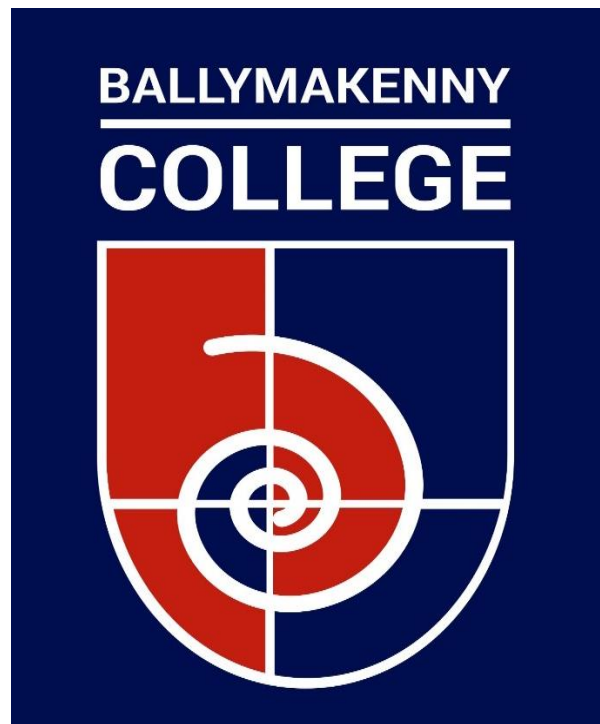


CODE OF BEHAVIOUR



2016/2017

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1. Introduction

Ballymakenny College is a new type of community school recognised by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). It is equality- based and co-educational and Educate Together (ET) and Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) are its joint patrons. As such, it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and follows the curricular programmes prescribed. The ET Mission Statement (*Educate Together will be an agent for change in the Irish State Education system seeking to ensure that parents have the choice of an education based on the inclusive intercultural values of respect for difference and justice and equality for all. In Educate Together schools, every child will learn in an inclusive, democratic, co-educational setting that is committed to enabling and supporting each child to achieve their full potential while at the same time preparing them to become caring and active members of a culturally diverse society*), the LMETB Mission Statement (*Louth and Meath Education and Training Board is committed to excellence and innovation in the education of young people and adults through the provision of dynamic services delivered by professional staff*) and the educational ideology and methodology underpinning Building Learning Power (BLP) that we strive towards underpin our vision, ethos and culture in Ballymakenny College.

1.1 Aim

Ballymakenny College aims to provide an education that will enable all students to contribute meaningfully to their communities, embrace the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to live their lives and to build their careers in the 21st century.

This Code of Behaviour has been drawn up in consultation with all the school partners, including the Board of Management, school staff, students and parents/guardians¹. It takes cognisance of the responsibility of Ballymakenny College to ensure that all of its students are educated in a happy, safe, respectful and optimal learning environment. This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests

¹ The term 'parents' is used throughout the remainder of this document to mean both Parents and Guardians

of all students. Ballymakenny College endeavours, to the greatest possible extent, to provide an appropriate education for all students and, in that context, the right of the overwhelming majority of compliant students to learn will not be subverted by any disruptive behaviour.

'The code of behaviour (conduct) is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that altogether form the schools plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well' (NEWB Guidelines, 2008).

1.2 Policy Context and Rationale

Many people work together in our school each day and therefore a high level of courtesy and consideration for others is necessary. Behaviour/conduct which is ill mannered, disrespectful, dangerous or disruptive cannot be allowed. The purpose of this Code of Behaviour is to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported. It is the key tool in enabling the school leadership to support the learning of every student in Ballymakenny College in compliance with the legislative requirements. It is also intended to inform and to clarify issues related to the schools' expectations and procedures. The Code of Behaviour complies with the provisions of all relevant legislation (in compliance with the NEWB guidelines, 2008).

1.3 School Ethos

Ballymakenny College is committed to the values laid down in the ET Charter and the Mission Statement, Values and Principles of LMETB. Ballymakenny College is learner-centred, equality based, co- educational and democratically run. This means that all members of the school community, whatever their social, cultural or belief background, work together in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. Students follow an ethical curriculum, which includes learning about different religions and belief systems. Our ethos provides a strong moral, ethical and spiritual framework for the whole school community, and informs all policies and practices in the daily life of the school.

1.4 Relationship of Policy to the Ethos of Ballymakenny College

The Code of Behaviour will reflect the school vision (as identified by students, teachers and parents) and our guiding principles (see section 1.7). The priority in Ballymakenny College is to ensure a safe, positive, supportive and optimal educational environment for all. The philosophical foundations of our Code of Behaviour are care, respect, positivity and personal responsibility. The Code of Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos,

relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour for learning and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The Code of Behaviour helps teachers and other members of the staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

1.5 Vision

Our vision is for a modern model of second-level school, one that places the student at its centre. We aim to create a vibrant, welcoming school community to which every member of the community feels a real sense of belonging. We use the best teaching and learning methods to enable each individual student to reach their full academic and social potential.

1.6 Scope

This policy applies to students of Ballymakenny College and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. This policy provides that if a student is recognisable as a student of Ballymakenny College then the school reserves the right to safeguard its good name. The code requires that all interactions between school staff and parents will respect the normal protocols that should apply to such interactions.

1.7 The Guiding Principles of Ballymakenny College.

These are some basic principles that underpin our Code of Behaviour. These include:

- Treating each person in the school with respect and courtesy;
- Recognising that everyone's behaviour matters;
- Providing clarity about expectations and standards for students;
- Being co-operative and positive in class and whole-school environments;
- Being mindful of every student's right to learn;
- Recognising the importance of relationships;
- Focusing on promoting good behaviour;
- Nurturing a growth mind set in students;
- Being active agents in maintaining an environment of equality and fairness;
- Recognising educational vulnerability;
- Attending to the welfare of students;
- Following all Health and Safety guidelines, ensuring that no student's actions compromises the safety of others;
- Fostering an environment of collective responsibility for the welfare of all students;

- Ensuring that all actions both inside and outside of school reflect positively on Ballymakenny College.

