

# Margaret Aylward Community College

## **Code of Behaviour**

May 2015

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# Code of Behaviour

## **Mission Statement**

*Margaret Aylward Community College seeks to encourage all to achieve their potential in a supportive atmosphere which respects diversity. The school welcomes the involvement of parents and community in developing the skills necessary for students to become self-motivating members of society*

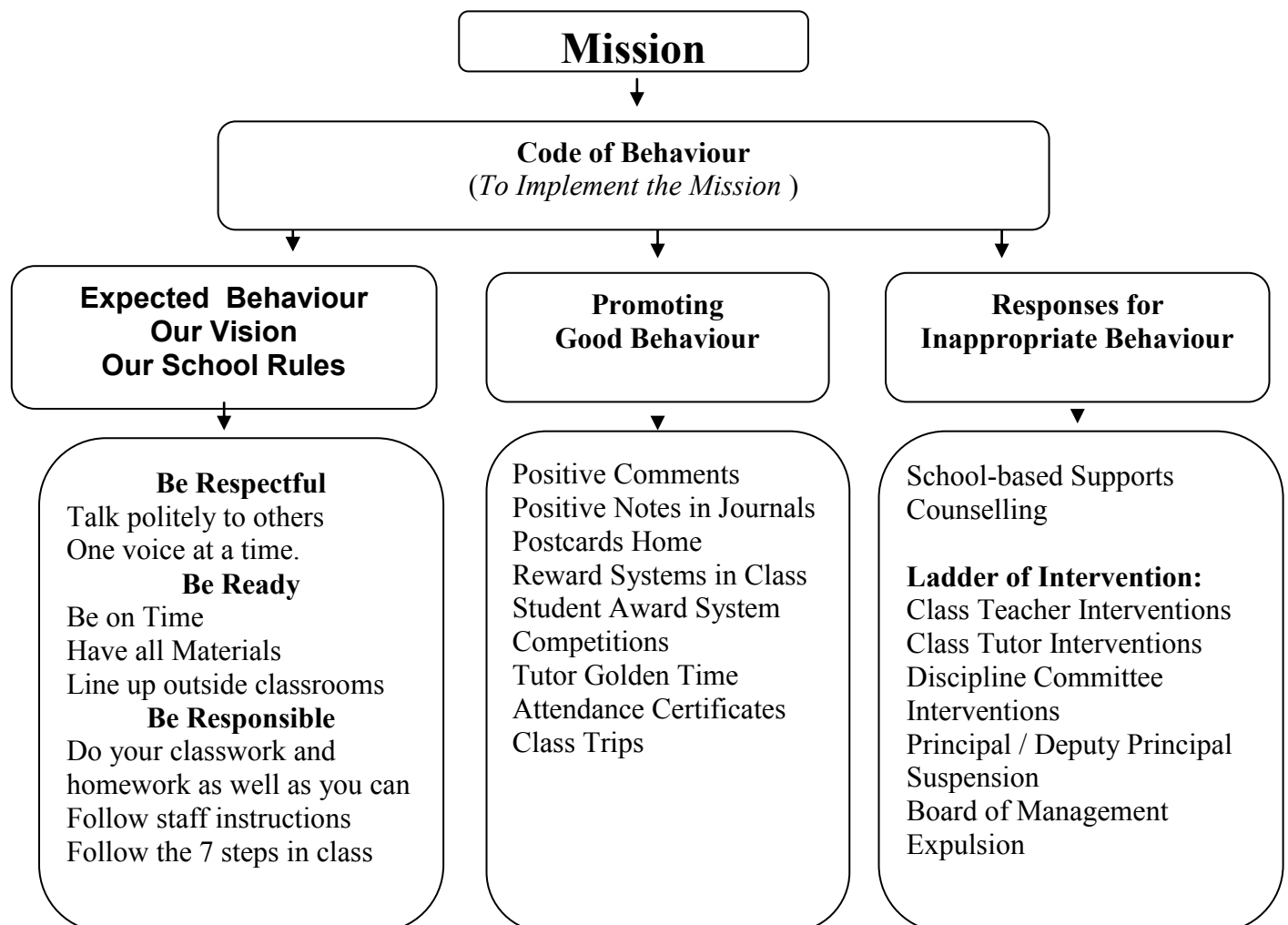
## **Introduction**

To enable this mission to be achieved, Margaret Aylward Community College has a **Code of Behaviour** which relates to all school activities both inside and outside of normal school hours. The Code is written in accordance with the National Educational Welfare Board's "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" (2008).

