



Code of Behaviour 2025-2026

Ursuline College Sligo



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR 2025-2026

MISSION STATEMENT

Ursuline College is a school where students are educated in partnership with parents in a Catholic and caring community; where each individual is respected as unique; where ongoing efforts are made to develop every aspect of the person and where each one is prepared to take her place in society as a responsible citizen.

The philosophy of Ursuline education is based on the writings of St. Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursuline Congregation. In her writings, St Angela emphasised the following;

- Personal relationship with God
- The holistic education of each individual
- The dignity and uniqueness of each person
- The importance of courtesy and kindness
- The fostering of courage and confidence to live in justice and truth
- The encouragement of a caring and respectful attitude towards self, others and the environment.

ETHOS

Ursuline College tries to enable students to

- Be aware of God's unconditional love for them
- Know and live their Catholic faith through learning, liturgy, prayer and practice
- Be active participants of their community and church
- Be aware of others less fortunate than themselves and respond accordingly
- Be independent of mind in order to stand up for the truth

Ursuline educators strive that all students would

- Be active participants in their own learning
- Reach their academic potential
- Develop and love their cultural heritage while also appreciating and respecting the cultural differences of others
- Develop creativity in their use of leisure
- Develop active and enquiring minds, powers of discrimination, self- discipline and leadership skills
- Be responsible guardians of our planet.



SAFETY REGULATIONS

- Students must take reasonable care at all times to ensure their own safety and that of others.
- Students must obey **ALL** health & safety instructions given to them by school staff members.
- Students must never behave in a way that endangers the health or the safety of any person in the school.
- Students must not interfere with safety equipment such as fire alarms, fire extinguishers and hose reels. Should any student do so, immediate suspension will result, along with a fine to cover damages.

FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY

In an emergency the ALARM BELL will sound.

If you hear the ALARM, follow the emergency code:

- Stop what you are doing and switch off any equipment you are using
- Listen to the instructions of your class teacher
- Leave the building by designated exit; Council members close doors
- DO NOT waste time collecting your possessions
- DO NOT run
- Make your way quickly and quietly to the designated Assembly Point on the school grounds (Hockey Pitch)
- Line up quietly and wait for your Council Member to take the roll
- Wait patiently and quietly until you receive further instructions.

School Rules and Regulations

Within the context of the school's Mission statement and stated ethos, school rules have been formulated in order to help students to develop their gifts and talents and to grow in self-discipline and responsibility. They are designed to create a positive and orderly atmosphere where each one is respected and where quality teaching and learning can occur. Respect is at the heart of school regulations at Ursuline College – respect for self, for others and for the school environment.

Students are expected to understand and appreciate the wisdom of school rules and to take a positive attitude towards them.

We expect our students to take pride in their school and to realise that each one has a part to play in upholding the school's good name. We expect the highest standards of behaviour from our students at all times and we take very seriously any incidents of unacceptable behaviour that let both students and the school down.

Students are expected to:

- Show respect for themselves, staff members and fellow students at all times.



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- Show respect for and pride in the school and its environment.
- Behave well at all times in the school, in the vicinity of the school, on school buses and in town.
- Be courteous and respectful towards members of staff if met outside of school at weekends or during holidays.
- Co-operate at all times with school authorities.
- Be punctual and regular in attending school.
- Work to the best of their ability in class, co-operating with teachers at all times.
- Appreciate the rights of other students to a positive learning environment.
- Behave respectfully in class so that everyone can learn and make progress.
- Prepare and present homework as required.
- Wear full school uniform to and from school and during the school day.
- Come to class with all the required books and materials.
- Participate positively in the life of the school.

Students may not:

- Leave the school premises without permission at any time during the school day.
- Absent themselves from school for the day when parent/guardians expect them to be present.
- Absent themselves from class without permission from their teacher.
- Take or interfere with the property of others or damage school property.
- Smoke, Vape or take alcohol or any non-prescribed drugs on the school premises, during any school-related activity, on school buses, travelling to and from school or in the vicinity of the school or at any time while wearing the school uniform. Failure to respect this will result in suspension: expulsion will be considered should the situation demand it.
- Bring personal digital devices such as mobile phones, tablets, smart speakers, wireless earbuds, cameras, or any other electronic or recording equipment to school is not permitted, unless explicitly requested by a teacher for educational use. Students who bring such devices to school do so at their own risk and are solely responsible for their safekeeping.
- Neither Tippex nor Chewing gum is allowed in school.
- The entire school grounds are smoke-free. All members of the school community have the right to work in a smoke-free environment. Smoking is forbidden on the school premises, during the school day, when students are in school uniform or at school events or outings.



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Smoking is a health issue for all of us, whether active or passive. The issue is not simply a school issue; it is a legal one as well. Should students be found smoking, parents/guardians will be contacted and the student in question suspended.

As a Green School, Ursuline College is committed to ongoing efforts to conserve and protect our natural resources. Respect for and appreciation of the environment is expected from all students. Each one is expected to contribute to a clean and tidy environment inside and outside the school and to be mindful of paper, water and energy usage. Recycling is an ongoing part of the school's Green programme and requires the efforts of everyone in order to be successful. While each one's effort might seem to be small, the whole school effort is significant in terms of conserving our planet's resources.

UNIFORM POLICY

It is policy that all students attending Ursuline College wear a uniform. The wearing of school uniform simplifies life for students; it removes the pressure of having to choose what to wear each day and helps students to focus on the learning to be done at school.

Students must wear full uniform at all times during school-time, including evening study. Non-uniform items of clothing e.g. scarves/coloured polo-shirts/non-uniform jackets etc. may not be worn at any time. Students representing the school must do so in full school uniform, unless informed otherwise.

Ursuline College students are expected to be well-groomed at all times and to take pride in their appearance.

Should students go into town for lunch, they do so in full school uniform and the highest standards of behaviour are expected of them.

School uniform consists of the following:

- Navy/green/red tartan skirt with side pocket worn at knee length.
- Navy/green school uniform trousers, available from Mullaney's only. No other trousers are permitted.
- Navy round-necked jumper with green trim and Ursuline crest
- Green polo shirt
- Official school tracksuit and t-shirt for P.E. only. All students must wear the official school P.E t-shirt.
- School jacket is compulsory for all students; no other jacket may be worn
- Navy socks/tights. No Footies/No Show socks allowed.



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- Footwear must be black or navy and must be flat. Given that Ursuline College has a number of flights of stairs, shoes other than flat ones are simply not acceptable. This is a Health and Safety issue. Runners/sports shoes may not be worn as part of the school uniform – these are for P.E. and sports only.
- Natural hair colour only is permitted.
- Jewellery should be kept to a minimum - a ring and one pair of stud/sleeper earrings only are permitted. If you have an existing facial piercing only a clear piercing retainer can be worn.
- Make-up may not be worn during the school day unless medically prescribed.
- Acrylic nails are prohibited for health & safety reasons.

All articles of clothing must be clearly marked with the students name and class. Students are responsible for their own belongings.

JUNIOR CYCLE BOOK SCHEME

The Junior Cycle Book Scheme, effective from the 2024/25 school year, provides essential textbooks on loan to students for the duration of their Junior Cycle, removing the cost burden from families. These books, owned by the school and identified via a barcode system, must be returned in good condition at the end of 3rd year to ensure they can be reused by future students. Each set of books is intended to last for two cycles of the Junior Cycle, or six years. Students are responsible for maintaining the books in good condition, with the expectation that they will not be written on, damaged, or defaced. Any lost or damaged books must be replaced at the expense of the parents/guardians. To participate in the scheme, parents/guardians and students will be required to sign an agreement, which includes proper book care and adherence to the school's guidelines.

ROAD SAFETY

We expect our students to behave in a courteous and responsible manner crossing roads to and from school. Students must respect the rules of the road in particular with regard to pedestrian crossings. They must never act in such a way as to distract or endanger any other road users. Consideration for other road-users makes our roads safer for all.

Students need to take particular care at all times when alighting from buses.

The Staff car-park is for staff only. Neither parents/guardians, nor students driving cars may use the staff car park. Pedestrians must use the pathways around the staff car-park: for safety reasons,



they may not use the car-park as a short cut.

Students' entry into and exit from the school is through the front gates. The back entrance is for staff and services only.

MOTORISED PERSONAL TRANSPORT (E-SCOOTERS, E-BIKES, ETC.)

For health and safety reasons, electric scooters, electric bikes, and all other forms of motorised personal transport are not permitted to be used on school grounds. Students who travel to school using such transport must dismount and walk them from the school gates. The school accepts no responsibility for the storage, loss, or damage of these vehicles. Misuse of motorised transport on or near school property will be treated as a serious safety concern.

USE OF TOILET CUBICLES

Only one student is permitted in a toilet cubicle at any time. Any breach of this rule will be considered a serious matter. For safety, privacy, and hygiene reasons, students must respect the appropriate use of toilet facilities. Consuming food is strictly forbidden in toilet cubicles and area. There are designated eating areas in the school. Misuse of the toilet areas may result in disciplinary action.

LUNCH-TIME

No students are allowed to leave the school at break time.

1st and 2nd year students stay in school at lunch-time. They may bring a packed lunch to school or purchase lunch in school. We strongly encourage students to eat healthily at lunch-time.

Fifth year students organise Clubs for 1st years at lunch time. The clubs which are organised in consultation with First Years will reflect the interests of the First Year group. We encourage all First years to take part in as many clubs as possible. Apart from the obvious enjoyment that students derive from the clubs, clubs also help them to get to know other students; this helps in the settling-in process.

3rd – 6th Year students may take their lunch in school, either bringing lunch to school or purchasing lunch at school. Should students go into town for lunch, they do so in full uniform and the highest standards of behaviour are expected of them. Students are expected to be polite and courteous wherever they go for lunch. They are expected to queue in a calm and orderly fashion and to be sensitive to the rights of other customers. Students may not loiter outside shops,



restaurants or cafes and are expected to be responsible about their litter. Should any student behave inappropriately in town at lunch-time, she will be obliged to stay on the school premises for lunch thereafter.

ENERGY DRINKS

Energy drinks are strictly prohibited on school premises at all times. These drinks contain high levels of caffeine and sugar and are not suitable for a school environment. Students found with energy drinks will have them confiscated. Repeated breaches of this rule will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedures.

WATER BOTTLES

Students are permitted to bring reusable water bottles to school. However, bottles must be stored securely and not left on the floor in classrooms, corridors, or communal areas, as they present a slipping hazard.

To ensure the safety of all members of the school community:

- Water bottles should be kept in school bags when not in use.
- Students should avoid carrying bottles in their hands while walking around the school.
- Staff may request that bottles be moved or removed if they are deemed to pose a risk to others.

HOT LIQUIDS AND TAKE-AWAY BEVERAGES

For health and safety reasons, students are not permitted to bring hot drinks or take-away beverages such as coffee, tea, or hot chocolate onto school premises. These drinks pose a risk of burns and spills, particularly in crowded corridors or classrooms. The school provides access to safe drinking water and encourages the use of reusable water bottles containing cold drinks only.

MOBILE PHONES/SMART DEVICES

Should students need to contact home, they should come to the school office to make arrangements. The school prefers that students do not bring mobile phones/smart watches to school.

Smart Watches: students are not permitted to have smart watches/technology on their person or in their possession. A smart watch is defined as a watch with the ability to make/receive calls, text messages photographs and/or video content. A simple wrist watch or fitness trackers (that do not



include any of the above technologies) are allowed.

Mobile phones, while being a very convenient way of keeping in touch with people, have the potential, if used inappropriately, to cause distress to others. It is within this context that the school's policy on mobile phones has been formulated.

If parents, for safety/security reasons, wish their daughters to carry mobiles to and from school, the school's mobile phone policy must be adhered to and the following procedures followed:

1. Courtesy, consideration and respect for others are paramount at all times with regard to the use of mobile phones.
2. On entering school grounds, phones must be switched off and put away for the entire school day. Should teachers ask students to use phones for class work, phones may be used only for that purpose and must, after that, be turned off and put away.
3. Mobile phones cannot be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school or to other people. Phones may not be used for any purpose (e.g. phoning, texting, accessing online content, taking photos, checking the time, taking videos etc.) at any time on school grounds.
4. Phones brought to school are entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for loss, theft, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure that mobile phones are properly and adequately insured as personal property. No school resources will be used to locate a lost/stolen phone.
5. In the case of trips, visits, exchanges and other off-site activities, mobile phones may not be used unless specifically permitted by the teacher(s) in charge. Mobile phones may not be brought to study or to detention.
6. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or bully another person. Students may not, under any circumstances, take photographs on school premises. Any reference to school, staff members or fellow students made via mobile phone/internet will be treated very seriously and dealt with accordingly. Should any student use a mobile phone in this way, An Garda Síochána may be informed.
7. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the phone being held at the school office for the duration of the school day.
 - First offence: The student may collect the phone from the school office on their way home. They will be given a letter to be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to their Year Head. This will result in -7 sanctions.



- Second offence: The student will receive a detention, and the Year Head will contact the parent/guardian directly, further sanctions may apply.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

In order that students strive for excellence and work to achieve their potential, they must attend school regularly and on time. The Education Welfare Act (2000) places a legal obligation on schools to monitor student attendance. Where students are absent for more than 20 days, the school is required to report this to the Welfare Board. School and home need to work together to ensure that students gain the maximum benefit from their time at school.

Students spend approximately 63% of the year in school and have plenty of time for holidays, appointments etc. outside of school-time. Every day missed impedes a student's academic and all-around progress.

Given that project work has become part of many subjects at both Junior and Leaving Certificate level, it is essential that students are present in school at all times. Deadlines for project work are set down by the Department of Education and Skills each year. Teachers will inform students of these. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they are present to complete project work on time, in this way ensuring that their work reflects their capabilities. The support of parents/guardians in this area is most important.

Late Arrivals

- If a student is late for 1st class in the morning (8.50–9.30am), she should go directly to class. The teacher will mark her as late on the roll.
- If a student arrives after 9.30am, she must report directly to the school office. This will be recorded on VShare, and a message will be sent to the relevant Year Head.
- Parents/guardians are expected to record the reason for the late arrival using the VShare app. This is now the preferred method of communication.

Written notes in journals should only be used in exceptional circumstances where VShare cannot be accessed.

Signing Out

- Any student signing out during the school day must report to the school office. No student is permitted to leave the premises without first checking out at the office.
- Parents/guardians must inform the school in advance via the VShare app, by phone, or by email, specifying the time and reason for signing out.
- Once confirmed, a message will be sent to the relevant Year Head.



- The use of the VSware app for this purpose is strongly encouraged. Paper notes will only be accepted in rare cases where digital communication is not possible.

Absences

Where a parent/guardian has notified the school that a student will be absent for an extended period of time (excluding for holidays):

- A message will be sent to the relevant Year Head in order to record the absence on VSware.
- The Year Head will contact the teachers of the student and request that the student is send work on Teams.
- It is vitally important that parents/guardians do not write notes for their daughters for anything other than legitimate, unavoidable absences from school.
- Important: In line with the Education Welfare Act (2000), schools are legally required to report to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) when a student has been absent for 20 days or more in a school year, regardless of the reason. This is a statutory requirement and not at the school's discretion.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep non-essential absences to an absolute minimum to ensure their child receives the full benefit of their education.

HOMEWORK JOURNALS

Every student must have a homework journal. The journal helps students to plan and organise their homework and is also a means of communication between home and school.

Absentee notes must be written into journals and must be written only by parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians must give an explanation of each period of absence in the journal.

The school encourages parents/guardians to check the journal from time to time in order to be sure that it contains entries signed only by themselves. The school authorities may, periodically, ask parents/guardians to check the information in the journal.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians have a vital role in promoting good behaviour in school and so effective home/school liaison is most important. We ask parents/guardians to support the school fully in all matters and particularly in dealing with their daughter's progress and behaviour.

In instances where parents/guardians fail to support the school in implementing its discipline



policy, students lose out and may develop patterns of indiscipline that prevent them from achieving their potential. It can be harder to say 'no' in the short-term but it reaps benefits for all in the medium to long term.

