-use of drugs on its premises or on any activity associated with the school, and/or while students are travelling to and from school or in school uniform.

The possession, use, or consumption of alcohol or of non-prescribed drugs (including tobacco) is forbidden at all times. Vaping is not permitted in the school.

Students who are found to have used or have possession of chemical substances, which are not illegal, but can have an intoxicating and/or hallucinating effect, will be sanctioned in a similar fashion, following an investigation of an incident.

The parent/guardian of a student who needs to take prescribed medication should inform the school Healthcare Officer and/or Head of Year.

Breaches of the Substance Use Policy will be addressed using the School's Code of Behaviour.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School Substance Use Policy**.*

9. Uniform and Deportment

- St. Gerard's School encourages students to take pride in the appearance of their uniform and deportment at all times.
- A student's uniform and deportment (uniform, shoes, hair, etc) must at all times be neat and tidy.
- Inappropriate uniform, unacceptable hair colouring/hair dyes, make-up, are not permitted.
- Facial or body-piercing is not permitted.
- Full uniform must be worn when travelling to and from school, on outings, representing the school and during the school day.
- Wearing of non-uniform items is not permitted.
- All items of personal property must be correctly labelled.

Sports Uniform

- The correct sports uniform must be worn for all sporting activities.
- Students must wear their school tracksuit when representing St. Gerard's School at sporting events.
- For P.E. classes students must wear the students' sports uniform.
- Correct school sports attire must be worn at athletics events and on Sports Day.
- Gum Shields are obligatory for all contact sports.
- Headgear for protection is strongly encouraged for all those playing rugby.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School Uniform and Deportment Policy**.*



10. Mobile Phones and other Personal Technological Equipment.

- The use of mobiles phones by 1st, 2nd and 3rd Year students is prohibited in the school.
- TY, 5th and 6th Year student's mobiles phones **MUST** be turned off during class time and during all extra-curricular activities, and should be stored securely in the students' lockers or bag. Students must keep their locker locked.
- A student who misuses a mobile phone by sending or generating unsuitable material will be sanctioned.
- Only parents may collect confiscated mobiles from the School Administration Office one full week from the date of confiscation.
- The school bears no responsibility for personal equipment lost or damaged on the school grounds.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School ICT Acceptable Use Policy**.*

11. Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The aim of this AUP is to ensure that pupils will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School ICT Acceptable Use Policy**.*

12. Homework Policy

At St. Gerard's School, we believe that homework is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School Homework Policy**.*

13. Sport and Extra-Curricular Activities

St Gerard's School recognises that sport and extra-curricular activities represent a valuable aspect of the learning process and contribute to the development of a fully rounded individual. Sport and extra-curricular activities supplement and complement in-school learning and activities and provide opportunities for students to broaden their horizons in ways that would not be possible within the confines of the classroom. Sport and extra-curricular activities provide students with opportunities to explore and expand their abilities and talents in a number of areas. Extra-curricular activities are considered a very important part of the school curriculum and are essential and in the all-round education of each student and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

*For further details see the **St. Gerard's School Sports Activities Policy**.*



14. Classroom Behaviour

St. Gerard's students are expected to contribute to a positive learning environment, through courtesy and respect for all staff, their fellow students and all school property.

St. Gerard's School students should take pride in everything they do.

They should:

- Arrive in good time for class with all materials required, etc
- Be seated quietly in full uniform, with the necessary materials for the prompt commencement of class.
- Listen to and follow the teachers' instructions without interruption.
- Allow others to work undisturbed.
- Be polite and thank the teacher at the end of class and at the end of an activity or trip organised by staff.
- Remember to stand back and hold doors for others when moving from class to class.
- Be courteous in their behaviour.

15. Dining Hall Behaviour

Please respect and adhere to the Dining Hall Charter at all times.

16. General Areas Out of Bounds

The following areas are out of bounds without the school's express permission:

- All emergency exits.
- The woods.
- Student car park during school hours.
- All car parks.
- The Sports Hall and the Pavilion.
- All sports pitches (with Year Head permission & correct footwear, pupils may use the hockey pitches at break and lunch times).
- Maintenance Area and Compound.

17. Chewing Gum

Chewing gum is forbidden on the school campus – both inside and outside the school buildings.



18. Cars / Motorbikes

Student Vehicle Parking Permits are issued to students at the discretion of the School Management.

Students who do not adhere to the guidelines for student vehicle parking will have their Vehicle Parking Permit withdrawn.

For further details see the **St. Gerard's School Student Vehicle Parking Permit Terms and Conditions**

19. Rewards for Good Behaviour / Achievement

St. Gerard's School recognises and rewards good behaviour, high standards of work and effort, regular attendance and punctuality and positive contribution to the school.