## **The Structure of the Code**

The Code outlines the following **three core parts**:

- **Expected Behaviour - Our Vision - Our School Rules**
- **Promoting Good Behaviour**
- **Responses for Inappropriate Behaviour**



## ***The Aim of the Code***

The spirit of the Code is respect for oneself, others, and property. The Code's long term aim is to ensure that young people from Margaret Aylward Community College learn the importance of their rights and their corresponding responsibilities. As they progress through the school, students will increase their understanding of the impact of their behaviour in school, at home, and in the wider community, and take responsibility for their actions. Upon completion of their education in Margaret Aylward Community College, and maturation as young adults, it is hoped that they will carry with them a sense of tolerance, justice, and positive social values, which will contribute to the general well-being of our society. The Code is based on the recognition of the student as an individual yet insists on an environment in which the welfare of all is protected.

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## ***The Ethos of the Code of Behaviour***

The principles underpinning the Code of Behaviour ensure that  
Margaret Aylward Community College:

**Has a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning which promotes positive relationships of mutual respect and support among students, parents, and staff**

*(This is achieved through the school culture, policies, structures and support systems across the school)*

**Has a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour**

*(This is achieved through a whole-school approach which promotes good behaviour inside and outside the classes and models good behaviour everyday)*

**Ensures that the standard of behaviour expected in Margaret Aylward Community College is communicated to all involved so that everyone understands how to behave, has the skills to behave well, and knows the impact of both good and inappropriate behaviour**

*(This is achieved through the regular teaching of the expected behaviour in curricular and co-curricular material and in the provision of a fair and consistent system of Rewards for Good Behaviour and Responses to Inappropriate Behaviour. Expectations of behaviour are communicated through the school journal, in class, during induction, and are displayed throughout the school. All parents/guardians receive a copy of the Code which they are expected to read and sign. Adherence to the Admissions Policy and the Code of Behaviour is a condition of enrolment in Margaret Aylward Community College.)*

## ***Roles and Responsibilities***

Each member of the school community has a responsibility to promote good behaviour and a role to play in minimising any behaviour that prevents teaching and learning, or risk people's safety. In Margaret Aylward Community College, students, parents, teachers, staff, school management, and the Board of Management all have a role to ensure the Code is upheld.

## ***The Rationale for the Code***

The Code is cognisant of the international conventions, laws and constitutional provisions which all schools must abide by. These include the *Education Act* 1998 and the *Education (Welfare) Act* 2000. These legal implications, along with the school's Admission Policy, ensures that Margaret Aylward Community College provides for the fulfilment of every child's right to an education in a safe, respectful setting where their basic needs can be met.

## ***The Consultation & Review Process***

Since the school opened in 1969, the Code of Behaviour has been reviewed a number of times with the Board of Management's authority through a whole-school approach, discussion with all partners and with an understanding of best practice in the area of positive behaviour management.

The 2015 updated Code was developed through consultation with all the school partners including students, parents, staff and the Board of Management and with the support of the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS). It was coordinated by the Margaret Aylward Community College Positive Behaviour Strategy Team.

The Code will be reviewed after the initial 12 months to ensure it supports the school's mission. Any amendments needed will be made and if they are in keeping with the general ethos of the Code, a new version will be distributed to staff, parents and students. If the amendments required are substantial, a full audit will be conducted. As a core part of the school's work, the Code of Behaviour should be reviewed every five years through a whole-school approach using the Audit Guidelines from the NEWB or other method as deemed appropriate by the Board of Management.

## ***Implementation of the Code***

Upon approval by the Board of Management and CDET B all staff members and parents/guardians of registered students, will receive a copy of the Code of Behaviour. A whole-staff workshop on the implementation of the Code will be held at the beginning of the school year and :

- the expected behaviour and rules will appear in all school journals and it is expected that parents/guardians and students sign this each year.
- resources to teach the skills of expected behaviour will be provided to all teachers and posters about the expected behaviour will be provided for all classrooms
- the Code of Behaviour will be available on the Margaret Aylward Community College website and similar to all school policies, any parent/guardian or staff member may request a written copy
- as part of the enrolment process in Margaret Aylward Community College, parents will be provided with a copy which they are expected to read and sign.

