

# Code of Behaviour

*Cód Iompair Inghlactha*



**Our Lady's Bower**  
An Grianán Mhuire

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## **1. Each Bower Student has a right to:**

- 1.1 A caring and orderly school environment where she can reach her true potential.
- 1.2 Respect as a person in her own right and as a member of Our Lady's Bower School Community.
- 1.3 Be guided through various options in Curriculum. A three year Junior Certificate Programme and a two year Senior Certificate Programme leading to State Examinations. Parents and guardians should note that the Junior and Senior Cycle programmes contain an RSE module.
- 1.4 Transition Year as an optional year after third year
- 1.5 Pastoral Care, Career Guidance and Counselling
- 1.6 Appropriate discipline, uniformly applied and compliance with fair procedures.

## **2. Each Bower Student has a duty to:**

- 2.1 Work to the best of her ability.
- 2.2 Be guided by the advice and help of the staff and management.
- 2.3 Wear the School uniform with pride and respect the good name of Our Lady's Bower.
- 2.4 Show courtesy and respect to others as persons in their own right, as members of Our Lady's Bower School Community. These courtesies are due also to all visitors to our school.
- 2.5 Show care and respect for her own property, the school property and the property of others
- 2.6 Respect the rights of others to participate in a caring and orderly school environment where they can reach their full potential.
- 2.7 Be guided by the Articles of this Code of Behaviour.

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## **3. Introduction**

Our School's Code of Behaviour will operate successfully if it receives the active support and co-operation of students, parents/guardians, teachers, school management and the Board of Management.

The school ethos in Our Lady's Bower is maintained and conducted through mutual trust, respect and co-operation between all. Our school is proactive in recognising encouraging and rewarding positive behaviour and achievement. The school aims to encourage each student to reach her true potential.

Each student's progress at Our Lady's Bower depends on the quality of the on-going partnership between home and school. The school journal is the essential link between school and home. The school journal:

- Contains the schools code of behaviour
- Is a required school textbook, not a personal diary.
- Maybe inspected at any time by the parent, teacher, yearhead, deputy principal or principal.
- Should be taken to all classes at all times and should never be left at home or in the students' locker
- Should contain a daily record of homework assignments, to include written work, oral work, revision and study

Students must not disrupt the teaching or learning process for herself or others or engage in any behaviour which constitutes a danger or threat (physical or otherwise) to any person. Student's responsibility for acceptable behaviour extends beyond school space and time, school outings, sports events and educational tours abroad.

Our guiding precept has always been the fewer rules the better, but, notwithstanding, it has been necessary to state the following:

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## 4 Attendance

Each student is expected to have consistent and punctual attendance if she is to avail of the educational opportunities provided at Our Lady's Bower. Under the Education Act 1998 compulsory attendance in school is now a legal requirement for every student.

- 4.1 Students must register using their swipe card each morning on entry to the school. Failure to register properly may result in a text message being sent from the school indicating a recorded absence. An accurate registration record is vital in the event of an emergency e.g. fire and also for the completion of NEWB returns
- 4.2 Parents are expected to be strict and only allow absences in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.3 The school calendar is issued each August prior to the commencement of the Academic Year. The school reserves the right to alter the calendar as circumstances demand.
- 4.4 Parents/Guardians and students should cooperate with the school in ensuring the calendar year is adhered to.
- 4.5 Being absent from school to study for tests, to take up part time work, to participate in a family holiday, is **not** acceptable. Visits to Doctors and Dentists should be arranged outside school hours where possible. It is difficult to retrieve the time taken off for non-school activities. An extra responsibility lies on senior students and their parents to comply with this requirement.
- 4.6 The school authorities must be notified in advance if a student is likely to be absent.
- 4.7 If a student has been absent a note of explanation should be completed in the school journal and presented to the Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head on her immediate return to school. A recorded absence may result in an automatic text informing parents of their daughter's failure to register and reminding them of the need to explain the absence with a note. Sanctions will apply for those who fail to provide a note of explanation for absence.

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- 4.8 A student who arrives late for school must present a note of explanation at the office and swipe in as normal
- 4.9 Any student who wishes to leave school during the school day should:
- i. have a note in their school journal from their parent/guardian stating the reason why they want their daughter to leave the school.
  - ii. have this note signed by their Year Head (if the Year Head is not available, the Deputy Principal or Principal).
  - iii. show their journal to the secretary in the office when they are due to leave the school.
  - iv. sign out giving details of return time/non return

Parents/guardians must collect their daughter, co-sign the sign in/sign out book at the office and return their daughter to school at the specified time

4.10 Students who drive to school must:

- (i) inform the school of their intention to do so
- (ii) supply the school with the make/model, colour and registration number of the vehicle
- (iii) only park in car park behind the transition year prefabs
- (iv) leave the car keys in the office
- (v) never use the car to transport other pupils from the school premises in the course of the school day

Permission to park a vehicle on school property is granted subject to compliance with these requirements

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## 5. Uniform

Full school uniform must be worn throughout the school day without exception

- 5.1 The full school uniform consists of a tartan skirt, two check shirts (blue), a navy jumper, low heeled shoes.
- Skirts should be “standard length”. Any alteration made to the skirt should not be any less than the standard length ie. 27” or knee length.
  - Navy knee socks or navy or black tights.
  - Navy or Black shoes only - no brown shoes or other variations allowed. Boots of any description are not acceptable. This is a safety aspect with regard to rules on Footwear. The school accepts no liability for accidents caused by inappropriate footwear.
  - School jacket is compulsory for all students.
  - Jewellery (facial jewellery, earrings, chains, bracelets, rings), casual wear (hoodies, scarves, leggings), make-up, dyed hair, sports shoes/runners are **not** part of the school uniform.

### **Branded or logoed clothing are not part of school or PE uniform**

- 5.2 The Physical Education uniform consists of navy tracksuit bottoms/skirt, pale blue tee shirt, school sports top and runners. Regulations regarding jewellery must be adhered to during PE classes and competitive games.
- 5.3 Students travelling to represent the school in team events/competitions will only be permitted to do so if they are in full school uniform/PE uniform. Students must wear their school uniform on the morning of a match.
- 5.4 A wristwatch, a finger ring and one pair of stud earrings may be worn.
- 5.5 Students should ensure all their clothing and possessions are named or marked so they can be identified

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5.6 All personal property, other student's property and school property must be treated with care. When school or another student's property is damaged or stolen the offending student must make good the loss by replacing the item or paying the cost of replacement.

## **6. Punctuality**

Parents /Guardians are expected to co-operate with school in ensuring punctuality. Being late causes disruption and contributes to the loss of class time.

6.1 Students must be present and on time for daily morning assembly at 8:50

6.2 Students are expected to be punctual for every class throughout the day and may not leave class except with permission of the incoming teacher.

6.3 Sanctions will apply for persistent lateness to school and individual classes

## **7. Homework**

Homework is an integral part of school and home life, it is the carrying out of work assigned by the class teacher outside of school hours, at home privately or at supervised study after school. Homework includes ongoing and regular revision of course work and provides critical feedback for students.

7.1 The purpose of homework is to enable the student to develop the necessary and important skills required for written examinations, to be thoroughly familiar with the course content of various subjects and to develop self-discipline. Revision done on a continuous basis reduces exam stress and keeps the student up to date with her work.

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- 7.2 Parents have an important supervisory role in ensuring that homework is completed and carried out carefully and without distraction. Parents are asked to provide a quiet setting for students to complete homework assignments and revision work.
- 7.3 All homework assignments should be recorded in the school journal at the end of each class, where it can be viewed by the parent.
- 7.4 Homework is assigned at the teacher's discretion.
- 7.5 It is recommended that junior students should devote at least two hours each evening to homework assignments and revision.
- 7.6 Senior students should devote three to four hours daily to homework assignments and revision.
- 7.7 Students following the Transition Year Programme are expected to adhere to deadlines set for the completion of projects; module tasks, and any work assigned by teachers.
- 7.8 Students must present completed homework on time

## **8. Substance Abuse/Misuse**

The schools' policy regarding smoking, the possession and misuse of alcohol and illegal substances is in keeping with the law of the land. Our Lady's Bower has a zero tolerance policy regarding the use of alcohol and illegal substances.

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- 8.1 Smoking, being in possession of cigarettes, the drinking of alcohol and/ or taking drugs (not medically prescribed) whether at school or anywhere in uniform or anywhere representing the school is forbidden. These will be regarded as serious offences and will attract severe sanctions; suspension, exclusion, expulsion.
  - 8.2 No student shall ever bring alcohol, cigarettes or illegal substances to school for personal use or for sale or distribution. This restriction applies everywhere the student is representing the school.
  - 8.3 A student must never attend school under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance, any student who does so will be immediately removed from class by the Principal or Deputy Principal, their parents contacted, sent home from school and denied permission to return to school pending an inquiry.
  - 8.4 Where a student is under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances, in the first instance the student will be suspended and expulsion procedures may be open to the school authorities.
  - 8.5 The school authorities may advise and encourage counselling for any student found in violation of this rule before being permitted to return to school.

