

## **Glanmire Community College Policy and Procedure for Suspension**

The procedures to be followed regarding suspensions are set out in this document. Students and parents are informed about the policy through the student journal and the school website. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Glanmire Community College (GCC) **Code of Behaviour**.

The objective of our Code of Behaviour in Glanmire Community College is to create a respectful, cooperative and positive learning environment, in which every individual is given the best possible opportunity to grow and develop academically, socially and personally. Students, teachers and parents have a role and responsibility in co-operating with each other to uphold the code, if this objective is to be achieved.

Traditionally, the behaviour of students in our school has been exemplary. On limited occasions, a suspension can be used as a sanction for persistent misbehaviour or for a serious incident of misbehaviour. A suspension is defined as *requiring the student to absent him/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days*.

### **Principles underpinning the process of Suspension**

- Fair procedures will be used. All staff members are informed of these procedures.
- There will be no undue delays in an investigation and in making decisions about the imposition of the suspension where required.
- Care will be taken to ensure that all matters to do with an investigation of alleged misbehaviour are dealt with in confidence.

- The principles of ensuring the right to be heard and the right to impartiality apply in all cases.
- If a student aged 18 years or more does not wish for his/her personal data to be shared with a third-party, the process will take place directly between the student and the school.
- Formal records of the investigation and decision making are kept.
- Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardai, who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

### **Procedures in respect of Suspension**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the following procedures are observed:

- The complaint is investigated (where possible the matter will be investigated by the Class Teacher/Year Head/Deputy Principal and a report given to the Principal).
- The student and parent(s) are informed about the complaint leading to a possible suspension.
- Parents and student are given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.
- The school will make every reasonable effort to communicate with parents before imposing a suspension. However, if the student and/or parents cannot be contacted the suspension will be applied if merited.

- Following a decision to suspend, a letter detailing the reason for the suspension, the duration of the suspension and the right of appeal to the Board of Management/Cork ETB/DES will be given/sent to the parent(s).

### **Reasons leading to Suspension**

A student can be suspended when other sanctions/interventions have failed or for serious misconduct. Some reasons for a suspension include:

- The student's behaviour has had a detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to the safety of students, staff of the school or other person.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Other interventions may have been tried but have not worked.
- The student has been involved in a single incident of serious misbehaviour.
- The student poses a threat to good order and to the right of other students to do their state examinations in a calm atmosphere.
- Persistent misbehaviour.

As part of the school's policy on sanctions and following a consultation process, particular named behaviours may incur automatic suspension: smoking/vaping on school grounds; the use of foul and abusive language; physical assault on another person, disrespect for school rules and authority.

### **Return to School following Suspension**

- When the sanction of suspension is completed, a student is given the opportunity and support for a fresh start.
- Following a suspension, the student cannot return to class until the student and his/her parent(s) has met with his/her Year Head and/or a member of Senior Management.
- A student returning from suspension is offered the opportunity to engage in a Restorative Practice process with a trained member of staff in order to restore relationships with those affected by the student's challenging behaviour.
- A member of staff is assigned to provide support to the student during the re-integration process as part of the Check & Connect programme.
- Following a period of suspension, a student is given a five-day report card which is to be monitored by the Class Teacher and Year Head and signed daily by parents.
- When this monitoring card is completed satisfactorily the suspension process is ended.

### **The Role of the Board of Management in the process of Suspension**

- The Board of Management delegates the authority to suspend pupils to the Principal (Deputy Principals in his/her absence).
- This delegation of authority to the Principal is recorded in the minutes of the first Board of Management meeting (normally September) of each school year.
- At its scheduled meetings The Principal reports all suspensions to the Board of Management.

- Students are not identified by name with suspensions noted by means of the student's VSware ID number, initials and date of birth.
- The reason(s) for the suspension and its duration is outlined to the Board.
- Where the Principal, in consultation with the school's Senior Management team, decides that a suspension in excess of 3 school days is warranted s/he will liaise with the Chairperson of the Board of Management on this decision.

### **Right to Appeal a Suspension to the Board of Management**

- The Board of Management offers an opportunity to appeal a Principal's decision to suspend a student.
- When parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they and the student will be informed about their right to appeal in the first instance to the school's Board of Management.
- Where an appeal to the Board is not upheld, parents (or a student aged 18 years or over) may appeal to Cork ETB and subsequently to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (DES).

### **Policy Ratification**

Ratified by the Board of Management on:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date:

Review Year: