



**OUR  
LADY'S  
SCHOOL**  
TERENURE



## Code of Positive Behaviour

*Ratified by the Board of Management on:*

*Date: May 30th 2022*

*Signature:* 

*(Chairperson of the Board of Management)*

<i>Commenced: 2004</i>
<i>Date of last Review: 2022</i>
<i>Review due: 2023</i>

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## Summary

The Code of Positive Behaviour is centred on the guiding values of our school. It identifies the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community. It highlights the 3 Rs - Rights, Responsibilities, Respect. It identifies supports for promoting good behaviour and the ways positive behaviour is acknowledged. It outlines support structures in place to address negative behaviour and the regulations around school uniform and attendance. The complaints and appeals procedures are also outlined.

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## 1. Introduction

### **School Mission Statement**

Our Lady's School is a community that embraces Christian values. The education it provides is rooted in a deep sense of faith.

We aim to create a positive inclusive environment which enables everyone to reach their full potential. We promote mutual respect within the school community and strive to provide a happy and secure atmosphere which fosters a love of learning.

We encourage the development of the whole person, by fostering the personal, spiritual and moral development of every student. The realisation of individual talents and academic excellence is paramount.

We aim to create a friendly, healthy, safe and caring environment which affirms our pride in the school.

We promote the development of the necessary skills so that students may become responsible members of society. It is our wish to see every student leave Our Lady's School with moral integrity and a heightened sense of social conscience.

### **Guiding Values**

As a Voluntary Secondary Catholic School, the following are the guiding values that are central to life in this school:

- People feel valued
- Self-esteem is fostered
- Respect, tolerance and fairness are practised
- People in difficulty are supported
- There is open and honest communication
- Effort is recognised
- Difference is valued
- Conflict is handled constructively
- Social, moral and civic values are promoted
- Initiative and creativity are celebrated

## 2. Rationale for a Code of Positive Behaviour

Under Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour for its students. The Act requires that the school Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board.

The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well. The Code of Behaviour assists the school community to promote the school ethos, positive relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. To reflect this focus, the document is referred to as the Code of Positive Behaviour. This Code of Positive Behaviour assists teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

To this end, the Code of Positive Behaviour is seen as a working document, informing everyday school life, and reflecting the voices of our students, staff, parents, Board of Management, our founding congregation, the Religious of Christian Education, and our trustees, Le Chéile, as well as the legislative requirements to which we are bound. By involving all our stakeholders in this document, we are inviting all members of our school community to take ownership of the atmosphere and environment in our school.

A copy of the Code of Positive Behaviour is available on request from Reception and can also be viewed on our website, [www.olschool.ie](http://www.olschool.ie).

### **3. Aims of our Code of Positive Behaviour**

- To create a safe, secure teaching and learning environment for all by promoting a sense of mutual respect amongst all members of the school community.
- To ensure understanding (by the parents, students, staff and management of Our Lady's School) of the Code, the reasons for it, as well as each person's responsibilities in relation to its implementation.
- To clearly identify what positive behaviour in Our Lady's School looks like.
- To emphasise the promotion, acknowledgement and support systems for positive behaviour in the school.
- To outline the strategies to be used to prevent negative behaviour.
- To outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions and interventions that will be used in response to negative behaviour.
- To identify the procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.
- To ensure that effective procedures are in place which will allow for the day to day running of the school whilst complying with all relevant legislation as well as Department of Education and Skills requirements.

### **4. Roles & Responsibilities of Members of the School Community**

#### **Scope of the Code**

Our Lady's School acknowledges the contribution of all members of our school community to the promotion of positive behaviour. The school is committed to a policy of recognition,

encouragement and reward of positive behaviour. All students enrolled in Our Lady's agree to adhere to the high standards laid out in the Code. Admission of students into the school is conditional on parents/guardians giving a written undertaking that they find the Code of Positive Behaviour acceptable and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance by their daughter(s). The Code of Positive Behaviour applies to all students up to the completion of Senior Cycle education. Its scope extends from day-to-day school life to include school outings, travelling to and from school and any representation of the school outside of normal school activity including any activity in the school uniform.