Rewards include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Verbal praise and encouragement to students, either in class or privately.
- Positive comments by Form Teacher / Year Head.
- Positive note home to parents in the School Planner/by email/on Google Classroom.
- Positive recognition at Form Class time or during Year Assemblies.
- Recognition of achievement (individual or group) on Student Council / Year Head / Principal's notice board.
- Recognition through the school's website, school newsletters, publications and school Yearbook.
- Recognition through Halloween, Christmas, Easter and Summer school reports.
- Display of students' work.
- Recognition at Prize Day.
- Recognition through the leadership roles assigned to appointed Monitors, Ambassadors, Captains and Prefects in 5th and 6th Year as well as other leadership roles in the school community.

A copy of the St Gerard's School's Code of Behaviour is available from the Administration Office.

The Code of Behaviour is explained to students at the start of the academic year and reference to it is made in classes such as CSPE, SPHE and through other aspects of the curriculum.

20. Expectations of Behaviour:

Students are expected on a daily basis to:

- (i) Treat everyone (students, staff and visitors) with courtesy, dignity and respect.
- (ii) Attend class on time every day.
- (iii) Participate fully in school activities and all aspects of school life.
- (iv) Behave in a manner that does not disrupt the learning of others or instruction during class.
- (v) Respect all school equipment and property as well as the possessions of fellow students.
- (vi) Observe the health and safety regulations of the school premises.
- (vii) Never to smoke/vape or use e-cigarettes in school or anywhere on the school campus and grounds.



21. School Response to Inappropriate Behaviour

Students must be alert to the fact that even minor breaches of behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can be damaging and have long-lasting effects including disruption of the student's own learning and the learning of others. Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching of other students, school leadership and management have a duty of care to all other students to safeguard them from the inappropriate behaviour of an offending student.

The role of the Classroom Teacher:

The classroom teacher has a strong influence with the students. They are leaders of learning. The classroom teacher will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies. These strategies may include:

- Talking to the student.
- The student may be directed to sit and work elsewhere in the classroom.
- Verbal warning.
- Teacher may make a report to the Head of Year.

The role of the Head of Year:

The Head of Year works closely with classroom teachers to manage the overall behavioural environment of the year group. Where a student is reported for persistent misbehaviour, the Head of Year will make interventions to establish the reasons for such behaviour and apply necessary sanctions.

The role of the Deputy Principal and Principal:

As part of the schools response to inappropriate behaviour, a student in some instances may be referred to the Deputy Principal. This will normally happen in cases of persistent minor breaches of behaviour or in instances of serious misbehaviour. The Deputy Principal will make interventions and/or apply sanctions as necessary. In the case of serious situations the student will be referred to the Principal. The Principal and Deputy Principal reserve the right to become involved in any behavioural matter if it is deemed that such involvement is necessary in that particular instance.

Exceptionally Serious Breaches of the St. Gerard's School's Code of Behaviour

There can at times occur some exceptionally serious breaches of the St. Gerard's School Code of Behaviour which will necessitate immediate action rather than progressing through teachers and the Head of Year. In the event of an occurrence of an exceptionally serious breach of behaviour, immediate action can be taken. Such action may include internal or external suspension or expulsion by the Board of Directors.



22. Sanctions.

St. Gerard's School maintains a positive and constructive Code of Behaviour, whilst at the same time ensuring that the consequences of breaking the Code are fully understood.

Sanctions include:

- Rebuke/verbal warning.
- Relocation in class.
- Note in Planner.
- Extra (meaningful) school work.
- Report to Year Head / Incident Report Form.
- Contact/correspondence with parents/guardian.
- Interim Report Card/Progress Card.
- Report to Deputy Principal / Principal.
- Community Service assigned by Year Head / Deputy Principal.
- Withdrawal from school activities/sports/excursions.
- Daily Detention (Monday to Friday.)
- Saturday Detention.
- Internal Suspension.
- External Suspension.
- Expulsion.

Notes

- These sanctions are in an appropriate order of ascending gravitas.
- In the case of Suspension and Expulsion, the school's Procedures and Policies will be followed.
- A record will be kept of all correspondence in relation to Detentions, Interim Report Cards, Suspensions etc., incurred by a student and this will be included in the student's file.
- These sanctions are applied in accordance with the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) guidelines.

Signed:

Date:

10/09/2025

Mr Stephen Loughman
Chair of the Senior Board of Education



APPENDIX 1

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

SEPTEMBER 2025

Suspension

Suspension is defined as: *requiring the student to absent him/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.*

During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school.

Involving the Gardaí

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

Authority to suspend

The Board of Directors has formally delegated to the Principal the authority to suspend a student. In implementing a decision to suspend, the Principal shall adhere to:

- (i) The procedures for suspension as set down in the Appendix of the school's Code of Behaviour.
- (ii) *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* (NEWB: 2008).

