



Loreto College Mullingar Code of Behaviour

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a Christian, caring community of learning, which seeks in an atmosphere of mutual co-operation, respect and justice, to develop the talents and potential of all members.

Our mission is achieved through:

- *An emphasis on the educational development of the whole person.*
- *A recognition and appreciation of the unique individuality of every member of the community.*
- *An orderly, positive environment that allows quality teaching and learning to take place.*
- *A spirit of collaboration and partnership with parents and a wider community*
- *Ongoing professional development of staff.*

The Loreto Tradition

The Loreto philosophy of education is centred in God and is rooted in Gospel values where truth, freedom, justice, sincerity and joy find expression. The name "Loreto" recalls the home of Nazareth. The spirit of that family home, in which Mary played such a significant part, inspires the Loreto School Community. In that spirit and tradition, the following basic principles, underpin the Loreto philosophy of education:

- *Loreto schools offer a Catholic education which strives to liberate, empower and motivate students to use their individual gifts with confidence, creativity and generosity in a spirit of loving and responsible service.*
- *The Loreto tradition seeks to promote the moral, spiritual, academic, social and personal development of students in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit reflected in the Loreto philosophy of education.*
- *All students are cherished equally regardless of ability, gender, creed, class or ethnic background.*
- *We encourage a pursuit of excellence appropriate to each student so that she may develop to the full her particular gifts.*
- *A broad holistic curriculum is offered to enable students to develop powers of critical reflection thereby building independence of mind as a means toward responsible citizenship.*

The nurturing of the aesthetic sense through the creative arts and an appreciation of heritage and culture is central to the Loreto Tradition.

Rationale:

The Code of Behaviour is a set of policies, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave and learn well. Rules help us all create a pleasant and ordered school environment for quality teaching and learning for everyone.

The Code of Behaviour addresses the following;

- The standards of behaviour expected in school
- The plan for promoting good behaviour
- Teacher Responsibilities
- Student Responsibilities
- The ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- Parental Responsibilities
- School Procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion (see Suspension and Expulsion Policy)

Scope:

May 2023

The Code of Behaviour applies to all students in Junior and Senior Cycle while in school or on any school related activity. This Code was formulated following consultation with students, parents, teachers and the Board of Management and takes cognisance of the Education Act, the Education Welfare Act, Equal Status Act and the Guidelines for schools for Developing a Code of Behaviour (NEWB, 2008). This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Internet Acceptable Use Policy, Substance Use/Misuse Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy.

Objectives of our Code of Behaviour:

- To foster an atmosphere in the school which promotes the holistic development of the student.
- To create a safe and secure learning environment for all students by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community.
- To foster good behaviour and self-discipline which allows effective teaching and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.
- To have effective procedures in place; this will allow for the day to day running of the school.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR EXPECTED IN SCHOOL:

Respect

- Students are expected to be courteous, respectful and well-mannered to all staff and fellow students at all times.
- Students are expected to apply themselves diligently to their work at all times in order to reach their full potential.
- Any behaviour in class that disrupts the work of others is considered a very serious offence. All students have a responsibility to behave in a manner expected by the school.

PLAN FOR PROMOTING GOOD BEHAVIOUR

All students attending Loreto College Mullingar are actively encouraged to make a positive impact on the school community through positive behaviour. In our school, positive behaviour is considered to be a form of training which empowers students to make appropriate choices in a supportive environment.

An essential element of this is good, open communication between students, teacher, management, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Board of Management. The school believes that such an approach will be beneficial for all the partners. The plan for positive behaviour should have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all parties concerned within the school. Praise and positive consequences are regarded as more important in maintaining a good relationship with students than punishment and negative consequences.

Strategies to promote positive behaviour:

- Verbal praise, praising progress and effort, as well as achievement.
- Teachers modelling expected behaviour and promoting an atmosphere of care and respect between all members of the school community.
- Provision of a weekly SPHE class for every student, which provides opportunity for appropriate discussion and training in promoting positive behaviour.
- Written commendation on homework or tests.
- Positive written comment in official school journal and on school reports.
- Acknowledgements of positive student contributions and achievements, on the intercom system, on notice boards, at assemblies and in school newsletters.
- Positive feedback to parents at Parent Teacher Meetings.
- Acknowledgement of student achievements at annual prize giving.
- Consultation with students promoting *Friendship Week* and *Positive Optimistic Thinking Week*; agreeing rewards with students for better effort and behaviour.
- Promoting leadership among students through positions of responsibility including Junior and Senior Prefects, Student Council and 'Big Sister' mentors.

- Promoting social development in encouraging involvement in sport, music, drama, debating, clubs, social justice group and SVP.

COVID 19 – Protocols& Procedures

Students must adhere to all health advice and Covid 19 protocols and school procedures.

Uniform

The uniform is considered to be an essential part of life in Loreto College. It is visual evidence of the shared responsibility we have for the education of your daughter, a responsibility shared between home and school. We recognise that it may require some sacrifice, but the school expects the full cooperation of parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that students are ALWAYS correctly dressed and present themselves neatly.

The school uniform consists of the following:

- Loreto College blue uniform jumper with school crest
- Loreto College blue uniform skirt and/or navy-blue trousers. (Tracksuit material is unacceptable in trousers) It is essential to have spare items so that a replacement item is available if needed.
- Light blue shirt
- Navy blue uniform jacket with school crest
- Plain black opaque tights or plain socks.
- Flat all black, footwear (no particular brand is required). Boots or high tops must not be worn.

PE uniform for all junior students consists of any t-shirt (no inappropriate slogans), pink hoodie with school crest and navy crested tracksuit bottoms or shorts. PE gear must be worn in sports hall at all times. Shorts may not be worn to classrooms unless instructed. **Runners must be worn. Canvas shoes and Converse runners are not permitted for health and safety reasons, as they provide no ankle support or shock absorption. Junior Students are permitted to wear PE uniform to school on the day they have PE. Senior students must change before/after PE.**

School Uniform Rules and Dress Code:

Students must wear their school uniform at school and at all school-related activities (unless otherwise directed) and should come to and from school in full uniform. All items of uniform as listed are compulsory. Non-uniform items cannot be worn. It is neither possible nor practical for the school to operate exceptions to this uniform policy, though we acknowledge that there will occasionally be genuine reasons why your daughter may arrive in school not wearing full uniform. To facilitate these exceptional circumstances **a student who cannot wear her uniform on a particular day, must have a note from her parent/guardian explaining the circumstances and present this note to the Principal or Deputy Principal before going to class.** Failure to produce a note will result in parents being contacted by the school. Students may be offered a substitute uniform. Persistent disregard for uniform will result in sanction.

Items of uniform must be replaced when outgrown or worn out. Substitution of non-uniform items or the wearing of worn out or ill-fitting uniform is not acceptable.

The skirt should be no longer or shorter than knee length. Items of uniform should not be defaced in any way and if this happens the student will be asked to replace the garment. Items of clothing that do not form part of the uniform may be confiscated and returned at the end of the day on first offence, but on subsequent offences confiscation will be until the end of term.

School jackets are to be worn on the way to and from school and are not to be worn in class. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum. Only small stud style earrings are allowed.

For health and safety reasons, loop or hanging earrings of any kind, nose/tongue studs, eyebrow rings or bars or other items of facial piercing are not permissible under any circumstances. Parents should be aware that the aftercare required for a new piercing involves a four-week period.

Piercings, therefore, can only occur during the summer vacation, to avoid breaching our school dress code. Only official school badges are permitted. Make-up should be kept to a minimum.

Unnatural hair colouring e.g. pink, red, blue, green, purple etc... is not allowed.

Individuals and teams who are representing the school in debates, sporting activities, educational trips, etc. will not be allowed to participate if there are any of the above-mentioned uniform infringements.