All school rules have been developed in accordance with these principles to promote the values of Ballymakenny College.

When the code is implemented, it will provide the foundations for the success in achieving these goals.

1.8 Goals of the Code of Behaviour

The goals of our Code of Behaviour are to:

- Create a positive, orderly and structured environment where teaching, learning and personal development can occur;
- Foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported;
- Enable the school leadership to support the learning of *every student* in the school;
- Encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour both offline and online;
- Help young people to mature into responsible participating citizens;
- Build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents;
- Create a safe, secure learning environment for all students and staff by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community;
- Implement effective procedures which allow for the day to day running of the school and which meet the demands of current legislation;
- Promote good behaviour, personal responsibility and self-discipline;
- Facilitate the appropriate involvement of all school personnel;
- Ensure understanding by the parents, students, staff and management of the code of behaviour and the reasons for it;
- Emphasise the promotion and acknowledgement of good behaviour;
- Outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions that will be used in response to negative behaviour;
- Outline how positive behaviour is encouraged;
- Outline the interventions to be used when a student repeatedly misbehaves.

2 Policy Content

The content of our code of behaviour includes the following sub-sections

2.1 Standards of Behaviour

2.2 Promoting good behaviour

2.3 Responding to inappropriate behaviour:

- Preventative Measures;
- Sanctions involving the ladder of referral;
- School Based Interventions.

2.1 Standards of Behaviour

Ballymakenny College expects all members of the school community to behave in ways that show respect for others and demonstrate our school's vision and guiding principles. Students are more likely to benefit from their education and to be happy in a structured, caring environment where high standards of behaviour are expected and adhered to. The term standards can also mean rules or expectations.

The schools' standards of behaviour reflect values such as:

- ✓ Respect for self and all members of the school community;
- ✓ Kindness, courtesy and willingness to help others;
- ✓ Fairness;
- ✓ Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict;
- ✓ Attending school regularly and punctually;
- ✓ Doing ones best;
- ✓ Taking responsibility for ones learning;
- ✓ Adhering to the rules/expectations of the school;
- ✓ Helping to create a safe positive environment;
- ✓ Respecting other students and their learning;
- ✓ Participating in school activities.

Our standards of behaviour also signal to members of the school community the kinds of behaviour that are not acceptable in the school, for example:

- ✓ Behaviour that is disrespectful and damaging to the positive relationships and atmosphere within the school;
- ✓ Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation both on and offline.);
- ✓ Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning;
- ✓ Inappropriate and irresponsible online behaviour (this is outlined in more detail in the Acceptable User Policy);
- ✓ Behaviour that is inappropriate for a place of work and learning;
- ✓ Threats or physical hurt to another person;
- ✓ Damage to property;
- ✓ Theft;
- ✓ Any behaviour that negatively affects the good name of Ballymakenny College both inside and outside of school.

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response, the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. As part of a whole-school approach to understanding the nature and impact of negative behaviours, specific examples of misconduct were discussed by staff, students and parents. Each behaviour was then classified as Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 standards of behaviour. (see Appendix A for Level 1, Appendix B for Level 2, Appendix C for Level 3 & Appendix D for very serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour).

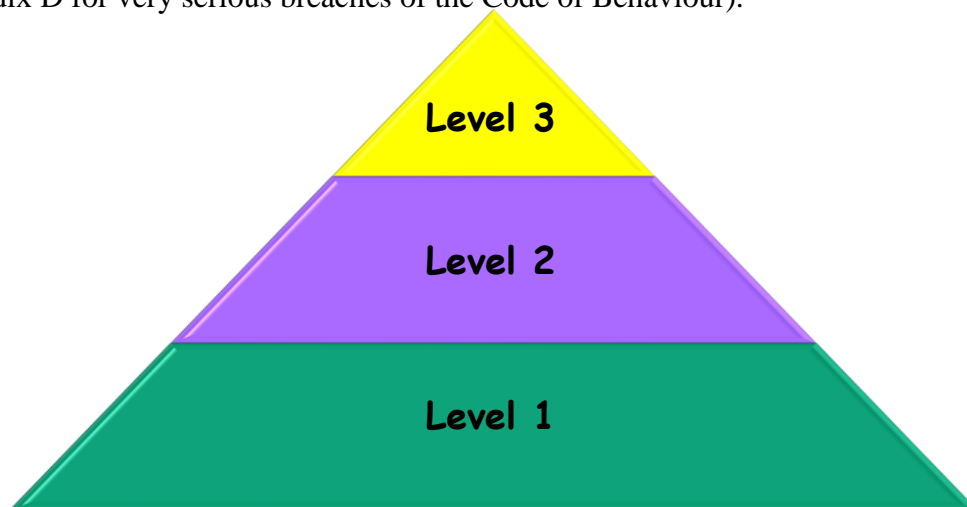


Figure 1

Level 1 behaviours are relatively low level with typically a higher frequency. Level 3 behaviours are less frequent but more serious. However, the context and frequency of Level 1 or Level 2 behaviours, whether from individual teachers or from a number of teachers determines the overall impact of that behaviour and the resulting consequences.

The expectations/rules of Ballymakenny College are outlined in Appendix E and are included in the school journal. It is an essential prerequisite of enrolment in Ballymakenny College that the Code of Behaviour is accepted in writing by parents/guardians & students on admission. The Code of Behaviour (including future revisions) must be fully complied with for the duration of the student's enrolment in Ballymakenny College. This commitment must be renewed (in the school journal) prior to the commencement of each academic year.