BEHAVIOUR

Our Code of Behaviour emphasises the importance of recognising and acknowledging positive behaviour within our school community. Positive behaviour creates a nurturing and inclusive environment, fostering respectful relationships, academic engagement, and personal growth. It encourages acts of kindness, empathy, and responsible citizenship, promoting a positive atmosphere for all. Conversely, addressing negative behaviour is essential to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment. By addressing negative behaviour, we aim to promote accountability, personal responsibility, and the understanding of consequences. Our Code of Behaviour strives to create a balanced approach that highlights the significance of positive behaviour while addressing and improving negative behaviour to ensure the well-being and success of every student in our school.

EXAMINATIONS & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to approach assessments and examinations with honesty and integrity. If a student is found to be cheating or attempting to cheat during any in-house examination or assessment, their paper will not be marked. This includes using notes, unauthorised devices, communicating with others during the exam, or any other form of dishonest behaviour. Incidents of this nature will be recorded and may result in further disciplinary action. This policy is in line with the regulations of the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

Discipline Structures

Level 1: Teacher and Student

- Classroom management issues should be addressed informally by the teacher and the student. Parents/Guardians are required to sign their school journal.

Level 2: Teacher, Student, and Class Tutor

- When a student repeatedly infringes on the code of behaviour, the teacher can involve the class tutor to address the issue.

Level 3: Class Tutor and Year Head

- If the student continues to violate the code of behaviour despite the intervention of the teacher and class tutor, the issue should be escalated to the year head.

Level 4: Year Head and Deputy Principal



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- If the student's behaviour continues to be a problem and the accumulation of sanctions warrants it, the year head should involve the deputy principal.

Level 5: Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal

- In severe cases where the student's behaviour poses a serious threat to the school community and or property, the year head, deputy principal, and principal should be involved.

Contacting Parents:

Contacting parents should be discretionary and done at any level depending on the severity of the student's behaviour. Parents should be informed of their child's behaviour and involved in the discipline process as appropriate.

Detention:

When a student receives a total of 14 sanctions, she will be required to serve a detention.

- Detention will typically take place over two lunchtime periods, with one detention equivalent to two lunchtimes (e.g. 30 minutes per day, over two consecutive days).
- In cases where the nature of the behaviour warrants it, a two-hour after-school detention (4:00pm–6:00pm) may be assigned instead.
- The Year Head will notify parents/guardians of the reason for the detention and confirm the dates and times it will be held.

Parents/guardians are expected to support the school in reinforcing the seriousness of detentions as part of the school's behaviour management process.

Positive Behaviour

Recording positive behaviour on VSware is essential for several reasons.

Recognition and encouragement: It allows for acknowledging and celebrating students' accomplishments, motivating them to continue their positive behaviour. Parental involvement: By documenting positive behaviour, parents/guardians can stay informed about their child's achievements and behaviour, fostering engagement and communication.

Building a positive school culture: Consistent use of VSware to record positive behaviour creates an environment where students feel valued and motivated to excel.

- Being consistently punctual +2
- Consistently adhering to the uniform policy +2



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- Being consistently organised and prepared for class +2
- Completing homework consistently +2
- Actively engaging in and contributing to class +4
- Showing respect to students, teachers, and other adults, by treating others with kindness, empathy, and consideration, fostering a positive and inclusive school environment +4
- Maintaining positive and non-threatening behaviour, promoting a safe and inclusive environment for all +4
- Respecting property and environment: +4
- Volunteering and contributing to the school community +4

Negative Behaviour - Sanctions

- Repeatedly late for class -2
- Repeatedly out of uniform -2
- Repeatedly forgetting book/copies/resources/school journal -2
- Repeatedly not having homework completed -2
- Disruptive & interruptive behaviour -4
- Disrespect to students/teachers/other adults -4
- Absenting themselves from class without permission -4
- Using a phone without permission -7/-14
- Recording or taking a photograph of students/staff without their permission -14
- Behaviour that is threatening either verbally or physically -14
- Leaving the school premises without signing out (in person) -14
- Smoking/vaping/taking prohibited substances -14
- Vandalism/graffiti/wilful damage of property -14 + fine
- Littering/leaving break & lunch areas dirty -7

In-house suspension is a form of disciplinary action that involves removing a student from the regular classroom setting and assigning them to a designated area within the school for a specified period of time.