### **Students**

Our Lady's School expects that students will at all times do their utmost to uphold the Code of Positive Behaviour of our school.

### **Parents**

Our Lady's School acknowledges the pivotal role of parents and guardians in the development and operation of the Code of Positive Behaviour. It is an expectation that all parents and guardians support the Code and actively encourage their daughters to uphold it.

### **Staff**

Our Lady's School acknowledges the contribution of all staff (teaching, administrative, SNAs, caretaking and cleaning) in the day to day running of the school. Each member of staff has a part to play in the successful operation of our Code of Positive Behaviour. In particular, staff members have a responsibility to respond to and/or report, as appropriate, incidents of either positive or negative behaviour that they witness.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management is the decision-making body of Our Lady's School. The school acknowledges its role in the development and operation of our Code of Positive Behaviour. All policies are developed with the authority of the Board of Management and must be approved by the board before becoming official school policy.

## **5. Positive Behaviour – what does it look like?**

### **The 3 R's**

Positive Behaviour in Our Lady's School is based on the 3 R's (Student Council 2018-19):

Rights

Responsibilities

Respect

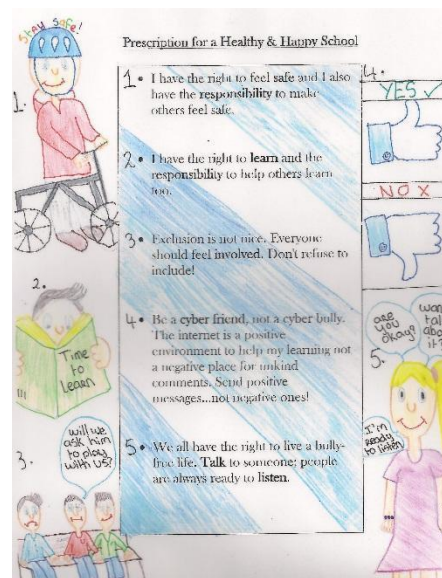
### **Guiding Rules**

The 3 R's are the foundations for our main school rules (Student Council 2018-19):

1. We are courteous, respectful and well-mannered to staff and other students.
2. We treat others the way we wish to be treated.
3. We work to the best of our ability.
4. We behave well in class and support the learning of other students.
5. We follow the school's uniform and dress code.
6. We follow instructions given to ensure our health and safety.
7. We show respect for our school environment and property.

### The OLS Prescription for a Healthy & Happy School

The OLS Prescription for a Healthy & Happy School was compiled in preparation for the Health Promoting Schools award received in 2015. It is student written and displayed in each classroom.



### 6. Positive Behaviour - School Supports

Students are encouraged to understand, adhere to and uphold the Code of Positive Behaviour in numerous ways including the following:

- The Code is presented and explained to Parents/Guardians and all incoming students.
- The Code is available on the school website and in hard copy at Reception.
- The Code is re-introduced on the first day of term by the Year Head, included in the school journal and is constantly reinforced by all staff and in particular by Form Tutors, Year Heads and staff members.