2.2 Promoting Good Behaviour

Ballymakenny College places a special emphasis on the acknowledgement of positive and exceptional behaviour. To this effect, we have developed a system of recording behaviour using our online database, VS Ware. Positive contributions to the school environment are recorded here; these include but are not limited to in-class or extra-curricular contributions, academic success or effort, positive student interactions, and modelling student leadership. Promoting good behaviour is one of the main goals of the schools Code of Behaviour. The day-to-day excellence of school management and classroom teaching enables most students to behave in ways that support their own learning and development. The psychological basis of BLP is personal responsibility and the development of a growth mind-set in students. This Code of Behaviour aims to support and nurture this growth. It aims to assist students to make better choices and take responsibility for their conduct and their learning. In addition to this, some specific strategies to promote good behaviour include:

2.2.1 Other day to day activities to promote good behaviour include:

- ✓ Affirming good behaviour either verbally, through the positive merit system on VS ware, writing a note in the journal or sending home a positive behaviour postcard etc.;
- ✓ Positive phone call home;
- ✓ Setting and communicating high, clear, consistent and widely-understood standards/expectations e.g. punctuality, demonstrating basic manner etc.;
- ✓ Nurturing positive relationships and interactions between all members of the school community;

- ✓ Adults modelling the behaviour that is expected from the students;
- ✓ Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students;
- ✓ Good school and class routines (Treoir, organisation of school day, corridor behaviour, lining up outside classrooms, placing school journals on desks, taking coats off in class etc.);
- ✓ Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour;
- ✓ Exploring with students how people should treat each other (at Treoir, in SPHE lessons, specific initiative/programmes such as Anti-Bullying Programmes, during House Assembly Time etc.);
- ✓ Involving students in the preparation of the school Code of Behaviour;
- ✓ Identification by students, staff and parents of the values and expectations of our school;
- ✓ Good teaching and learning that engages students and builds their learning capacity;
- ✓ Opportunities for collaboration and participation with students and parents;
- ✓ Student Leadership programmes i.e. Student Council, House Captains etc.;
- ✓ Maintaining a pleasant and well organised school and classroom environments e.g. lots of visual displays, displaying student work, keeping high standards of cleanliness and tidiness etc.;
- ✓ Extracurricular activities;
- ✓ Inter- house competitions.

2.2.2 Rang na Míosa

To encourage positive behaviour and class cooperation and teamwork, every month the highest mean merit mark per class is calculated from VS. Behaviours not meeting the standard expected for students at Ballymakenny College warrant the deduction of a sum of points from this class total. At the end of the month, the class with the highest class total is awarded a prize. All classes return to an even score for the next month so that each class is given ample encouragement to try to build on their class reputation.

2.2.3 Dalta na Míosa

In order that individual students may be recognised for their positive contribution to the school, one student from each house can be nominated to win the Dalta na Míosa award. At the end of each month, teachers can nominate students they feel are deserving of this award. Tutors and house leaders, after taking the nominations plus students' behaviour on VS into account will choose their Dalta na Míosa for their house.

2.2.4 Annual Prize- Giving Ceremony

2

Ballymakenny College recognises and rewards students across all year groups for achievement and excellence in academic studies, in extra-curricular activities, and in all other aspects of school life. Their achievements are particularly highlighted at the end of each school year with the presentation of certificates, trophies, prizes and awards in areas such as House Spirit, Leadership & Participation, Personal Achievement, Full Attendance, Sports etc.

2.3 Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

Despite the best efforts of any school, inappropriate behaviours can happen. Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can have damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the students own learning, the learning of others and the capacity of the teacher to teach all of the students. Ballymakenny College has a strong focus on high quality teaching and learning, consequently the disruption of lessons cannot be tolerated.

Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of others, the school leadership have to weigh the needs of that student with the needs of other learners and staff. This requires the application of professional skill and judgement in each individual case, while considering the student(s) involved and the specific circumstances/context of the incident.

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to maintain a classroom and school environment that is supportive of the learning of *every* student in the school and which ensures continuity of instruction for all. The whole school community of Ballymakenny College responds to inappropriate behaviour as follows:

- Preventative measures;
- Sanctions involving the ladder of referral;
- Interventions.

2.3.1 Preventative Measures

The initial response of Ballymakenny College is one of prevention in order to minimise the occurrence of poor behaviour. Students are constantly encouraged to take responsibility for their actions in relation to how they behave in school, and how they interact with others in the school environment. The following list is not exhaustive but includes some of the ways in which students are encouraged to uphold the code of behaviour:

1. An abridged version of the code of behaviour and a synopsis of the school rules are included in the school journal. At the start of every academic year, all students and parents must read and sign these rules to indicate their agreement with the content and their support and co-operation with the code of behaviour. The full version of the school code of behaviour is available on the school website;
2. At the start of each new academic year and after every school holiday i.e. midterm breaks, Christmas and Easter Holidays, the expectations of the code of behaviour are explained and reinforced to students and any amendments to it are highlighted;
3. School rules and the reason for them are discussed and explained as part of the schools' pastoral care programme (including at Treoir, during SPHE lessons and house assembly time). The expectations and school routines may be explained to students with specific individual needs (as identified by the school) to ensure understanding;
4. Tolerance for others, self-control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are discussed as part of the many curricular and extra-curricular initiatives in the school e.g. Ethical Education and SPHE programmes;
5. Issues such as bullying including cyberbullying, racism, sexism, harassment, violence, substance misuse, well-being etc. are discussed with the students during their time in our school using Treoir, SPHE, CSPE, current affairs and/or outside speakers;
6. Many supports are put in place for students as part of the school's pastoral care programme. The house system structure ensures that the tutor and the house leader develop a good relationship with students. There are also many opportunities for students to demonstrate

leadership in the school and to develop a true sense of belonging and importance to the school community;

7. Staff in Ballymakenny College are expected to thoroughly prepare all of their lessons in order to ensure that:
 - Learning and engagement are optimal;
 - Opportunities for misconduct are minimised;
 - A growth mind-set is encouraged and nurtured in students;
 - Lessons build the learning capacity of the students.