Repeated infringement of the uniform code will be viewed as a serious breach of discipline and treated accordingly. Students in breach of the uniform and dress code may not be allowed attend class.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance: Excellent attendance is essential for the academic and social development of the student. A record of attendance is taken each morning and recorded electronically on the VSware system. This system also keeps a record of punctuality, absences and the reason for absences. An automatic text message will be sent to a designated mobile phone number every morning informing a parent/guardian in the event of his/her daughter's unexplained absence from school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the school office immediately if such a text message is received. **If your daughter is unable to attend school for any reason, we expect a telephone call from a parent/guardian before 9.30am. The VSware app can be used to input all attendance notes in advance also. Students must never have access to Parental App.**

Punctuality: All students must be punctual for class. School starts at 8.55am each day and students are expected to be on the school premises no later than 8.50am. **Any student who arrives late, during or after the commencement of the first class in the morning, should present a note from her parent / guardian at the school office stating date, time and reason for lateness.** The student's journal will then be stamped "late" on the appropriate page and the student will be requested to sign the 'late book' before proceeding to class. Repeated tardiness may result in a sanction.

School Absences: Absence from school due to part time work commitments or holidays seriously undermines academic progress. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to be strict and to allow absence in exceptional circumstances only. The Education Welfare Act (2000) requires a report to be submitted to TUSLA, the child and family agency, if any student is absent for 20 days or more per school year. Section 18, of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 obliges parents/ guardians to notify the Principal of the school of the reasons for a child's absence. Parents must give a reason for absence by contacting the school or using the VSware app. Exemptions from P.E. must also be covered by a note. Long term absence from PE must be supported by a doctors note/ medical cert.

Please remember:

- **an attendance record is documented on every student's reference on leaving school**
- **every day of absence is recorded (including unexplained absence)**
- **a record of every student's punctuality is made for the duration of her time in school**

Permission to leave school: In order to ensure accurate Health and Safety standards in the school it is crucial that any student who has to leave the school premises at any time during the school day is signed in or out in the school office by a parent/guardian. **This must be witnessed by the Principal, Deputy Principal or office staff when a student is leaving the premises.**

All foreseeable appointments (medical, dental, etc.) should be arranged out of school time. Parents should write and sign a note of permission for a student to leave school early stating the time and date of departure. The student should present the note to her teacher when she is leaving class.

Spot checks on absence notes on VSware will take place periodically

Evidence of appointments should be produced as follows:

- Official dental / medical appointment card with student's name, date and time of appointment.
- In the case of emergency appointments only, a parent / guardian may contact the school directly by phone to inform of their daughter's absence.

A parent / guardian should collect the student from the General Office waiting area and sign the student out and should return the student to this area upon signing back in (indicating the time of return). Every student must be present in the classroom for the full class period, unless otherwise

permitted. No student may leave the school grounds without the permission of the Principal or Deputy-Principal.

Accident and Sickness: While the school has an overall concern for the general well-being of all students, the medical well-being of each and every student is primarily the responsibility of the parents/guardians. It should be noted that the Department of Education and Skills does not provide medical staff to schools. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that the school is able to make contact with parents/guardians in the case of illness. These may include home/work numbers for parents/guardians and the phone number of a person authorised by parents to take responsibility for the student in the case of a failure to make contact with parents e.g. relative or neighbour. If a pupil has a known medical condition, the school should receive all relevant information. The school expects a student to be well when she comes to school. A girl who is unwell should be kept at home.

In the case of illness during the school day, the procedure is as follows: the student must ask permission from the class teacher to leave class. The teacher must sign the student journal if permission is given. The student must then go directly to the waiting area at the general office. A parent/guardian is contacted. If no parent/guardian is available to collect the student and the student is deemed able, she will be asked to return to class. In the case of minor accidents, basic first aid may be administered (**N.B.** Painkillers of any kind will only be dispensed in exceptional circumstances after contacting parent/ guardian.). In the event of an emergency, an ambulance will be called.

Absence from school without permission: School management will not accept responsibility for students who absent themselves from school for any purpose without prior permission from the school authorities. Once a student enters school at the start of the day, she may not leave without permission from a member of staff; doing so will be regarded as truancy. Students are not allowed leave school during lunchtime. Absence from classes or the school grounds without permission is a serious breach of discipline and may result in suspension.