- The Code is revisited during timetabled form time and throughout the school year – formally and informally.
- Positive relationships amongst and between students and staff as well as between school and home are prioritised.
- The values of Restorative Practice (respect, empathy, safety, personal accountability, equality, community, trust) are promoted in addressing conflict resolution. This involves scaffolding dialogue between affected parties using questions that focus on what has happened and what steps are needed to move positively forward. Restorative Practice aims to consciously build relationships, respond to conflict in a healthy way, and connect us to our best selves and to one another. The values of this philosophy inform how each person thinks, engages, speaks, listens, and approaches situations, all day, every day. Staff training in Restorative Practice is facilitated.
- The caring ethos of our school is embodied in our daily practice and interaction with one another. In addition to day to day routines, it is evident in the provision and support of lunchtime and extracurricular & co-curricular activities, Learning Support, Supported Study, Pastoral Care time, the House System, all of which endeavour to foster a sense of belonging to all and encourage positive behaviour from students.
- The school strives to provide to its students an education that will be broad and challenging in nature. Students will be prepared for Junior and Leaving Certificate Examinations and a comprehensive Transition Year Programme will be provided.
- The broad and varied curriculum on offer in Our Lady's School offers substantial choice and seeks to accommodate student preferences.
- The school strives to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities in an attempt to enhance the social, personal, spiritual, sporting and aesthetic development of students in an engaging context.
- Various classroom management strategies, such as designated seating arrangements, are employed when necessary, to pre-empt and reduce/alleviate negative behaviour.
- Teachers prepare class materials well and lessons are differentiated to respond to pupils' abilities and interests.
- Formative Assessment procedures underpin approaches to teaching and learning in order to encourage students' ownership of their learning and a growth mind-set.
- Consistent use of the school journal as a means of communicating between home and school promotes consistent standards and open communication in relation to positive behaviour.
- VShare reports are made available to parents/guardians in November, February and May to support student learning and progression.
- Various media such as our website, school app and school newsletter, as well as personal contact, are employed to enhance communication with students and home.

- The core tenets of tolerance for others, self-control, fairness and the principles of natural justice are explored as part of the Wellbeing programme in our school. These are continually consolidated in all other subject areas and in our daily interaction with each other.
- Students of Our Lady's School are continually and consistently encouraged to behave in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. This is achieved in no small part through adult modelling as well as the various programmes on offer in the school such as SPHE, CSPE, RE, etc. and through the intervention of specialist supports such as Form Tutors, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, the Care Team, the House system, etc.
- Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism, Harassment, Violence, Substance misuse etc. are openly discussed with the students during their time in our school, through a variety of fora such as subject work, extra-curricular, projects, visiting speakers, drama, etc.
- Positive contributions to the school are encouraged, acknowledged and rewarded through the merit system.
- Positive contributions to the school are also encouraged, acknowledged and rewarded in other ways such as through school representation and student leadership opportunities - the 6th Year Council, the Class Captain System, the Student Council, formal recognition at Awards Ceremonies, display of student work, verbal and formal affirmation by Form Tutors, Year Heads and Senior Management, participation in internal and external competitions, etc.
- Adult supervision at break-times and lunchtimes assists in detecting, sanctioning and reducing inappropriate behaviour. Equally, the presence of CCTV acts as a deterrent.
- Students are aware of the systems in place to deal with inappropriate behaviour e.g. marks system, ladder of referral, etc.

## 7. Positive Behaviour - Acknowledgement

- Positive recognition by staff members.
- Merits (which are recorded on VSware) will be awarded in recognition of positive behaviour that supports our Code.

Such behaviour might involve:

- Being inclusive
- Showing social responsibility
- Demonstrating positive leadership
- Having a positive attitude
- Making a positive contribution



- Showing an improvement in behaviour/in study application
  - Showing an improvement in participation
  - Displaying consistent diligence
- After three Merits are awarded, a postcard is sent home to parents/guardians by the Year Head recognising the student's positive contribution to the life of Our Lady's School.
  - An annual whole-school prize-giving ceremony is held at the end of the school year where the behaviour, talents, achievements and efforts of students, across all aspects of school life, are acknowledged. Records of Merits inform the nominations for the Public Spirit awards.
  - An annual Year Group prize-giving ceremony is held at the end of the school year acknowledging students' positive contribution throughout the year.
  - Achievements are acknowledged and celebrated on the television at reception/on the school app/in the newsletter/magazine.
  - Notes are sent home in the school journal.
  - Consistent positive behaviour can support applications/appointments to leadership roles (Class Captain, Student Council, 6th Year Council, etc.).
  - Student work is displayed throughout the building.
  - Formal reports are made available to parents in November, February, and May.
  - References are provided for students upon request.

## **8. Negative/Unwanted Behaviour**

The Code of Positive Behaviour runs parallel with the system of care, which is outlined in our mission statement. It is intended to help students during their time in Our Lady's School. While every effort is made to address issues of behaviour in a positive and supportive manner, it is important for the overall effectiveness of the school that there are clear consequences to behaviour that is deemed unacceptable. Sanctions and interventions are designed to minimise the disruption to teaching and learning and to support the Mission Statement of the school. The emphasis is on remediation rather than being strictly punitive.