The foundation of positive behaviour for learning is effective teaching and learning, and an inclusive and engaging curriculum. The approach that a school adopts and how it is presented to the students has a significant effect on student behaviour. Where students are engaged and motivated to learn, it is more likely that their behaviour will be positive;

8. The curriculum of Ballymakenny College is relevant, modern and determined by student preferences. A taster programme in first year facilitates students in making informed decisions about which optional subjects are best for them. This minimises (as much as possible), the disengagement of students when forced to take a subject which they don't like;
9. All of the teachers and students in Ballymakenny College use the agreed digital devices, in our case iPads to facilitate teaching and learning. The iPad has the potential to increase student engagement and consequently reduce misbehaviour. The ubiquity of technology in the lives of the students has raised digital literacy to a life skill. However, as part of being a good digital citizen, students are expected to comply fully with the schools' expectations regarding the use of technology and mobile devices (See Acceptable User Policy)

2.3.2 Sanctions

The objectives of the use of sanctions in Ballymakenny College are as follows:

- To help a student to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable;
- To give the student an opportunity to reflect on and take responsibility for their personal actions;
- To help a student to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviours on others;
- To help students to understand that they have choices about their own behaviours and that all choices have consequences;
- To signal to other students and to staff that their well-being is being protected;

- To prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning;
- To nurture a growth mind-set in students;
- To keep the student, or other students and adults safe.

Good practice in the use of sanctions ensures that:

- Sanctions are used consistently;
- Students and parents know what sanctions are used in the school;
- Sanctions are proportionate and appropriate;
- Sanctions are used to encourage students behaviour to change.

2.3.2.1 The Ladder of Referral

The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour/breach of the school rules are referred to as our ‘ladder of referral’ and for the most part all misbehaviours will be dealt with by this system. However, should an incident occur such as serious verbal or physical abuse of any person in the school, theft, alcohol or drug abuse, inappropriate behaviour online or possession of offensive weapons then these behaviours will automatically be reported to the deputy principal/principal.

The basic principle is that the more serious the incident, the higher up the ladder it is dealt with. Such sanctions including the involvement of various staff such as subject teachers, tutors, house leaders, deputy principal and principal are as follows:

2.3.2.2 Subject Teacher

Subject teachers will regularly monitor the demerits they apply to their own students and may avail of a number of sanction options available to them.

- Simple warnings or directions
- Questioning and involvement in lesson
- Non-verbal cues
- Teacher Detention
- Phone call home to parents
- Meeting with parents
- Diffusing or re-directing potential conflict
- Taught and modelled behaviour and/or values required
- Moving seat
- Positive reinforcement
- Feedback
- Giving simple choices
- Reminding of rules and/or values
- Reasoning with student individually
- Target/Goal setting

- Extra work
- Lunchtime Intervention
- Note in Report Card
- A form of apology required for poor behaviour
- Awarding demerits.
- Discussion with tutor if felt warranted at any stage.
- Keeping tutor informed of interventions and meetings that may have taken place through the notes section on VS.

2.3.2.3 Tutor

In the event of continued misbehaviours, the subject teacher will refer the matter now onto the Tutor. The Tutor can avail of the sanctions listed above and/or may:

- Put the student on Tutor Report;
- Agree an improvement plan;
- Refer the student to School Counsellor, the Care Team or Resource department;
- Discussion with House Leader if felt warranted at any stage.

2.3.2.4 House Leader

If the student fails to meet these targets and acquire further demerits or acquire an instant -5 demerit, the matter will now be referred onto the House Leader. The House Leader can avail of the sanctions listed above and/or may:

- Put the student on House Leader Report;
- Take over monitoring student behaviours on VS;
- Send a pre School Based Intervention (SBI) letter home when students acquire -10 points on VS. (See Appendix F for copy of this letter);
- Place students on an SBI for 1 day when they acquire a further -5 points on VS;
- Discussion with Deputy Principal/Principal if felt warranted at any stage;
- Recommend external suspension to Deputy Principal/Principal.

Note:

1. On return from an SBI, students will be placed on tutor report for 1 week- tutors will monitor this.
2. An 'after SBI re-set' will be applied to student VS account by House Leader and the counting starts again as before.
3. After all holiday breaks, tutors will apply the 'after holiday re-set on all students accounts and the counting starts again as before.

2.3.2.5 Guidance Counsellor/ The Care Team

The guidance counsellor offers counselling and support. At any stage of the ladder of referral, teachers can refer a student to the care team or guidance counsellor. They may in consultation with school management refer the student to external agencies such as NEPS, TULSA etc. The guidance counsellor can also provide students with advice on subject choice, career guidance, study techniques etc.

2.3.2.6 Deputy Principal/Principal

Students whose behaviour has not been modified despite the schools best efforts will be referred by the house leader to the deputy principal or principal. They may use any of the above sanctions/interventions plus those listed below:

- Arrange meeting with student, parent and house leader;
- Temporary withdrawal from particular subject(s) for a limited time;
- Withdrawal of students leadership roles or responsibilities e.g. student council;
- Seek cost of repair of damaged property from the student or impose fines;
- Develop an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) in consultation with the tutor, house leader, student and parent;
- Referral to outside agencies (NEPS, TULSA etc.);
- Suspension from school (in accordance with the schools policy on Suspension & Exclusion);
- Exclusion from school (in accordance with the schools policy on Suspension & Exclusion).

See section 4 for the Procedures for Suspension and Exclusion.

2.3.3 Interventions

Each subject teacher will deal with the majority of routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies, thus minimising the need for interventions. The school has both formal and informal structures in place for when intervention is necessary.

- Formal structures will include: tutor & house system, pastoral care teams, SEN coordinator, homework club, supervised study etc.
- Informal structures will include: peer support, mediation, providing informal support to colleagues e.g. removing a student to a colleague's room for time-out, (buddy system) etc.

