Code of Behaviour

Mission Statement

Loreto Letterkenny is a Catholic school committed to the development of the whole person.The school endeavours to develop student responsibility for learning in a safe, caring and spiritual environment, where each individual experiences personal success and fulfilment.

1. The Standards of Behaviour Expected in Loreto Secondary School, Letterkenny

The Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour. Parental cooperation is considered fundamental to the implementation of the school's policy. Students given a place in Loreto Secondary School, Letterkenny, must abide by the code of behaviour. Students must realise that they are ambassadors of the school at all times. This code applies to all school activities. The good name of the school depends on them and proper behaviour is expected.

This policy applies to all students during the school day and while on all school related activities.

The overall aim of our code of behaviour is to:

- *facilitate learning, in a safe and positive environment within the school*
- *promote and acknowledge positive behaviour, respect and cooperation*
- *encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning*
- *ensure the health and safety of all in our school community.*

Respect

- Students are expected to be courteous, respectful and well-mannered to **all** staff and fellow students at **all** times.
- Students are expected to work to the best of their ability at all times in order to reach their full potential.
- Students must treat their own property and all school property and equipment with respect and care.

Correspondence

Communication with parents is essential to the effective running of the school.

- Parents/guardians and students will receive communication from the school through the VSware app, via text, push notification and/or email. The school cannot accept responsibility for missed communications due to out-of-date or incorrect contact details entered into VSware and it is very important that these are checked by parents to ensure they are accurate.
- Parents/guardians wishing to communicate with the school should do so through the school office at 074-9121850 or at info@loretoletterkenny.ie
- Letters addressed to parents/guardians should not be opened by students and should be delivered promptly.
- Communication by telephone between students and parents/guardians must be made through the school office and not on personal mobile phones.
- Parents/guardians should monitor their child's profile on the VSware app.

Student Journal

- The student journal is an important form of communication between home and school.
- Each student must have the student journal in her possession at all times.
- The Student Journal should be treated with care and respect. It should not be defaced in any way. If this happens, the student will be requested to purchase a new journal.
- Students are expected to record homework in the journal before the end of each class.
- The class tutor will inspect and sign the journal at Tutorial Class.
- Teachers may inspect Student Journals at any time.
- Parents / guardians are requested **to inspect and sign the student journal weekly.**

Attendance and Punctuality

- Regular attendance is essential for the academic and personal development of the student.
- All students must swipe in every morning before 8.55am. Failure to swipe in will result in your daughter being marked absent for that school day.
- Attendance at school is a legal requirement in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Students must attend school each day between 9.00 a.m. and 4 p.m.,Monday-Thursday, 9.00 a.m. and 1.20 p.m. on Friday. Under the Education Welfare Act, we are obliged to report absences aggregating 20 days to the Education Welfare Board for students aged 16 and under.

Absence

- VSware will record attendance, punctuality, absences and the reason for the absences.
- Absenting oneself from school or class without permission, or not going to the approved study centre when instructed to do so, is mitching.

- **When a student arrives late to school:**
  - Students arriving between 9.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m are recorded as late.
    - They should report to the front office when they enter the school with the relevant section in their journal completed by a parent/guardian
    - If a student arrives to class before 9.30am with a stamped note in the diary they should be marked as Late on VSware by the class teacher.

  - Students arriving after 9.30am:
    - If a student misses one or more classes throughout the day a partial absence should be requested by a parent/guardian on VSware on that day.
    - N.B. Partial absences can only be inputted on the day of the absence.

- **When it is necessary for a student to leave school before 4.00pm (or 1.20pm on Friday) for an appointment it is important that:**
    - Permission from a parent/guardian must be requested on VSware before 9am.
    - A parent/guardian must collect and sign the student out at the front office.

- **When a student is absent for a full day or more:**
    - An explanatory note from a parent/guardian should be submitted on VSware before the student returns to school.

- **When a student becomes unwell at school**
  - During class, she must;
    - get permission from her teacher to leave class.
    - go directly to the front office and school will then make contact with a parent/guardian.
    - be collected and signed out by a parent/guardian.

- At break time / lunchtime, she must:

- approach a staff member who will make contact with a Deputy Principal
- go directly to the front office and school will then make contact with a parent / guardian.
- be collected and signed out by a parent/guardian.