## **9. Breaches of the Code of Positive Behaviour - Support Structures & Sanctions**

Behaviour that is deemed not to be in support of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour will be addressed as follows:

- Students should receive a verbal warning before a sanction is applied, especially if it is a first offence (with the exception of a particularly serious breach of behaviour).

- o Flexibility and understanding are exercised, especially when dealing with 1st Year students until mid-term in October.
- o An Amber/Red Mark (which is recorded in VShare) will be given for incidences such as misbehaviour, breaking of school rules or failure to produce homework.
  - o An Amber Mark signifies a minor breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
  - o A Red Mark signifies a more serious breach of the Code, necessitating the Year Head's attention.
- o Should a student receive one or more red marks or an accumulation of marks, their record will be reviewed by their Year Head who will apply interventions or sanctions, as appropriate.
- o Automatic detention can be given for a serious breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour, as well as suspension, up to and including expulsion.
- o A range of interventions may be used by the Year Head to assist positive student behaviour including detention/community work within the school, the establishment of a behaviour support plan, the revoking of certain privileges (e.g. 6<sup>th</sup> Years being allowed out for lunch) or exclusion from activities organised by the school, etc.

### **Detention**

Detention is a component of the Code of Positive Behaviour of the school and forms a serious stage of the disciplinary procedure. Parents/Guardians will be given prior notice of their daughter's detention. Detention is held on Wednesdays, from 1.40pm to 2.40 p.m. In special cases, a detention may be given on a day other than Wednesday. A reflection exercise or community work will be given by a supervisor and must be completed by each student on detention. Homework may not be done during detention.

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

In the case of persistent misbehaviour, or in the case of a very serious breach of the Code, parents/guardians will be asked to meet the Year Head. Sanctions up to and including suspension and expulsion may be considered in accordance with NEWB Guidelines. In any such incidence, the school will inform the student and their parents about the complaint and give them an opportunity to respond, ensuring that fair procedures for investigation, decision-making and appeal, in line with NEWB Guidelines, are followed.

## **10. Punctuality and Attendance**

High standards of punctuality and attendance are of utmost importance to ensure that learning and teaching are uninterrupted. The following procedures identify the standards upheld by the school in relation to punctuality and attendance.

## Punctuality

- o All students are expected to arrive before 8.20 am, in order to have time to get organised for the day.
- o It is the students' responsibility to go to class on time.
- o Failure to do so will incur a mark/detention.
- o In the event of a student arriving late to school, she must present herself to Reception, sign in and receive a late stamp in her journal.
- o Students may go to their locker rooms from 8.10 am. Students who arrive earlier must stay in the GPA, where there is supervision from 8am.
- o Classes begin at 8.30am. The first bell rings at 8.25am reminding students to make their way to their classroom.
- o Parent explanations for late arrivals can be submitted via the school app.
- o If a student does not have an explanation for her late arrival submitted via the app, she will get a late stamp in her journal and it will be noted on VShare.
- o It is expected that a student who is late will go to class directly and make up any work missed. Students must present their late stamp showing the time of arrival to their class teacher, upon entry to class.
- o More than a once-off unexcused late arrival will incur sanctions/intervention, as deemed appropriate by the Year Head, which may include detention.

## Attendance

- o The school has a statutory duty, under the terms of the Education Act, to monitor and report student attendance.
- o The school is obliged to report absences aggregating 20 days to the Educational Welfare Services of the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA). The Year Head will send an Attendance Report to the parents at 10, 15 and 20 days absence.
- o Unauthorised absence from school (truancy) is a serious breach of discipline.
- o Students are expected to attend all of their classes, every day. A student may not absent herself from class without permission. The VShare attendance system is used by all class teachers to record attendance at each class period.
- o No student may leave the school at break time.
- o 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> Year students must remain on the school premises at lunch time. 6<sup>th</sup> Year students have the privilege of leaving the school premises at lunchtime.
- o Students leaving the school premises on a field trip/school organised outing must have the appropriate permission form submitted by their parent via the school app.
- o In the event of a student's unexplained absence, a text message notification will be

sent to parents/guardians.