Interventions refer to the strategies used to help prevent students from re-offending and give specific help to those students who find it particularly difficult to live by the code of behaviour. Such strategies usually involve gathering information and consultation with school personnel, parents/guardians and others as appropriate. Specific intervention packages may need to be designed to suit individual needs. Examples of specific interventions include:

1. Additional support may be necessary for some students and may include: meeting with the Tutor and/or House Leader, being put on report, being placed on a School Based Intervention, being put on Lunchtime Intervention, target setting etc.
2. Specialised support may be necessary for a small minority of students for example: having an SNA² appointed, behaviour contracts, behaviour plans, going home at certain times of the day, involvement of external agencies³ etc.

The effectiveness of an intervention is directly dependant on the engagement of the student with the intervention being tried and the support of the parents. Both of these factors are essential in order for an intervention to be successful.

2.3.3.1 School Based Intervention:

It is the policy in Ballymakenny College that students will be obliged to take part in a School Based Intervention (SBI) if **fifteen** demerits are accrued. The ultimate goal of an SBI is to address any shortfalls in learning and bring about an improvement in behaviour. It involves discussion of student difficulties and strategies for improvement. It also allows for students to catch up on work (if applicable) and reflect on the reasons why they have been placed on a SBI. (See Appendix G for copy of Student Reflection Sheet)

² SNA = Special Needs Assistant

³ External agencies may include NEPS, HSE, Community Psychological Services, NBSS, Child Guidance Services, Adolescent and Mental Health Services...etc. The list is not exhaustive.

3 Policy Implementation

3.1 Implementing the Code of Behaviour

The implementation of the Code of Behaviour for Ballymakenny College includes the following:

- All school partners are involved in the consultation and review of the code;
- The code of behaviour will be made accessible to all through its publication on the school website and hard copies will be available on request;
- An abridged version of the code of behaviour is published in the student journal for students to refer to. The code will also be referred to in class on a regular basis. Students and their parents must sign a student contract in the student journal each year to renew their commitment to the code of behaviour;
- Students must have their student journal out on their desks during class (except in the event of practical activities) and at all times on the corridor, with a note from their teacher explaining their reason to be out of class unless they have been given the Student Pass from their teacher.
- Parents are requested to sign the student journal on a weekly basis (for homework and the weekly review) and to acknowledge any notes they may receive from teachers through out the year;
- Parents are encouraged to check their child's VS account regularly to monitor behaviours while in school;
- School rules/expectations and the reason for them are constantly referenced to students and are also discussed as part of the schools' pastoral care programme;
- The school wellbeing programme, SPHE as an example, and extracurricular opportunities (music, sport, drama, after school study, homework club etc.) are used as vehicles for teaching the Code of Behaviour and habits for responsible behaviour and relationships;
- Parents are encouraged to share information with the relevant school personnel in order to assist the school in understanding a student's behaviour and to plan interventions where necessary;
- Behaviour in the school will be monitored carefully at all times.

3.2 Related Policies

The Code of Behaviour is an integral mechanism/policy in Ballymakenny College. It is one of the most important policies with regards to how our school maintains an optimal learning environment and a positive atmosphere. However, it does not operate in isolation. *All other school policies* directly relate (to a greater or lesser extent) to the School's Code of Behaviour. It is the interdependence and co-operation of these policies in an organic way that ensures their effectiveness. However, the Code of Behaviour is essential in ensuring the effective implementation of the other policies. Where the strategies implemented by each individual policy have been exhausted, issues may be referred to the Code of Behaviour for resolution. For example; where students do not comply with the schools expectations under *the School Trips Policy* or *Anti-Bullying Policy*, then issues may be referred to be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. It is understood that students choosing to enrol in Ballymakenny College will accept and fully comply with the policies of the school.

Please note that Bullying and Harassment whether on or offline will not be tolerated in Ballymakenny College. Under the Anti-bullying Policy, breaches may be referred to be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour. This will include the full range of sanctions of the Code of Behaviour, up to and including Suspension and Exclusion.

3.3 Whole School Approach

The Code of Behaviour, on its own, cannot create the environment that makes it possible for students to learn and behave well. All members of the school community have responsibility to ensure that our students behave well. The main elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

- ✓ An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony to create a positive school environment. Related policies include the schools Anti bullying, Pastoral Care, Attendance and Substance Use Policies;
- ✓ Effective classroom management and good curricular planning;
- ✓ An inclusive and involved school community.

Classroom management and teaching methods have a strong influence on students' behaviour. The classroom environment, like the wider school community, gives students clear messages

about teachers' expectations and creates boundaries. In addition, the supervision of students at break times is critical to ensure the school creates and maintains a positive school environment for all members of the school community.

3.4 Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Ballymakenny College acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour and a role in dealing with (minimising) negative behaviour. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities allow for consistency among staff as well as ensuring that there is a planned approach to helping students to change their own behaviour.

3.4.1 Students.

The general behaviour expected of the students in Ballymakenny College is clearly laid out in the earlier parts of this document. The lists below are a reminder of the key aspects of our policy.

In general all students are expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults;
- show respect for the property of, the school, other children and their own belongings;
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual;
- do his/her best both in school and for homework;
- walk quietly when moving between classes in the school corridors;
- behave appropriately when using the communal toilet areas;
- behave appropriately and responsibly both offline and online.

Specifically for class all students are expected to:

- listen to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking;
- have all necessary equipment in school for all classes;
- work to the best of his/her ability;
- value school property and the belongings of fellow pupils;
- follow the direction of his/her teacher and other adults from the school community;
- obtain his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom;
- respect the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

3.4.2 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality and regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort. Parents can monitor their child's progress by a number of means:

- monitoring the school journal;
- signing the school journal every week;
- monitoring their child's VS account.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment with their class tutor to discuss their concerns.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents are expected to participate in the intervention process. Their on-going support is seen by the school as an invaluable part of the intervention process.

3.4.3 Teachers

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school. Ballymakenny College acknowledges the role of teachers in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour. The school recognises that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management. Teachers will be assigned to a class and subsequently to a house. Other school personnel will also have special responsibilities for operating the code: house leaders, tutors, the care team including the guidance counsellor, learning support teachers, deputy principal and principal.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class.