In the event of the absence of the Principal on approved leave or on school business, the authority to suspend is delegated to the designated Deputy Principal/Person-in-charge subject to the provisions of (i) and (ii) above.

Grounds for Suspension

The decision to suspend a student will be on serious grounds such as:

- The student's behaviour has had a detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to the safety of others.
- An incident (or incidents) of gross misbehaviour that is contrary and repugnant to the ethos and values of St. Gerard's School.



- The student is responsible for damage to school property.
- Repeated, deliberate and sustained breaches of the Code of Behaviour.
- Breaches of the Code of Behaviour while on a school outing or away on a school tour.

The grounds listed above are not exhaustive.

Suspension during State Examinations

Should it be necessary to suspend a student from St. Gerard's School during a State examination, the suspension will be approved by the Senior Board of Education and will be used where there is:

- A threat to the safety of other students and personnel.
- A threat to the order, environment and smooth running of the State examinations.
- A threat to the rights of other students to sit and address their exams in a calm atmosphere.
- An exceptionally serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.



Essential Elements in the Procedure for External Suspension

1. An Incident Report Form is given by a member of staff to the Head of Year, who forwards it to the Deputy Principal.
2. The pupil(s) involved are met by the Deputy Principal and/or the Head of Year and are asked about the reported incident.
3. Pupil(s) involved are asked to give a written account of the incident which is read back to them and which they will sign and date.
4. The pupil(s) will then be asked to either go back to class, wait in the LRC or go to the Head of Year classroom for supervision, depending on the nature of the incident.
5. The Head of Year checks the files of those involved to ascertain if there have been any previous sanctions or incidents involving the students.
6. The Head of Year or the Deputy Principal informs the parents that an incident has occurred, that the student has given a written account and is now in class or being supervised. The parents are told that sanctions are being considered in line with the incident and are given an opportunity to respond and/or are invited to come to the school for a meeting.
7. Should it be considered that a suspension may be warranted, the relevant documentation is referred to the Principal, who is also briefed by the Head of Year and/or the Deputy Principal.
8. The parent(s)/guardian(s) is/are informed of the precise grounds which give rise to the consideration of a possible suspension, and is/are given the opportunity to respond, before a decision to suspend is reached and formalised.
9. The Principal makes a decision (or, in the Principal's absence, the Acting Principal or Deputy Principal) in line with the Code of Behaviour, relevant school policies and the relevant documentation presented.
10. Parents/Guardians are informed of the decision to **Externally Suspend** and are invited to come to the school for a meeting should they so wish.
11. Should the suspension be immediate (e.g. in the interests of Health and Safety), the Parents/Guardians may be informed by phone, with confirmation of the sanction following - in writing.
12. Student to be supervised/in class until suspension takes effect.



13. Student will never be sent home during the school day, unless collected by parent/legal guardian (or other suitable arrangement made). Otherwise students will be placed on **Internal Suspension** during the day and placed on a Progress Card.
14. The formal letter of notification should include:
 - Notice of the suspension
 - Effective date of the suspension
 - Reasons for the suspension
 - Expectations of the student while on suspension (Study Programme may be attached)
 - A statement that the student is under the care and responsibility of the parents/guardians while on suspension
 - A statement that the NEWB has been informed (if the suspension is longer than 6 days, or the student has been suspended for more than 20 days during the school year).
 - The requirements which need to be in place when the student returns to school (e.g. written apology, completed assignments, pastoral care, etc).
 - An enclosed copy of the letter for acceptance and signature of parent.
 - The formal letter of notification should include a statement confirming the right to appeal of the parents.
15. Should consideration be given to proceeding to expulsion, then the letter must make this clear.

Appeals:

The decision of the Principal to suspend a student may be appealed to the Senior Board of Education.

Section 29 Appeal:

Where the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents/guardians or a student over eighteen years, may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2007. At the time when parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under section 29 of Education Act 1998, and will be given information about how to appeal.

Report to TUSLA:

The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with NEWB reporting guidelines (Education Welfare Act, 2000, section 21(4) (a)).



Procedures for the formal re-introduction of the student into the school.

- Parents may be requested to attend with the student on the day of his/her return to the school
- Undertakings of good behaviour may be requested in writing
- Agreed conditions (e.g. counselling, pastoral care supports, letter of apology, meeting with Principal/Deputy Principal) should be agreed by parent(s) and pupil.

Reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that any formal notification is made in a manner that can be understood by the student and the parents/guardians. This is essential when parents have difficulty reading or understanding English.

Signed:

Date:

10/09/2025

Mr Stephen Loughman
Chair of the Senior Board of Education