Bullying

Bullying is the willful desire to hurt, threaten or intimidate another person, in any way on an ongoing basis. Any form of bullying, is unacceptable and will be dealt with accordingly. It is essential that anyone, pupil or parent, who is aware that bullying is occurring, will make this fact known immediately. Any information received is acted upon with discretion and sensitivity. It is recognised that both bullies and their victims have issues which need to be addressed, and the co-operation of all parents is vital in dealing with this matter. All reported incidents of bullying will be recorded. Any act which endangers the health, safety and welfare of others in the school, will not be tolerated. Please see Loreto College Mullingar's Anti-bullying Policy.

School Journal

Each student must have a school journal with her at all times and have it available to be viewed by any teacher on request as a means of checking and recording her progress.

It should be neat and tidy and free of graffiti. Inappropriate material may result in the journal being confiscated. Lost or damaged journals will have to be replaced at a cost of €10.

The purpose of the journal is to:

- Record homework, both written and oral, at the end of each class.
- Facilitate communication of relevant information between school and home. Therefore, **parents/guardians are requested to inspect and sign the Journal weekly.**
- Monitor attendance and punctuality, which is now a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000
- Monitor student behaviour
- Offer information of general interest to each student at this school.
- Record the school timetable.

- Inform parents and students of some school policies along with other important information about Loreto College. The Code of Behaviour is contained in the school journal. Other policies are available at the school office and on the school website.

Mobile Phones and Other Electrical Equipment

While recognising their uses for parents, in particular for contacting daughters while travelling to and from school, the school authorities believe that mobile phones can act as a major distraction in the classroom environment and beyond. The school authorities would prefer if mobile phones were left at home, as the school is not in a position to take responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones. **Any parent wishing to contact their daughter urgently should phone the main school number and messages can be passed on.** If students bring mobile phones to school, the phone must be powered off on the school campus. (Please see mobile phone policy). Use of camera phones or other electronic devices to take photos, or make recordings is an intrusion of individual privacy and is strictly forbidden. **Parents are asked not to request the return of the phone as it undermines school policy.**

Smoking, Vaping and Illegal Substances

Smoking is illegal in public places, such as schools. Students are not allowed to smoke or vape on school premises, on school grounds, on any school related activity or in school uniform. Breach of this rule will normally result in suspension as the appropriate sanction. If a student is found in an area where vaping/ smoking is suspected, they may be questioned. Names will be recorded, and should a similar incident take place with the same students sanctions may be applied.

Illegal substances and alcohol: No student may possess, distribute, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances during school hours or when involved in any activity organized by the school. Breach of this rule will result in immediate suspension by the Principal until the Board of Management considers the matter further. The Board of Management and the Gardaí will be informed. Distribution of drugs or alcohol may result in permanent exclusion. **Students must not be in possession of any substance or equipment which would potentially damage the health and safety of others.**

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

All teachers will conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers. The Code ‘sets out the standards which are central to the practice of teaching and expected of registered teachers.’ Each teacher is responsible for maintaining a positive teaching and learning environment in his/her classroom, based on mutual respect and is expected to have a system to promote positive behaviour and also procedures to deal with misbehaviour and breaches of class rules. Teachers set high expectations for student behaviour, have good class routines, give positive feedback about behaviour and model the behaviour that is expected of students. Teachers will ensure that students in their class are clear on the contents of the Code of Behaviour and the standards expected of them.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In Loreto College we seek to develop a sense of community that reflects the ethos of the Catholic School and the Loreto Philosophy of Education. This is a commitment to ‘holistic development and to the achievement of the full potential of each student, particularly those who are disadvantaged or marginalised. It is a policy influenced by the gospel and conducted in an atmosphere of care, respect and joy’. To achieve this effectively we strive to foster a sense of order and discipline. Each student is expected to be attentive to her classwork and homework, to have all the specific requirements for each class and to be well behaved. Sanctions may have to be imposed in this context, but the ideal is that students will acquire the skills of self-discipline, consideration, co-operation and mutual respect that foster a good working and social environment. The Code will have regard to the rights and responsibilities of all parties concerned with the school: management, teachers, ancillary staff, students and their parents.