- o Authorised absence from school, for example, in the case of illness, is to be submitted to the school via the school app, outlining the reason for and length of absence.
- o Where possible, any medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours.
- o Parents/Guardians are particularly asked to ensure that their daughters attend whole-school celebrations and House events, as these are central to the ethos of Our Lady's School, their school of choice.
- o A student requesting permission to leave school before the end of the day must have parental authorisation submitted via the school app. Before a student leaves, she must present at Reception, where she will be registered as having left early. Parents/guardians may receive a text message to confirm this. If she returns to school that day, she will be required to sign in again at Reception.
- o In the case of illness parents/guardians will be contacted by the school so that they can collect their daughter.
- o **Students are not permitted to contact home from their personal mobile phones during the school day but may do so through Reception.**

## 11. School Uniform and Appearance

Full school uniform is obligatory and must be worn to and from school, during school hours and at school functions as directed by the school authorities. Uniform requirements are outlined on the school website.

While wearing the school uniform, students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the standards set out in the Our Lady's School Code of Positive Behaviour.

On non-uniform occasions, dress should be appropriate to the event.

A student may not combine elements of the sports uniform with her school uniform. The school tracksuit may only be worn in P.E classes and for sports and may not be combined with non-uniform items. **Please note that leggings are not permitted as a substitute for the official school tracksuit bottoms.** Students are permitted to wear their PE tracksuit in to school on the day(s) they have PE. They must bring a clean aertex shirt to change into after P.E for hygiene purposes.

The school jacket is compulsory and is the only jacket that may be worn to and from school.

Headscarves must be plain navy blue.

Non uniform items worn to or in school may be confiscated and will be returned on student request after one school day.

Disregard for the rules regarding dress and appearance may result in the full range of sanctions outlined in the Code up to and including suspension for persistent breaches of the rules. All items of uniform must be marked clearly with the owner's name.

## Footwear

School shoes must be plain black/ navy leather shoes (non-marking) with low heels (no brand names or logos permitted) and must be worn in school and on the way to and from school.

Students are not permitted to wear runners/sports shoes/pumps/canvas shoes with their school uniform. Runners may only be worn for sport or P.E. Students must have separate school and P.E. shoes.

## Personal appearance

A clean, neat and tidy appearance is expected at all times when wearing the school uniform.

## Hair/Make Up/Nails

Inappropriate hairstyles and extreme hair colours are prohibited. Hairstyles must be neat and tidy. Hair accessories must be discreet. The school authorities are the judges of acceptable hairstyles/colours.

Make up, **including eyelash extensions**, may not be worn.

**For reasons of hygiene and health and safety, short nails are mandatory.**

**Acrylic/gel nails are NOT permitted on health and safety grounds.** Students will be directed to remove same if worn.

## Jewellery

The wearing of limited and discreet jewellery is permitted. Ear piercings must be studs. For health and safety reasons, large earrings/bars are unacceptable. **No facial (brow/nose/lip/tongue) studs, rings or bars are permitted.** The school authorities are the judges of acceptable standards.

Students wearing additional jewellery will be required to remove it whereby it may be confiscated and returned on student request after one school day.

In the interest of safety, no jewellery may be worn at P.E., Art, Home Economics, Science or for any practical classes.

## 12. Health and Safety Regulations

Students should take reasonable care to ensure their own safety and the safety of others and must not behave in any way that might endanger the Health and Safety of any person in the school.

Students should familiarise themselves with emergency exit routes for each room that they use.

Students should obey all safety instructions given by staff.

Students must not interfere with any safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, alarm bells or fire hose reels.

Any student who wilfully damages school property will be liable for the cost of repair and subject to the sanctions outlined in the Code of Positive Behaviour.

Students are responsible for the upkeep of their lockers. The school accepts no responsibility for loss or theft of personal belongings. If a lock is faulty it is the student's responsibility to report the fault immediately to Reception so that it may be repaired. Large sums of money or valuables should not be brought to school.