## **9. Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- Cyber bullying and
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

(Anti – Bullying Procedures for Primary & Post Primary Schools 2013)



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While not in the definition, an isolated or once-off incident of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people is considered a bullying offence in Our Lady's Bower and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the schools code of behaviour

Every student in Our Lady's Bower has the right to enjoy her learning and leisure, free from intimidation. Our school will not tolerate any form of bullying.

- 9.1 Incidents where bullying is evident will be dealt with in a confidential manner by the Principal/Deputy Principal and the Pastoral Care Team. The school treats bullying as a breach of school discipline and appropriate discipline sanctions will be applied.
- 9.2 A process of discussion, counselling and mediation will be initiated to help both victim and offender. The involvement of Parents/Guardians concerned is important in this process which is aimed at reconciliation and the prevention of a recurrence of the problem.
- 9.3 The use of a mobile phone or portable media device to menace, harass or offend another person is considered bullying and also a criminal offence. A student's involvement in such action may involve the Gardaí.
- 9.4 Parents are asked to contact the school to discuss any problems they know or suspect their daughter might be having. Parents can be assured that all matters will be treated with sensitivity by the Principal/ Deputy Principal and the pastoral care team.

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9.5 The threat of physical violence or the carrying out of acts of violence against pupils or teachers will not be tolerated by the school authorities. Such incidents will provoke severe penalties up to and including expulsion.

## **10. Health, Safety & Wellbeing**

10.1 Students must read and obey the Health and Safety/Fire regulations posted throughout the school.

10.2 Staff and students are required to be familiar with safety procedures and to participate in fire drills and mock evacuations without exception.

10.3 Students must never interfere with or damage fire equipment, safety equipment or safety signs.

10.4 Students must always move in an orderly fashion.

10.5 Smoking, the use of lighters or matches are strictly prohibited.

10.6 School bags must always be stored in safe and proper fashion to allow for free movement and not obstruct passageways or exits.

10.7 Littering of classrooms, assembly area and school grounds is strictly prohibited.

10.8 In the interest of safety for all, students have a duty to report broken desks and windows and any concerns regarding Health and Safety to staff/school management

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10.9 Administration of medicines – in keeping with modern accepted practice and advice, no medication will be dispensed to students by school staff. Students should not give prescribed/unprescribed medication to other students

Our Lady's Bower follows the Department of Education and Skills guidelines on the provision of RSE as a part of school curriculum. In accepting this code of behavior I accept my daughter's participation in same.

## **11. Communication & Mobile Technology (Cameras, Mobile phones, MP3 players, portable media devices)**

The school has a duty to help students communicate with home when the need arises.

Students who use their own or another mobile phone to contact parents/guardians will be deemed in breach of the schools mobile phone policy. Students/parents should **only** make contact during the school day via the phone in the school office.

Pupils may not use mobile phones, cameras or MP3 players, in school without the express permission of a teacher. On school related activities, students may use their mobile phones only with the express permission of their teacher.

- 11.1 No student may have a mobile phone, camera, MP3 player or other portable media device on her person during school hours.
- 11.2 Where a student brings such items to school, these must be switched off at 8:50am and kept in the student's locker.
- 11.3 Students found with any of these items will have them confiscated (including the SIM) for at least one week and will only be returned to a parent or guardian.

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- 11.4 Misuse of mobile/electronic devices, including the use of same to take photographs or make recordings will be treated as a serious breach of the code of behaviour.
- 11.5 The school accepts no responsibility to investigate the loss of, theft of or damage to mobile phones etc. The school accepts no responsibility to replace said items.
- 11.6 If a teacher has any suspicion that a mobile phone, camera, MP3 player or portable media device has unsuitable material stored on it, pupils will be required to hand over the device to a teacher and parents will be contacted, and the material viewed if required.

It is the schools policy to promote and encourage involvement in school activities. The school publishes images and information regarding student's involvement in school related activities using all media formats. Parents and guardians should note that in accepting a place in this school and in accepting this code of behavior that your daughter's image maybe used in such publications.

## **12. Internet Use**

The following is a summary of the schools ICT Acceptable Use Policy. It has two broad aims:

- To maintain the safety and welfare of our students.
- To maintain the integrity of school ICT infrastructure

To ensure that pupils benefit from the schools IT resources, all student users are expected to adhere to the following:

- Never give out personal information such as home address or telephone number in an email message to an unknown recipient.
- Never make arrangements for an unsupervised meeting with another person on-line without the permission of a teacher/parent.