Each student is expected to contribute positively to the teaching and learning environment in every class and every teacher has the right to expect

1. Order and mutual respect
2. Co-operation from students in the following of instructions to promote an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning, which enables every student to reach her potential
3. Punctuality, excellent attendance and participation
4. All students coming to class with necessary journal, books, copies etc... and keeping all equipment neat and tidy
5. All class work and homework to be completed on time
6. Care and respect for all property and equipment in the school. This includes no eating or drinking in class. (These conditions may be reviewed in certain medical circumstances.) Chewing gum, smoking, vaping or banned substances are strictly forbidden.
7. Mobile phones and any other electronic devices to be powered off and out of sight
8. Uniform and dress code adherence

Student Charter:

1. **I will treat all school staff and all students with respect.**

Why?

- Because I should have consideration for others and be respectful in the way I speak to students and teachers
- Because it creates a better learning environment
- Because it is the teacher's right and duty to advise and correct me if I misbehave

2. **I will co-operate and follow the instructions of all staff members.**

Why?

- To maintain order and avoid disruption
- To create a better learning environment for all

- 2a. **I will follow all health advice and Covid 19 protocols and school procedures.**

Why?

To keep the school community safe.

3. **I will come to school and class on time every day**

This means

- If I must leave school during the day, I will have a note on VShare/ Journal and be signed out by a parent/guardian
- That I will not waste time between classes
- I will not visit the locker room during or between classes without permission
- I should not need to take a bathroom break, as there are frequent official breaks throughout the day and leaving class disrupts teaching and learning.

Why?

- To do well in school it is necessary to attend every day
- The school is **legally entitled** to an explanation for absences
- Being late causes disruption to the teacher and other students trying to learn

4. I will have my journal, books and all equipment that I need for each class and I will keep my books neat and tidy

Why?

- So that I can benefit fully from each class
- It wastes class time if I have not got my books and materials

5. I will do my homework and class work

This means

- I will listen to the teachers and I will not disturb the class
- I will do both written and learning homework
- I always carry my journal and write my homework in it
- I get my journal signed weekly by my parents and class tutor

Why?

- The teacher is there to help me
- It is unfair to others who wish to learn if I disrupt the class
- Doing my class work and homework helps me to learn and do well in examinations
- Getting my journal signed allows my parents to see how I am progressing

6a I will respect all property and equipment in the school

This means

- I will not damage my own, other students or teachers' property in any part of the school and its grounds
- I will not litter any part of the school and its grounds
- I will not take anything that does not belong to me

Why?

- Damage to property costs money to repair, which could be better spent on other school items
- This equipment is needed in order to learn in class
- Damage to fire equipment could risk lives

6b I will agree not to chew gum, smoke, vape or bring banned substances onto school premises

Why?

- Chewing gum damages property
- Smoking/ Vaping is very bad for my health and it is illegal to smoke in a public place
- For my own safety and the safety of others

7. I will switch off my mobile phone and any other electronic device while on the school campus/ at school activities

Why?

- Mobile phones and other electronic devices cause too many disruptions in school
- Camera phones and other electronic devices can impinge on the privacy of others

8. I will follow the school's Uniform and Dress Code

This means

- I will enter and leave school in my full school uniform
- All students must have uniform jacket. Only the school jacket may be worn to or from school
- Uniform shoes must be worn to and from school and in school at all times except when actively participating in sport (it makes everyone equal and eliminates competition and it gives students a sense of belonging and identity)
- If I wear earrings I will wear stud earrings only. I will not wear any form of facial piercing (including nose, brow, lip, tongue etc) as it is a health and safety risk in school
- Full P.E. uniform for Juniors. Senior PE uniform as instructed by PE department

Why?

- When I wear my school uniform well it sends out a positive message about me and my attitude to school
- Visitors and the general public gain a positive perception of the school when I present myself well.