In-house suspension structure:

- The student will be supervised in a designated area within the school by a designated staff member.
- Extra work will be assigned by the student's teachers to ensure they are still meeting their academic responsibilities.



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- The student's parents will be required to bring them to the school office in the morning and collect them from the school office at the end of the day.
- Lunch and break periods will be supervised to ensure the student does not interact with other students outside of the designated area.

The length of the in-house suspension will depend on the severity of the student's behaviour and the discretion of the school management. During the in-house suspension, the student will be expected to reflect on their behaviour and take steps to address any underlying issues that may have contributed to their actions. The goal of in-house suspension is to provide a consequence for the student's behaviour while also providing an opportunity for them to learn from their mistakes and make positive changes moving forward.

Breach of school rules will lead to a graded system of sanctions, which is recorded on the student's behaviour record on VShare. The consequence of repeated bad behaviour can include: on report, detention, suspension or expulsion.

Any student who breaches school rules and builds up a number of sanctions may be prohibited from taking part in school outings or tours and may forfeit the opportunity of participation in special programmes i.e. Transition Year.

Participation in School Trips, Sporting Activities and Extra-Curricular Events

Participation in school trips, sporting activities, and other extra-curricular events is a privilege and not an entitlement. Students whose behaviour has resulted in detention, suspension or other serious disciplinary measures may be excluded from such activities.

This decision will be made at the discretion of school management and will take into account the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the student's overall conduct and any potential impact on the safety and wellbeing of themselves or others.

The school reserves the right to prioritise the safety, reputation and smooth running of all school-related events when making decisions regarding student participation.

Entry into Transition Year (TY)

Entry into Transition Year is a privilege and is not automatically granted. A student's behaviour and conduct throughout the Junior Cycle will be a key consideration in determining their suitability for the TY programme. Consistently respectful, responsible and cooperative behaviour is expected.



Students with a history of serious disciplinary issues, poor engagement/attendance, or ongoing breaches of the Code of Behaviour may not be offered a place in TY. Final decisions regarding TY admission rest with school management and will take into account the student's overall attitude, behaviour, and readiness to engage positively with the programme.

Abusive language/aggressive behaviour is totally unacceptable. Any incidence of these will result in the removal of the student from class. Contact will be made with home and suspension may be considered. Should students be involved in serious incidents of misbehaviour, lack of respect or lack of discipline where a longer period of suspension is deemed necessary, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management. In extreme cases of indiscipline, expulsion may be recommended to the Board.

With regard to dealing with misbehaviour, the following will apply:

- Verbal warning
- Extra work
- Giving of sanctions, proportionate to the offence
- Communication with parents – note in journal
- Community service in the school community
- Detention
- Loss of privileges e.g. participation in school events or tours
- Communication with parents – formal meeting
- Placing of student 'on report'
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Each case is assessed individually, and all sanctions aim to support the student in recognising the impact of their actions and making positive changes. Restorative practices may also be used alongside or in place of sanctions where appropriate.

Students will be required to pay the full cost of any damage caused to school equipment, facilities, or property — regardless of malice, intent, or whether the damage was accidental.

Year Heads will contact parents/guardians in cases of persistent misbehaviour. Where behaviour does not improve despite initial interventions, students may be placed 'on report'. This involves daily monitoring of behaviour and academic engagement for a period of one week or longer, depending on progress. Parents/guardians will be informed if their daughter is placed on report.



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If a student has been placed in detention on two occasions, parents/guardians will be invited to a meeting with the Year Head and Deputy Principal to review concerns and agree on further supports or consequences. Should there be no improvement, the matter will be escalated to the Deputy Principal and Principal, and if necessary, referred to the Board of Management.

Interference with or damage to fire equipment will result in immediate suspension, along with a fine to cover the cost of repairs.

Comprehensive procedures and protocols relating to Suspension and Expulsion are available under the “Policies” tab on the school website: www.ursulinecollegesligo.ie