Parents/Guardians are asked to follow the school's road signs and not to drive into the main school yard. Students must follow the pedestrian walkways marked to enter and leave school.

E-scooters and other forms of electric transport are not permitted on school grounds for health and safety reasons.

There is no provision for students to park motorbikes/scooters or cars in the school grounds.

Food or drink may only be consumed in designated rooms. Hot drinks and food served in the canteen must be consumed in the canteen.

Chewing of gum inside the school buildings or on school grounds is absolutely forbidden and will be deemed a breach of the code of behaviour.

If a student needs to take medicine at school she must bring in a letter from her parent/guardian giving instructions for its use. Medicines, with the exception of an inhaler for asthma or medicine for any other allergy that requires immediate attention, must be left in Reception for safekeeping. Parents/Guardians of students with conditions such as serious nut or other allergy or diabetes should make arrangements to meet the Year Head to advise of the procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency. The school does not provide medication for students.

Students are not permitted to bring or carry any dangerous object/s or objects that the school deem to be dangerous or pose a danger to others on their person, in their belongings or anywhere on the school premises including but not limited to school trips/excursions.

Possessing, supplying or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal/harmful drugs/substances while on the school premises, while at a school event or while in school uniform is strictly forbidden. Any breach of this rule may lead to referral to the Board of Management and sanctions may include expulsion.

Smoking, vaping or inhalation of any substance is not permitted while on the school premises, while at a school event or while in school uniform, at any time.

Sanctions up to and including expulsion will be applied for breaches of Health and Safety regulations.

### 13. Mobile Phones/Smart Devices (including watches)

During school hours students are only permitted to use their device for learning related activities at the specific instruction of the teacher and within the parameters of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Students may not use their devices at any time to record, transmit or post photos or videos of other staff or students unless given explicit permission to do so by a teacher.

Outside of the above conditions, students are not permitted to use their mobile phones at all during the day, including at break or lunchtimes and during arrival and departure from school. Please note that this includes receiving/sending messages and checking the time.

Devices may be kept in the student's locker or turned off in her bag. **They should not be carried by the student on her person.**

Students who fail to comply with these rules will have their device confiscated for 1 day and their parents will be notified. A Red Mark will also be given. More severe sanctions may apply, if this is a repeated occurrence.

Misuse will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-bullying and Acceptable Use policies. These are available on the school's website or on request from Reception.

### 14. Complaints Procedure

The purpose of this complaints procedure is to provide a fair, consistent and equitable mechanism for processing complaints by Parents/Guardians or Students (who have reached the age of 18 years) in relation to the Code of Behaviour and its application.

Complaints and queries must be conducted through the appropriate channels. Parents should contact the school office in the event of a complaint/query.

See link for further information:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Complaints-Bullying-Child-Protection-Discrimination/Parental-Complaints.html>

Students may speak with their Form teacher or Year Head to raise a concern.

It is not appropriate to use social media for complaints.

Failure to comply with the appropriate procedures is deemed as a serious breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour

### 15. Appeals Procedure

Under Section 28 of the Education Act, 1998:

(a) The parent/guardian of a student or, in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal to the Board of Management against a decision of a teacher or other member of staff of a school.

(b) Grievances of students, or their parent(s)/guardians relating to the students' school (other than those which may be dealt with under paragraph (a) or Section 29), shall be heard.

(c) Appropriate remedial action shall, where necessary, be taken as a consequence of an appeal or in response to a grievance.

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, there are three contingencies in which the student (over 18) or the parent/guardian may appeal to the Secretary General of the DES, as follows:

(a) where the Board permanently excludes a student from the school

(b) where a student is suspended for a period of 20 days or more in one school year

(c) where the school refuses to enrol a student

Such an appeal may only be made following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school in accordance with Section 28.

#### **16. Modification Clause**

The Board of Management in consultation with the school management team reserves the right to modify the details of the Code of Positive Behaviour at short notice in response to events or circumstances that were not foreseeable when the Code was being first drafted or subsequently reviewed.