## Section 1:

### Expectations of Behaviour in Margaret Aylward Community College

All members of the school community are expected to be '**RESPECTFUL**' as outlined in the list of expectations. The '**Expected Behaviours**' are discussed with each class by Class Teachers and Class Tutors at the beginning of each year or when a student joins the school. They are included in the school journal and are reinforced by teachers and through induction programmes. The skills required to behave as expected are taught in class by teachers, modelled by all staff, and supported by parents through a strong link between school and home. The Expected Behaviours allow for teachers' initiative and creativity.

There are '**Five Key Rules which help us to be RESPECTFUL**' and these are presented with reasons for each rule.

### Respectful Behaviour in Margaret Aylward Community College

*In Margaret Aylward Community School, we are expected to observe the following:*

1. **R**espect all school facilities both inside and outside the building
2. **E**nter and exit classes in order, walk on the left hand side of the corridor and line up quietly at the next classroom.
3. **S**afety at school is everyone's right, including staff and students.
4. **P**ractise safe behaviour coming to and from school

*In class, we are expected to:*

1. **E**ngage and participate in class to the best of our ability without distracting others
2. **C**ome on time in uniform to class with books, homework, journal and other materials
3. **T**alk and communicate calmly with respect and manners to all students and staff
4. **F**ulfil our obligation to respect the rights of all to work teach and learn.
5. **U**se the 'One voice, Hands up and Listen' method in class
6. **L**ist and do all homework and learning in the journal.

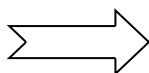
*Senior Students, Mentors, and Student Council members are expected to act as role models for good behaviour in school.*

## **Five Key Rules to Help me to be RESPECTFUL to Myself & Others**

### **1. Attend school regularly**

#### ***This means:***

- I come in every day in full uniform unless I have a valid reason
- I must bring in a note from my parents/guardians or a doctors cert for each day I miss
- I don't leave school without permission



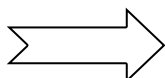
#### ***Because:***

- I will learn more and be prepared better for exams and my career
- it is the Law to explain why I was absent and the school must record why I wasn't in
- my safety is important

### **2. Be on time for each class**

#### ***This means:***

- I arrive to school early in the morning and after lunch
- If I am late, I go to the front door, sign the register and get marked in
- I move quickly between classes and don't delay
- I must attend all classes during the day



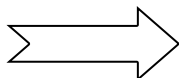
#### ***Because***

- if I am late I disrupt the teacher and other students
- it is the Law to record my attendance and the school needs to know I am in
- being on time is a good quality to have
- I am responsible for Health and Safety reasons to attend all classes.

### **3. Follow the classroom routine**

#### ***This means:***

- I sit in the seat assigned to me
- I take out my class materials
- I remove my jacket in class and put my bag under the table



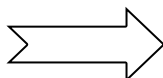
#### ***Because***

- routine helps me to focus
- being organised makes learning easier
- the classroom needs to be a safe place that doesn't distract me or others

### **4. Behave Appropriately in Class**

#### ***This means:***

- I let others learn without distraction
- I use 'One voice, Hands up & Listen'



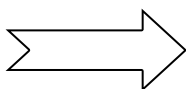
#### ***Because***

- everyone has a right to learn
- it makes it easy to participate in class

### **5. Use my Journal properly**

#### ***This means:***

- I keep my journal neat and record my classwork and homework in it
- I get it signed each week at home or when asked to
- I put the journal on the desk and give it to a teacher when asked



#### ***Because***

- it helps me to remember my homework and helps with revision and study
- parents/guardians can see how well I am doing and it has space for notes
- rooting in my bag for it can be distracting and wastes time



## Section 2:



# Rewards for Good Behaviour

When expectations are achieved and a standard of behaviour is shown by students, positive reinforcement is important. Good behaviour both inside and outside the classroom is acknowledged. In some cases, a quiet word is most appropriate and in other situations, good notes / stickers are written/ placed by teachers in student journals or a postcard is sent home. At more formal award ceremonies certificates are presented along with gifts or vouchers.

### Informal:

***This is done within classes by individual teachers and can include:***

- verbal praise either in class or quietly to students
- a positive note or sticker in the journal
- positive comment about the student(s) to Tutor
- small rewards such as class materials or treats.