They will:

- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year;
- Ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom;
- Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour;
- Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times;
- Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner;
- Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct either in the Notes or Behaviour sections of VS. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and, the consequences of its repetition. (Recorded on VS ware and escalation notices sent to relevant parties);
- Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the tutor/house leader / deputy principal or principal i.e. to engage in the ladder of referral as appropriate.

3.4.4 Other staff including SNA's

Ballymakenny College acknowledges the contribution of the SNA's & ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful delivery of the Code of Behaviour. In particular, they have responsibility to report incidents of misbehaviour, changes in behaviour/attitude, patterns of behaviour, and examples of positive behaviour they witness.

3.4.5 Board of Management

Ballymakenny College acknowledges the role of the Board of Management in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour. All policies are developed in consultation with and are ratified by the Board of Management. While it is not involved in the day to day procedures, it is the body to which parents and students over the age of 18 years can appeal in cases of Suspension or Exclusion.

3.5 Timeframe

This Code of Behaviour was devised in consultation with the students, parents, staff, management and Board of Management of Ballymakenny College . The process was commenced in October 2015 and the resulting code was implemented during the 2016-2017 academic year.

3.6 Success Criteria & Monitoring

This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed regularly as part of the normal Whole School Development Planning review cycle. If necessary, the Code of Behaviour may be reviewed at any time in light of changing circumstances and/or changing legislation. Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of the School. Any suggested amendments/improvements will be communicated to the Principal or Deputy Principal who will consult with all partners.

Ratified by the Board of Management on **06/03/17**

Review Date: **06/03/18**

Suspension & Exclusion

4 Suspension and Expulsion

Note:

In all circumstances that deal with the suspension or exclusion of a student, Ballymakenny College follows NEWB guidelines.

The Board of Management is obliged pursuant to section 15(d) of the Education Act 1998 (as amended) to publish its policy on Suspension and Expulsion and in so doing have regard to the ethos of the school and the constitutional rights of all persons concerned.

General Principles: There may be cases of unacceptable behaviour, where it will be necessary to remove a student from school for a period of time or for the Board of Management to expel a student permanently from the school.

Principles of Natural Justice: The Principal will ensure that the principles of natural justice will apply in the context of any proposal to suspend or expel a student. These principles translate into procedural fairness with regard to the implementation of sanctions.

Accordingly, the students and his/her parent(s)/ guardian(s) will be afforded The right to be heard which includes:

- the right to know why the sanction is being imposed;
- the right to know the manner in which the issues will be determined.
- the right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information which will be taken into account.
- The right to an appeal. The right of a person to an impartial decision includes:
 - the right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making process;
 - the right to an absence of bias by the decision maker.

4.1 Suspension

The Board of Management of Ballymakenny College has the authority to suspend a student and that authority has been formally delegated to the Principal. A student may be suspended, pending investigation and discussion with parents, for serious and very serious incidences of

inappropriate behaviour. In the case of an unacceptable level of repeated inappropriate behaviour a student may be suspended when in the professional opinion of the school authorities, all other strategies have been exhausted, and the student shows no willingness to change his/her behaviour.

In the absence of the Principal, the Deputy Principal will assume responsibility for the smooth running of the school. In the absence of the Principal and the Deputy Principal, responsibility will be delegated to a member of the senior management team.

4.1.1 In the case of extremely serious misbehaviour.

When a student is behaving in such a manner that the teaching and learning in the school is being severely interfered with and/or there is a serious risk to the health and safety of the student themselves or of the school community, the Principal/ Deputy Principal (in the absence of the Principal) may also decide (following consultation with the student's parent/guardian) to send the student home for the remainder of the school day.

In the case where the student's behaviour is deemed to pose a real and imminent threat to the health and safety of members of the school community, the Principal may request that the Board of Management permits a longer than usual suspension until the appropriate supports are put in place to ensure the safety of students and staff.

In the case of serious and sustained misbehaviour and/or aggressive behaviour of a kind which is disruptive/dangerous for both the student themselves and/or for other students and teachers, the Principal may consider it necessary to consult the Board of Management for permission to initiate the process of expulsion.

Responsibilities: Only the school Principal may suspend a student from school. The Principal has authority, under the "Articles of Management of Secondary Schools" to suspend "any pupil for a limited period and shall report any such suspension to the Board of Management at its next meeting." [Article 19(b)]

The Board of Management affirms the right of the Principal to suspend a student for a period of three days without recourse to the Board. When the Principal deems a longer suspension necessary, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for approval. However, where it is impracticable to convene a meeting of the Board within the timeframe, the Board

reserves the right to authorise the Principal to impose a suspension of up to five consecutive days with the sole approval of the Chairperson.

4.1.2 Procedures:

In all instances where suspension is applied, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted and notified. In most instances parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to meet with the Principal or person acting on the authority of the Principal, to discuss the matter.

In the case of an immediate suspension, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified and arrangements will be made with them for their child to be collected from school. In all cases a formal letter of notification will be sent to parent(s)/guardian(s).

All suspensions are recorded in the student's file and are reported to the Board of Management. The student will be regarded as being in the care of his/her parents/guardians during the period of his/her suspension and must not come near the school during this period.

4.1.3 Appeals:

A parent/guardian or a student over 18 years of age may appeal, in writing, a suspension by the Principal to the Board of Management in the first instance.

The letter of appeal addressed to the Secretary of the Board of Management, must set out the ground for the appeal.

The appeal will be heard as soon as is practical.

The appeals process will at all times follow the principles of natural justice:

- Appellants have the right to be made aware of all details relating to all allegations against the student.
- The Board of Management may appoint a sub-committee to hear the appeal, especially where this will facilitate an early hearing.
- The parent/guardian and the principal will present their arguments to the Board/Committee after which they will leave the meeting while the decision is being made.