- In cases of serious illness / injury:

- the Principal / Deputy Principals will be contacted immediately
- a parent / guardian will be contacted
- the Emergency Services will be contacted where necessary.

Lunch-time

- It is compulsory that all first year, second year, third year and transition year students stay on the premises at lunchtime.
- Permission to leave the school at lunchtime will be withdrawn from any sixth or fifth year student who gets involved in unacceptable behaviour / activities / lateness.

Uniform

- Students are expected to wear the **official full school uniform at all times** in school and when representing the school. It must also be worn coming to and going home from school.
- Students must wear the official school PE uniform to school on the day PE is timetabled for them. PE uniform must be worn when representing the school at any sporting activity
- The normal school uniform must be worn on non PE days, including days when students have training.
- Uniform items should be labelled clearly with the student's name using indelible ink.
- Students must wear the official school uniform without ornamentation, only school badges are permitted.
- One ear stud in each ear and one ring on each hand are acceptable.
- Light facial make-up only is acceptable.
- For health and safety reasons, long acrylic nails are not permitted.
- Facial and tongue piercings of any type are not permitted.
- Tattoo's must not be visible.
- Hairstyles must be neat and tidy. Hair accessories must be discrete. Flamboyant hairstyle / colour e.g. blue, green, pink, red etc. are not permitted and will not be tolerated.

The normal school uniform consists of: (*available from County Seat*)

- Brown uniform skirt or uniform trousers.
    - Skirt should be no higher than one inch above the knee.
    - Only tailored trousers are acceptable which must be ankle length.
- A check blouse for senior students and a shale coloured blouse for junior students.
- Brown uniform jumper with the Loreto crest.
- Brown tights or brown socks must be worn with the skirt.
- Brown shoes must be worn with the uniform at all times. Runners, including brown runners/vans/ converse are not acceptable
- Only official brown school coat/fleece with school crest may be worn.
- Gloves, hats, scarfs and hijabs must be brown.

The PE uniform consist of:

- School crested sports top - available exclusively from O'Reilly's Ballybofey or at www.oreillysofficial.com
- Black bottoms
- Runners - PE footwear must be suitable for sports with white soles.
- Students should wear either a black coat or the official school uniform coat with their PE gear.

Lockers
Each student, with the exception of Transition Year students, must have a locker and it is her responsibility to ensure that it is locked correctly at all times.

- It is the responsibility of each student to keep her locker free of graffiti.
- Students may only go to their lockers at the following times:
    - Before 8.55am.
    - 11.00am -11.15am.
    - 1.20pm - 1.50pm
    - After 4.00 pm (after 1.20pm on Fridays)
- Sharing of lockers is forbidden.

Health and Safety

- In order to ensure ease of movement and for the safety of all, students are expected to walk in single file and on the left hand side of all corridors and stairs.
- Students must follow the directions given when the fire alarm rings.

Language

- Strong/vulgar language will not be tolerated.

Bullying

- Bullying of any sort will not be tolerated. The school's Bí Cineálta procedures will be used to deal with bullying behaviour.

Smoking and Vaping

- Smoking and vaping are strictly forbidden in school at all times, during all school related-activities and on all occasions where the school uniform is worn.
- It is illegal to smoke inside any part of the school building **and on the school grounds** [Public Health (Tobacco) Acts 2002 and 2004, Section 47].

Illegal Substances

- The school operates a zero tolerance policy with regard to all illegal substances and alcohol.
- Possession, selling or consumption of any illegal substances or alcohol in school, on school grounds and during school related activities will warrant suspension from school and may warrant expulsion. The Board of Management and the Gardaí may be informed.

Mobile Phone Usage

- When a student brings a mobile to school, t**he phone must be switched off** (unheard and unseen) during the school day from entering the school premises until 4:00pm. Mobile phones may not be used for any purpose on the school premises unless directed by a teacher.
- Failing the above, students will have the phone confiscated until the end of the school day. A parent/guardians must collect the phone at the front office before 4.30pm.
- Parents / guardians should not communicate with a student via the student's mobile phone between 8.55am and 4.00pm. If it is necessary for parents / guardians to contact the student, this should be done through the school office at 074 9121850. ***We ask parents/guardians to cooperate with this directive.***
- No photographs or recordings (video or audio) may be made with mobile phones. Using phones in such a way can seriously infringe on people's rights.
- The school reserves the right to view the contents of the matter under investigation on the confiscated mobile phone in the presence of the student, to ensure it contains no images or information which might compromise any member of the school community. Students are required to remove any photographs or recordings of this nature.