### Formal:

Rewards and certificates are presented across year groups throughout the year and at the end of each term. Students or classes may be verbally acknowledged at assembly. Students representing the school at events are announced with details of their achievements at assemblies and over the school intercom

### Positive reports

of students' progress may be given at parent-teacher meetings and in school reports after Christmas examinations, Mock Examinations, and Summer Examinations

### Awards

Tutor nominate students for Student of the Month awards. Parents may also be contacted to inform them of the students' progress or achievements.

Attendance, punctuality, participation, and academic achievement are acknowledged through certificates and vouchers

Awards are presented for Generosity of Spirit, Class Spirit, Effort and Courtesy.

A First Year celebration takes place at the end of the academic year

A Third Year JCSP Awards celebration and presentation of JCSP Certificates and Folders of Excellence takes place before students sit the Junior Certificate examinations.

At the sixth year Graduation a Principal's prize is presented to a student who most represents the school ethos.

### Outdoor Trips

Class/Year Group trips can be arranged to reward a particular group/achievement such as having all positive notes in the school journal.

However, some class trips are part of the curriculum and are different to 'reward trips'.





## **Section 3:**

### **Responses for Inappropriate Behaviour**

Despite students, staff and parents/guardians best intentions, inappropriate behaviour can happen and even minor events can be disruptive to teaching and learning. Most students behave appropriately with the help of consistent routines and clear rules in school. The majority of students respond to work that is presented well in a manner that is suitable for their ability. To ensure this occurs teachers will draw on their own teaching style, expertise and knowledge of both students and subject. When a student's behaviour prevents teaching and learning taking place, a balance must be found between meeting the needs of that student and the needs of the other students and staff.

Margaret Aylward Community College adopts a problem-solving approach when dealing with inappropriate behaviour and has a number of supports and initial interventions to help the student. The purpose of the school's approach is:

- To help students learn that their behaviour was unacceptable
- To help students learn the skills of good behaviour
- To help students recognise the effect of their actions
- To help students understand that they have choices about their behaviour and that all choices have consequences.

The quality of relationships between students and teachers is one of the most powerful influences on student behaviour and after inappropriate behaviour has been dealt with, one goal of this approach is to restore a positive relationship between the student and teacher.

In some cases, it is necessary to apply sanctions. The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour and they help to reinforce boundaries as set out in the Expectations and Rules. Sanctions are a consequence to certain behaviours and serve to ensure that everyone's safety and right to learn or work is protected.

### ***Interventions, Sanctions & Supports***

Margaret Aylward Community College has a consistent school-wide response to behaviour. The first intervention to inappropriate behaviour is the teaching of the Code of Behaviour to all students and giving them the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour.

When a student behaves inappropriately, the teacher tries to deal with the incident in a calm and firm manner which aims to help the student recognise the effect of their behaviour and the consequences of their choice of behaviour.

If the student is unwilling or unable to adapt their behaviour for any multiple of reasons, the school has a strong support system to draw from such as the Staff, Tutors, Discipline Committee, Pastoral and Counselling services, School Management and external services. Teachers and staff in Margaret Aylward Community College share resources and advice and act as a team with the aim of supporting students to behave appropriately.

In response to inappropriate behaviour, teachers use a number of interventions and sanctions for students. Sanctions are imposed as consequences to inappropriate behaviour and the school uses a Ladder of Intervention to offer consistency of responses to such behaviour.

Senior students are expected to have a greater understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and sanctions may be selected to reflect this.

# Ladder of Intervention

## Low Level Occasional Misbehaviour

This misbehaviour is attended to routinely and effectively through the skills of the teacher in the classroom or on the corridor. Teachers keep records of the behaviour, sanctions given and they follow up to ensure it is completed. Teachers also record if the student adapted their behaviour after the sanction.

### ***Examples of this type of behaviour***

- distracting others in class
- inappropriate language/comments
- littering in corridor or classroom
- not having class materials
- not doing homework/study
- being uncooperative
- disruption on corridors
- chewing gum
- no journal
- having mobile phone/recording equipment/cameras/ipods/music players in use or in sight
- not following the school's Health and Safety policy on piercings

### ***Sample Interventions & Supports***

- verbal correction
- moving the student within class
- note in journal
- meeting student after class to discuss
- removal of gum
- additional work
- seeking parental support

### ***Sample Sanctions***

- extra relevant work given and collected by teacher
- detention with relevant work supervised by the teacher
- confiscation
- phone/recorder is given to Principal for safe keeping until a parent collects it

During class, if a student does not respond to the above interventions or sanctions and continues to repeat the behaviour, they may be removed to a neighbouring class upon prior arrangement with the neighbouring teacher. Students cannot be left unsupervised in classrooms/on the corridor. It is the responsibility of the student to report to the neighbouring teacher's classroom. After class, the student should report back to the class teacher with their completed Class Work.