- They should remain available to the Board/Committee who may seek further clarification from either party.
- The decision of the Board of Management/Committee is binding and will be communicated in writing to the parent/guardian.
- If dissatisfied the appellants have the right to appeal to the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) pursuant to section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

In the event of an appeal the suspension may be deferred in exceptional circumstances.

It is possible that the suspension may be served before the hearing by the Board of Management of the appeal. In this case, if the appeal is successful the record of suspension will be removed from the student's file.

The school is obliged to inform the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) pursuant to section 21 (4) (a) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000:

- if the suspension is longer than 6 days **or**
- if the student has been suspended for a cumulative total of more than 20 days during the school year.

4.1.4 Formal Review

The Board will review formally any proposal to suspend a student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current year to 20 days or more. Where the total number of days for which the student is suspended in one school year reaches 20, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed in writing of their right of appeal pursuant to section 29 of the Education Act as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

4.1.5 Grounds for Removal of Suspension

Unforeseen grounds for appeal of a suspension may arise but in general a suspension may be removed in the event of:

- successful appeal to the Board of Management;
- successful appeal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended);
- an alternative strategy being agreed following consultation with parents;
- new circumstances coming to light.

4.2 Expulsion

Expulsion is considered to be a last resort.

Circumstances when expulsion may be considered: (See Appendix C)

Expulsion will generally be considered by the Board of Management, only after every effort at rehabilitation has failed and when all other sanctions in the Code have been exhausted.

While it is impossible to foresee every eventuality the following represent situations where expulsion may be considered:

- the student's actions pose a real threat to the health, safety and welfare of others;
- the student's actions constitute a continuous and serious disruption of the learning of others;
- the student concerned can no longer benefit by remaining in this school;
- when the student concerned has, through continued misconduct, displayed an unwillingness to accept the standards set out in the school Code of Behaviour;
- Any other gross misbehaviour.

4.2.1 Responsibilities:

If, in the judgement of the Principal, a student should be expelled, the Principal shall refer the matter to the Board of Management for its decision. The Board of Management alone has the power to expel a student.

4.2.2 Expulsion Procedure:

The Principal must communicate her recommendation to expel to the Board of Management which has the sole right to decide on the matter.

The procedure will be as follows:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed in writing of the situation, the reasons for considering this course of action, copies of any and all documents, statements and disciplinary records supporting the case.
- The letter will notify them of their right to appeal any decision to expel pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by Section 4 of the Educational (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.
- Pending the outcome of any proceedings the principal reserves the right to suspend the student in accordance with Section 24 (5) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 if, in her opinion, such an action is appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained and that the safety of students is secured.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be invited to attend and present their case to the Board meeting at which the issue will be discussed.
- The principal will present the case for expulsion to the Board of Management in the presence of the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their response.
- Both parties will leave the meeting while the Board of Management deliberates.
- The Board may further request information from the Principal and Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Student.
- In weighing the situation the Board of Management will take into consideration:
 - The student's record of behaviour - the effect the behaviour has on other students' rights.
 - any expert advice deemed necessary.

- any mitigating factors affecting the individual's behaviour; these might include age, previous record of behaviour, particular personal circumstances, the effect of peer pressure in individual occurrences.

- The Board will make a final decision to expel/not to expel the student(s).

The decision of the Board will be formally communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) by registered letter. If the decision is to expel, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

Pursuant to Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 the Board shall, before expelling the student, notify the Education Welfare Officer of its opinion and the reasons for expulsion.

In accordance with section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 the decision to expel will not take effect for 20 school days following receipt of the notice of expulsion by the National Educational Welfare Board.

4.2.3 Appeals:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) or student (if over 18 years of age) will be informed of their right to appeal a decision to expel a student under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.
- Documentation will be supplied in relation to an appeal under Section 29 with the letter, giving notice of intention to expel.
- Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date on which the decision of the school was notified to the parent(s)/guardian(s)/student.
- In the event of an appeal being lodged, the Board of Management will co-operate fully in all procedures initiated by the National Educational Welfare Board. 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 might be influencing behaviour in the school, and to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.

School Contact Details

Principal: Alan Mynes
Deputy Principal: Caroline Toole
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Phone: 041-9802459
Email: info@ballymakennycollege.ie
Website: www.ballymakennycollege.ie
Roll Number: 91573N

5 Appendices

After lengthy consultation with staff, parents & students, the following lists of misdemeanours and sanctions have been agreed on. Note that this list is not exhaustive.

Appendix A

Note: This list is not exhaustive

Level 1 Behaviours – Loss of 1 point on VS ware (in most cases)

- Forgetting iPad- tutor to give (-2) during Treoir. (Subject teachers not to de-merit in this situation after that)
- Disrupting teaching learning (low level)
- Failure to attempt/complete/present work in class or homework
- Not having the correct materials/equipment for class
- Failure to provide relevant notes promptly
- Not having the journal signed.
- Leaving class before the lesson has finished.
- Packing up before the the class is over.
- Uncharged iPad (-2)
- Disruption of exams [minor (-1)]
- Not having journal or student pass while on the corridor/going to toilet
- Calling out of turn in class
- Swing on the chair
- Throwing things across the classroom.
- Refusal to hand over journal when requested
- Leaving seat in class without permission
- Not staying on task.
- Late for class (5 per half- term, then goes to Level 2)
- Use of bad language (low level bullying)
- Littering
- Non-cooperation during fire drill.
- Not having PE gear

- Failure to wear the correct uniform
- Chewing Gum (-2)
- iPad out during lunch/ break times, between classes and from 8.30 onwards
- Rudeness towards any member of the school community
- Poor corridor behaviour
- Minor theft

Important Note:

- Downloading any prohibited app such as "snapchat|yikyak|instagram|facebook|messenger|viber|whatsapp|oovoo|periscope|vpn|twitter" or any other app that results in the iPad being used as a communication tool will result in the iPad being placed on iPad detention for 2 weeks.
- Graffiti to School Journal – students are expected to replace the school journal at a cost of €10.
- Use of mobile phones during the school day is strictly prohibited. If students need to make contact with home, they may avail of the office phone at school reception. If a student has a phone out in class, the teacher may request the phone from the student. The teacher may return it at the end of the school day or pass it onto school management where a parent will need to come in to pick up the phone.