- Students participating in school related activities (e.g. study, extracurricular activities, school trips, tours and all school events) must abide by the mobile phone rules governing these activities.
- Incidents where students use mobile phones to bully other students, will be treated as a serious breach of the code of behaviour and the Bí Cineálta anti-bullying procedures.
- The school accepts no responsibility for loss, theft or damage to mobile phones on the premises.
- It is strongly advised that students do not share passwords.
- Failure to hand over a mobile phone when requested will be treated as a serious breach of the code of behaviour.

Litter and Graffiti

- In order to maintain a pleasant and hygienic working and learning environment for all students and staff, the school must be kept litter and graffiti free.
- Chewing gum is not allowed in school.
- During lunchtime and break time students are expected to return plates, cups, cutlery etc. to the canteen and place all litter in the bins provided throughout the school.

Personal Property

- The school does not accept responsibility for items lost, mislaid or stolen.
- All personal property must be labelled clearly.
- Money and valuables must be kept on the person at all times or handed in to reception.

2. Strategies Used to Promote, Acknowledge and Affirm Good Behaviour

We are proud of the fact that the behaviour of our students in Loreto Letterkenny is excellent. We believe that positive and respectful interactions work best with students in the promotion of good behaviour.

The following are examples of strategies that could be used to promote, acknowledge and affirm good behaviour:

- Words of praise from a subject teacher, Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal and / or positive comments recorded in the Student Journal.
- Individual teachers may adopt an award system for his / her class.
- A positive note / postcard / letter sent home to parents / guardians.
- Public recognition of good behaviour / achievements through, for example, the intercom system, notice board, local papers.
- Positive actions and achievements and improvements in behaviour are recognised and acknowledged by a positive referral of the student to the Year Head, Deputy Principal, or Principal.
- If a student shows signs of improvement a negotiating system may be used to encourage the student to maintain improvement in their behaviour.
- Class trip.
- Lunch voucher.
- Teachers give no homework for the weekend if all students in the group did homework really well Monday to Friday. If everyone does well in tests, no homework may be given.
- The talents and achievements of students are acknowledged and rewarded annually at either the "Celebration of Participation" ceremony or the "Awards" ceremony.
- Senior students are given leadership roles through the fifth-year monitor and prefect systems.
- Fifth-year and sixth-year students receive references at the end of that academic year, upon request from potential employers.

3. The Ways in Which the School Responds to Unacceptable Behaviour

3.1 Breaches of the Code of Behaviour

Breaches of the code of behaviour are divided into two categories:

i) Low-level unacceptable behaviour
ii) High-level unacceptable behaviour.

Examples of Low Level Unacceptable Behaviour Include:

- Lateness to class
- Failure to bring correct materials to class
- Homework not completed
- Being disruptive in class
- Incorrect uniform

Examples of High Level Unacceptable Behaviour Include:

- Bullying
- Consistent interference with fellow students' right to learn
- Showing disrespect to other students and staff members
- Unruly, aggressive and defiant behaviour
- Strong, vulgar language
- Failure to swipe and register attendance
- Using another student's Swipe Card or pin number
- Failure to produce Student Journal
- Use of devices, including but not limited to for example: mobile phones, cameras, recording and musical devices and smart watches during school hours. This describes any products with an electronic communication/storage device or digital facility
- Failure to hand up mobile phone, camera, recording and musical devices or indeed any device when requested
- Smoking/Vaping on the school premises, on school grounds, when representing the school and when in school uniform
- Missing class/es and school without permission
- Copying at exams
- Failure to attend detention
- Possession, sale, use, consumption and abuse of alcohol and illegal substances in school, on school grounds and during school related activities
- Forging signatures of parents / guardians / teachers
- Defacement of and damage to school property including school books
- Interfering with the fire alarm
- Theft
- Abuse of the Internet
- Persistent misconduct
- In a toilet cubicle with another student/s

3.2 Sanctions for Breaches of the Code of Behaviour

We are aware that a small number of students find it difficult at times to abide by the code of behaviour. When this occurs the key focus is on helping the student improve her behaviour and on preventing a recurrence of the offence. A range of strategies and sanctions is used in instances where breaches of the code of behaviour occur.