## **Immediate Action for Inappropriate Behaviours**

Any behaviour that puts a student or staff member's safety at risk is immediately brought to the attention of the Deputy Principal or Principal

### ***Examples of this type of behaviour***

- absent from class without permission
- unacceptable language
- bullying or threatening behaviour
- smoking/ illegal drugs/ alcohol
- theft
- vandalism/graffiti
- physical or verbal aggression

### ***Sample Interventions***

- removal of student from situation
- contact made with home
- Anti-Bullying Policy implemented
- referral to Discipline Committee
- referral to Care Team
- Anger Management Programme

### ***Sample Sanctions***

- extra relevant work given
- purposeful detention
- suspension as sanctioned by Principal / Deputy Principal
- Contract of Behaviour signed
- Referral to Board of Management

# Ladder of Intervention (continued)

## For Repeated Low-Level Misbehaviours & Refusal to Adapt Behaviour

The class teacher may consult with the Tutor and Discipline Committee regarding the supports and interventions available for repeated misbehaviour. The aim of these interventions is to help the student develop the skills to enable them to return to the classroom without disturbing the teaching and learning taking place.

### ***Examples of this type of behaviour***

If a student

- refuses to change their behaviour after class teacher's interventions
- refuses to follow the school's 'Piercings Policy'. Piercings are forbidden in PE.
- is unable to adapt to the classroom situation
- does not complete the sanctions given.
- refuses to wear the college uniform correctly.

### ***Sample Interventions & Supports***

The Discipline Committee has a number of interventions available to help the student:

- meet with student and review the Expectations & Rules
- consult with Tutor for pastoral care
- consult with class teachers to create a Progress Report
- meet with parents/guardians and the student
- suggestion of counselling and support from Care Team
- use Behaviour Cards
- suspension from class trips
- telephone call to parent / guardian. School uniform delivered to school or student sent home to change into the school uniform and return to school.

### ***Sample Sanctions***

Extra relevant work given and collected

Not allowed to represent school at events/reward trips

Suspension as sanctioned by Principal / Deputy Principal

Records of interventions, sanctions and contact with home are kept in the student's file and feedback is provided to the class teacher and tutor. Parents/Guardians have a right to view the records on file for their daughter at any time.

After the above interventions and sanctions, most students will respond, learn the skills for expected behaviour in Margaret Aylward Community College and adapt their behaviour. When any sanction is completed, the student is given the opportunity and support for a fresh start and although a record is kept, the same good behaviour is expected of this student as of all other students.

If a student fails to respond to all the supports and interventions that the school has to offer and has been sanctioned with numerous suspensions, the Principal will be involved in a detailed review of the student's behaviour.

## **Policies and Procedures for suspension**

Excluding a student through suspension is a very serious step warranted only by very serious behaviour. Suspension is defined as 'requiring the student to absent herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days' (NEWB, 2008). Suspension is considered when other measures have been exhausted or the misbehaviour is of such a serious or threatening nature that an immediate suspension is necessary.

**Suspension** may occur where a student's behaviour :

1. Has a detrimental effect on the education of other students.
2. Constitutes a Health and Safety risk.
3. Causes serious damage to property
4. A single serious incident.

### **Procedures**

Fair procedures involve the right to be heard and the right to impartiality. A report of the student's behaviour is compiled. Parent/guardian(s) are given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made to suspend a student. Parent/ Guardian (s) are then informed in writing of the reason for the suspension, the number of days suspension and the date scheduled to discuss the suspension with the student's parent/guardian. Students may be provided with work to complete while on suspension. The purpose of a suspension is:

- to bring about a change in behaviour by helping the student to realize that their behaviour is unacceptable as it seriously affects others.
- to help students realize that they have choices about their behaviour and that all choices have consequences.
- to help students take responsibility for their behaviour.
- enable the school to set behaviour goals with the student and their parent/guardian (s)
- give school staff an opportunity to plan other interventions.

## **PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATING A SERIOUS INCIDENT**

Procedures to be followed where a student is alleged to have been involved in a **serious incident** that in some way affects the rights of others students or members of staff in the school.