Appendix B

Level 2 Behaviours:

Note: This list is not exhaustive

Note: *Persistent Level 1 behaviours will result in the specific misdemeanour being moved up to Level 2.*

- Repeated failure to attend Lunchtime Intervention (if failed to turn up once, then student receives 2 more LI's. Teacher who referred student to follow up. Failure to attend those, matter then referred onto school management)
- Repeated failure to follow instructions (-5)
- Repeated failure to comply with a specific school rule or an aspect of a school policy (-5)
- Challenging teacher instruction (-3)
- Non-cooperation at school events
- Setting off the fire alarm (-5) [parents to cover the cost if applicable]
- Bullying before Intervention (-3)
- Persistent Lateness (-5)
- Repeated misuse of mobile phone (-3)
- Missing school or class without permission [in- school (-3), out of school (-5) plus LI]
- Smoking or Vaping on school or environs [1st offence (-5), 2nd offence – L3 see below)
- Disruption of exams [Serious (-5)]
- Copying during exams (-5)
- Forging signature of parents/guardians (-3)
- Inappropriate language directed at any member of school community (-5)
- Using iPad inappropriately/Non compliance with AUP. (-5)

Note: At any stage a Lunchtime Intervention may be deemed an appropriate sanction to any of these behaviours.

Appendix C

Note: This list is not exhaustive

Named Behaviours that warrant an Automatic/Immediate Suspension:- Persistent Level 2 behaviours.

- 3 X (-5) demerits for any misdemeanour in close succession.
- Smoking (if caught a second time) (-5)
- Unauthorised recording and sharing of audio/video and photographic material for exploitive, sharing or bullying purposes. (-5)
- Repeated failure to comply with school rules.
- Serious aggression towards any member of the school community. (-5)
- Theft (if item stolen poses a Health & Safety concern or has a high cost associated with it). (-5)
- Out of school truancy.(-5)
- Intimidation of any member of the school community. (-5)
- Intentional damage to people or property. (-5)
- Persistent bullying/racial abuse/homophobic abuse/rudeness/verbal abuse. (-5)
- Provoking/initiating a fight. (-5)
- Very serious disruption of exams. (-5)
- Persistent use of inappropriate behaviour directed towards any member of the school community (-5)

Appendix D

Note: This list is not exhaustive

Named Behaviours that warrant an Expulsion: - Persistent Level 3 behaviours.

- Selling and/or in possession of a banned substance on the school site or environs.
- Serious acts of violence or an assault of any member of the school community.
- Illegal/dangerous items (weapons, drugs, alcohol) in school.
- Any behaviour whether offline or online that poses a threat to the safety and welfare of any member of the school community.

Appendix E

It is an essential prerequisite of enrolment in Ballymakenny College that the Code of Behaviour is accepted in writing on admission. The Code of Behaviour (including future revisions) must be fully complied with for the duration of the student's enrolment in Ballymakenny College. This commitment must be renewed (in the school journal) prior to the commencement of each academic year. The expectations/rules of Ballymakenny College as laid out in the school journal are as follows:

Be co-operative and positive in class and whole-school environments.

Be mindful of every student's right to learn.

Be active agents in maintaining an environment of equality and fairness.

Respect the property of others and accept the consequences of failure to do so.

Attend school punctually on each school day and bring in a note to explain all.

Remain on the school premises during the school day unless permission has been granted in the School Journal by parent(s)/guardian(s) or School Management.

Be prepared for all classes by, for example, completing all homework and bringing in all the necessary materials.

Follow all Health and Safety guidelines, ensuring that no student's actions compromises the safety of others.

Contribute in a positive manner to the atmosphere in the school.

Foster an environment of collective responsibility for the welfare of all students; this may include students informing the school authority of any matter likely to harmful to any student's welfare.

Ensure that all actions both inside and outside of school reflect positively on Ballymakenny College.

Appendix F

Copy of School Based Intervention Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We would like to draw your attention to _____ behaviour record. We are concerned that _____ has accumulated a significant number of demerits and negative behaviour notes. At present, _____ has a behaviour record of 10 demerits since _____.

It is the policy in Ballymakenny College that students will be obliged to take part in a School Based Intervention (SBI) if **fifteen** demerits are accrued. The ultimate goal of a SBI is to close the achievement gap and bring about an improvement in behaviour. It involves discussion of student difficulties and strategies for improvement. It also allows for students to catch up on work (if applicable) and reflect on the reasons why they have been placed on a SBI.

Every demerit represents an unacceptable behaviour or action that is detrimental to your son/daughter's learning as well as possibly the learning of the other students. The SBI resulting from fifteen demerits illustrates that consistent instances of non-compliance with teacher instruction, school rules, or homework guidelines constitutes a serious breach of discipline. Since *date* _____ has accrued _____

We have highlighted the gravity of _____ current disciplinary record in school with him/her. He/she is aware that a continuation of his/her behaviour pattern will result in a SBI. We are hopeful that _____ will take this opportunity now to correct the behaviour concerned and improve his/her discipline record, thus removing the possibility of reaching a record of fifteen demerits and being issued with a SBI.

We would be very grateful if you could support an effort to do this at home.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Principal

House Leader

Appendix G



Reflection Form

“Reflection is looking back so that the view looking forward is even clearer”

Day:	
Date:	
Student Name:	

Why have you been placed on a School Based Intervention (SBI) today?

How was your experience of being placed on SBI today?

Please outline 3 things you will do from now on to avoid being placed on a School Based Intervention in the future.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Signed (Student): _____ Date: _____

Signed (House Leader): _____ Date: _____