WAYS IN WHICH THE SCHOOL RESPONDS TO UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

SPHE class provides a forum for discussion which helps young people understand the need for positive behaviour, the effects of negative behaviour and the need to learn from these behaviours.

The student journal records all behaviours and efforts of the students on a daily and weekly basis. This is co-signed by Form Teacher and parent and therefore is a valuable communication tool between home and school.

Each class has a Form Teacher and Year Head who have both a pastoral and disciplinary role.

The school follows the agreed Code of Behaviour in relation to unacceptable behaviour. Students are referred to both Guidance Counsellors and School Chaplain where deemed necessary. Support from outside agencies including NEPS, NEWB and HSE provide additional expertise for students, their families and the school.

Examples of Serious Breaches of School Discipline:

- Breach of Covid 19 protocols and school procedures.
- Bullying (see Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Preventing teaching and learning and interfering with fellow students right to learn
- Showing disrespect to staff members
- Forging signatures of parents/guardians or teachers
- Defacement/damage of property
- Smoking/ Vaping /Abuse of substances
- Missing school/class without appropriate authorisation
- Cheating or copying at exams
- Unruly, threatening or violent behaviour
- Failure to attend detention
- Failure to hand up mobile phone/ adhere to policy
- Failure to produce journal when asked
- Any action that puts the health and safety of staff and students at risk.
- Persistent misconduct in the following areas:

- o Failure to present homework/copying of homework
- o Failure to have correct books for class
- o Punctuality offences
- o Failure to wear proper school uniform
- o Failure to provide relevant notes
- o Failure to have journal signed
- o Causing litter

The above list is not exhaustive.

Specific referrals and sanctions

Sanctions are applied in a proportionate manner for breaches of school regulations and misconduct. The school views the support of parents as essential in our series of sanctions that are designed to amend unacceptable behaviour, to develop a sense of responsibility and give the student an opportunity to reflect on the link between her action and its consequences.

Referrals to Staff	Sanctions
Year Head Deputy Principal Principal	Verbal warning Note in journal/ Vsware Parent Alert Letter (PAL), sent by class teacher Friday Detention Student placed on report for 1 week (this may be extended, if necessary) Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) Repeated breach of school rules may result in suspension Exclusion is considered when there is a very serious breach of school rules or when a student's behaviour endangers the well-being of others or interferes in a serious way with teaching and learning

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Parental co-operation and support is fundamental to the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Parents will be made aware of the school's Code of Behaviour at a meeting with incoming Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and are asked to sign the Code of Behaviour on enrolment and in their daughter's journal each year. In doing so, it is established that Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are acknowledging acceptance of the Code of Behaviour and that they will make every effort to ensure that their daughter complies with every aspect of the code. Loreto College Mullingar welcomes communication with parent(s) / guardian(s). If parents /guardians have any queries and concerns about their daughter's progress, participation and performance they should contact the school office where the appropriate referral will be arranged.

Loreto College Mullingar strongly supports the Parents' Advisory Council in providing information on a wide variety of issues relevant to the parenting of young people.

Expectation of Parents

Since the primary responsibility for the education of their daughter(s) rests with parents we encourage you to take an active role in the life of the school by:

- Supporting all school policies including uniform, behaviour, homework, mobile phones, attendance, punctuality etc...
- Supporting the staff in their efforts to promote the moral welfare and academic progress of your daughter(s).
- Attending parent/teacher meeting each academic year.
- Ensuring that there is a good environment for homework.

- Supporting your daughter in her social development by providing boundaries around activities that would interfere with successful application to study and homework.
- Keeping regular contact with school concerning the development of your daughter.
- Giving financial support where possible to the ongoing development of the school
- Supporting the work of the Parents' Advisory Council.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

See Suspension and Expulsion policy

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed every two years. Minor amendments may be carried out on an ongoing basis by Board of Management, Principal and staff.

This Code of Behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management of Loreto College, Mullingar on 8th June 2023.

Signature of Chairperson _____ Anne Lordan Shaw _____

Ms Anne Lordan Shaw

Review Date: May 2025