- The Principal or his/her designated representative must conduct an investigation into the alleged incident
- Student/s may be suspended while this investigation is ongoing
- For all suspensions the parents of the student, or the student themselves if 18 or over, should be given a letter outlining the reason for the suspension the period of suspension invitation to contact the Principal or their representative to set a date to discuss the alleged offence and suspension.
- On concluding the investigation the Principal should apply the appropriate sanction as outlined in the code of behaviour or proceed to implement permanent expulsion procedures if s/he feels this is required

**Forms of Suspension:**

**In-school suspension:** determined by Principal, Deputy Principal or Discipline Committee / Senior Tutor.

**Suspension:** determined by Principal or Deputy Principal.

**Suspension during a State examination:** determined by Principal where there is a threat to good order in the conduct of examinations.

**Grounds for removal of a suspension:**

When agreement is reached at a meeting between school management, the student and the parent/guardian on the future behaviour of a student in the college then the suspension is lifted. A student and parent/guardian may be asked to sign a Contract of Behaviour. If a student is suspended on more than one occasion a referral to the Care Team may also be made.

**The period of suspension**

Suspensions may be for a period of time between one and three days depending on the nature of the inappropriate behaviour.

Suspension for longer than three days are referred to the Board of Management. The Board of Management may delegate authority to the principal to suspend a student for up to five days.

The Education Welfare Act (2000) requires the school to inform the Education Welfare Board when a student is suspended for six days or more.

Where a suspension brings the number of days a student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days a formal review is carried out by the Board of Management. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

**Policies and Procedures for Suspension beyond 20 days****Suspension beyond 20 days**

A proposal to suspend a student beyond 20 days (cumulative) from a school in any one school year is a formal procedure and is regulated by the CDETБ along the following lines:

1. The Principal proposes that the student should be suspended and prepares a report.
2. A meeting of the school Board of Management is called to hear the proposal. The parent/guardian is invited to attend this meeting.
3. The Board of Management informs the relevant parties of its decision.
4. The decision of the Board of Management is forwarded to the CDETБ for approval.
5. The parent/guardian can appeal the decision of the City of Dublin Education Training Board (CDETБ)
6. The CEO determines whether to admit the appeal.
7. The CDETБ discusses the decision of the Board of Management and / or hears the appeal and makes its decision.
8. The CDETБ informs the relevant parties of its decision and the fact that the decision is open to appeal to the Department of Education and Skills.

## **Permanent Exclusion**

*( Education Act 1998, Section 29, Education Welfare Act, Section 24 )*

Permanent Exclusion of a student from the college may occur when all other options are exhausted and a student continues to engage in persistent significant disruption to the learning of others, is a health and safety risk, or has caused serious damage to school property. In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may form the opinion that a student be expelled for a very serious first offence. Due process and fair procedures are followed before a student is expelled. Expulsion is determined by the City of Dublin Education Training Board (CDETb).

### **CDETb Procedures in respect of expulsion will include:**

1. A student cannot be expelled without having been suspended first.
2. A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal and a written report compiled. The Principal proposes that the student should be expelled.
3. A meeting of the school Board of Management is called to hear the proposal. The parent/guardian is invited to attend this meeting.
4. The Board of Management will notify the parent/guardian and the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its decision. The student cannot be expelled before the passing of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification.
5. The decision of the Board of Management is forwarded to the CDETb for approval
6. The parent/guardian can appeal the decision to the CDETb
7. The CEO determines whether to admit the appeal
8. The CDETb discusses the decision of the Board of Management and/or hears the appeal and makes its decision.
9. The CDETb informs the relevant parties of its decision and the fact that the decision is open to appeal to the Department of Education and Skills.
10. Confirmation of the decision to expel.
11. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.

In cases where the Board of Management confirm the decision to expel a student parent/guardian(s) have the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills. In such a case parent/guardian(s) will be advised to contact the Educational Welfare Officer.

Section 24 (4) of the Education Welfare Act 2000 does not fetter the discretion of the Board of Management to take other reasonable measures to ensure good order and discipline in the school and the safety of staff and students.

**Please sign and return to your tutor**

**I acknowledge receipt of Margaret Aylward Community College  
Code of Conduct.**

**I agree to co-operate fully with the rules and procedures as outlined in Margaret  
Aylward Community College's Code of Conduct and to be bound by its  
provisions.**

**Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent's / Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date\_\_\_\_\_**