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- If a student receives a message that causes them to feel uncomfortable, it must be reported to a teacher without delay
  - Users are responsible for all e-mail sent and for contacts made that may result in e-mail being received.
  - Students are forbidden to visit internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials, post anonymous messages and the forwarding of chain letters is forbidden.
  - Students must report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials.
  - Students should not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
  - Downloading of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
  - Personal chat room sessions are strictly prohibited, and can only be permitted by the Principal, Deputy Principal or IT co-ordinator.

Students should be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school related or personal will be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

## **School Network/Login Accounts**

- All users will only access the system with their own login and password, which should at all times be secret.
- If a student feels that her account has been in any way compromised her password being made public, she must immediately inform IT co-ordinator.
- Any student who, having divulged her password to another person allows her account to be accessed by another student will also be subject to sanctions.

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## **13. Sanctions for breaches of the Code of Behaviour**

13.1 The school reserves the right to implement fair and uniform discipline strategies to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. These may range from:

- a) Reasoning with student.
- b) Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- c) Temporary separation from peers, friends, others.
- d) Loss of privileges.
- e) Detention during or after school hours.
- f) Prescribing additional work.
- g) Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Head
- h) Communication with parents.
- i) Suspension or Expulsion in the most extreme cases of indiscipline or in serious cases of misbehaviour.

13.2 The imposition, nature and duration of sanctions will be at the discretion of the Principal in line with procedures already established within the code of behaviour.

13.3 In compliance with fair procedures a student has the right of appeal against the imposition or quality of sanctions being imposed.

## **14. Procedure to deal with unacceptable and repeated unacceptable behaviour**

### ***Graded procedure***

14.1 Reasoning by subject teacher or staff member. Advice on how to improve.

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- 14.2 Reprimand by staff member and apology by student.
- 14.3 Repeated misbehaviour is reported to the year head who interviews the student and elicits an undertaking as to the future good behaviour. The year head documents this interview and informs the Principal/Deputy Principal at Year Head meeting. This meeting is minuted.
- 14.4 If behaviour persists, the Year Head/Principal Deputy Principal will issue a report card to the student, which requires each of the student's teachers to record the student's application, class work, homework, and general behaviour in their class. Parents will be notified of the schools decision to place the student on report. The report card will be issued daily to the student by the year head at assembly. The previous days report card signed by parent/guardian is returned to the year head at assembly. Parents may then be requested to attend a formal meeting convened by Principal attended by Deputy Principal and/or Year Head. Parents may be asked/required to give undertakings as to future good behaviour. The meeting will be recorded. Minutes and report cards will be filed.
- 14.5 If behaviour persists the Principal may initiate a student case conference which may be attended by the Deputy Principal, year head, and staff members. Case history from previous meetings will be read. Documented instances of unacceptable behaviour will be discussed. The decision to suspend /exclude or impose a lesser sanction will be taken by the Principal after the student case conference, and will be recorded communicated to the parents.
- 14.6 The student's right of appeal can then be activated. Parents/Guardians are referred to Sections 28 and 29, Education Act 1998 where the procedures are set out.
- 14.8 A suspended student must present with their parent/guardian to school management on the morning of their return to school. At this meeting the student may be required to sign an agreed contract of behaviour.

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During the course of school life, some behaviour may require urgent attention, and may be referred directly to the Principal/Deputy Principal. Such behaviours may include:

- Deliberate use of offensive language and/or behaviour to Staff member or another.
- Physical assault of staff/student
- Drinking/Illegal substance abuse.
- Mitching and repeated mitching.
- Damage to another's or school property.
- A student caught smoking or being caught in possession of cigarettes

The list is not exhaustive. This unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with at procedure 14.5, where immediate suspension or other appropriate sanction may be invoked.

## **15. CONCLUSION**

The code of behaviour is under constant review and the school authorities' reserve the right to modify any material contained in the code

The words and expressions used in the code will be ascribed their plain English meaning.

The Code of Behaviour at Our Lady's Bower has been developed in line with the NEWB Guidelines and with the agreement of the Staff, Students, Parents and Board of Management of the school. Full details on all relevant policies and procedures are available on our website [www.ourladysbower.com](http://www.ourladysbower.com)



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I have read and understood the Code of behaviour of Our Lady's Bower Secondary School. I undertake to support the authority of the School in that my daughter/student in my care shall abide by the terms of the Code of Behaviour.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_