The code of behaviour is implemented through the ladder of referral which initially involves the subject teacher, followed by the Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal.

Sanctions for inappropriate use of devices including but not limited to for example: Mobile Phones, Recording/ Musical Devices and Smart Watches

First offence**:**

- The device is taken from the student, a Student Report Form is completed and the student is given a verbal warning.
- The device and the completed Student Report Form are given to the Principal / Deputy Principal.
- The device may be collected by a parent / guardian from the Principal / Deputy Principal at 4.00pm on the first day or any subsequent day. The parent / guardian must sign the Student Report Form.
- The use of devices including but not limited to for example: mobile phones and other electronic devices including smart watches during examinations will result in the cancellation of the student's answer paper.

Second offence:

- As above, however students will also be put on lunchtime detention

Sanctions for Incorrect Uniform

- Non-uniform items may be confiscated and retained for collection at 4.00pm.
- Wearing incorrect uniform will be recorded in the Student Journal and after 3 infringements a student will be placed on lunchtime detention.
- Further infringements will be dealt with in accordance with the code of behaviour

4 How the Code of Behaviour is Implemented Through the Ladder of Referral

LADDER of REFERRAL

Teachers will use the ladder of referral to help students reflect on and improve their behaviour when a misdemeanour occurs. The higher up the ladder of referral the student moves, the more serious the behaviour and hence the sanction. The emphasis at all stages of the ladder of referral is to support and help the student to improve her behaviour and to prevent re-offending. Extra support may be put in place for students who find it difficult to abide by the code of behaviour. It is important that a student understands how her behaviour impacts on herself, her fellow students and teachers and on the process of teaching and learning. The student should also understand the purpose of the sanction.

1. **Subject Teacher**
    - Each subject teacher is responsible for managing student behaviour in his / her classroom. Classroom rules are used to help students understand how they are expected to behave during lessons.
    - Subject teachers may employ a number of strategies to help the student behave well and improve her behaviour. These may include:
        - a one-to-one talk with the student or a verbal reprimand given in a supportive and respectful way
        - a note to the parents / guardians in the Student Journal
        - an opportunity for the student to reflect on her behaviour
        - moving the seating arrangements in the classroom
        - time out in the classroom of another teacher for a short time, by prior arrangement with the teacher.

- A **Student Report Form** may be completed by an individual subject teacher for:
    - 3 similar low-level complaints
    - **o** any 3 low-level complaints
    - one high-level complaint.
- The Subject Teacher records the action that has been taken and the Student Report Form will then be passed on to the Year Head. The Subject Teacher will indicate if any further action needs to be taken by the Year Head.
- The Student Report Form will be stored in the individual student's file in a locked filing cabinet.

2. **Class Tutor**
    - Class Tutors for first year students have a pastoral, encouraging and supportive role.

3. **Year Head**

Persistent misbehaviour and high-level unacceptable behaviour will be reported to the Year Head using the Student Report Form. The following are examples of strategies and sanctions that the Year Head may use to help the student reflect on and improve her behaviour:

- Contact home
- Conduct a one-to-one interview with the student and if necessary with the student, her parents / guardians and the Deputy Principal
- Provide the student with the opportunity to reflect on the causes and impact of her behaviour and to make a plan for improvement. This written piece of work may be used as part of the discussion between the Year Head and the student in helping the student develop and maintain high standards with regard to her behaviour.
- Sixth & Fifth-year students may lose the privilege of leaving the school at lunchtime.
- The student may not be allowed to represent the school in extracurricular activities or to participate in school trips / events
- Place the student on:
    - Attendance report
    - Behaviour report
    - Lunchtime Detention
    - After-School Detention (parents / guardians will be informed by letter in advance).
- In consultation with parents / guardians the student may also be referred to the Guidance Counsellor or to an outside agency for specific support.

4. **Deputy Principals / Principal**
    - If the student's behaviour has not improved she may then be referred to the Deputy Principals / Principal.
    - In extreme cases suspension or expulsion may be warranted.

I agree to abide by the Code of Behaviour of Loreto Secondary School, Letterkenny.

Signature of Student: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____**Date:** _____
Signature requirement is in line with our admission policy