



Finn Valley College **Coláiste Ghleann na Finne**

Drumboe Lower, Stranorlar, Lifford PO, Co. Donegal

Principal: Séan Mc Fadden 074 9131684 E: finnvalleycollege@donegaletb.ie



A Code of Behaviour for ***Finn Valley College***

The Code of Behaviour provides the general framework within which all members of the school community can work together in a safe, happy learning environment for the benefit of all. The Code reflects *A Positive, Inclusive, and Restorative Learning Community*.

This Code reflects our commitment to student wellbeing, inclusion, equity, and high expectations. It supports a restorative, consistent, and student-centred approach, responsive to our DEIS context, ASD provision, and evolving national guidelines.

Our school seeks to recognise that each student is unique and has different gifts and different needs. Finn Valley College also aims to develop positive relationships among students, parents, and the school's staff.

1. Core Principles

Core Value	Explanation
Respect	We promote a culture of respect for ourselves, others, learning, and our environment.
Care	We nurture wellbeing and kindness, ensuring each individual feels valued and supported.
Community	We build positive relationships and a sense of belonging among all students and staff.
Equality	We provide a safe, inclusive, and fair learning environment for every student.
Excellence in Education	We set high expectations and support each student to reach their full potential.

These principles are embedded in teaching, school routines, classroom management and pastoral care.

2. Student Responsibilities

Responsibility	Student Action
Attendance and Punctuality	Attend daily and on time. Absences and lateness are explained through VSware/Student Journal.
Uniform and Equipment	Wear your full uniform and bring the required books and materials.
Respect for Others	Show kindness, patience, and tolerance towards others. No bullying or exclusion.
Respect for Authority	Listen to and follow instructions given by school staff.
Engagement	Participate in class, complete homework, and contribute positively.
Safety and Cleanliness	Help keep the school safe and tidy; follow safety guidance.
Digital Behaviour	Use digital technologies only as directed by teachers, for learning purposes.

3. Promoting Positive Behaviour

Positive behaviour is taught and encouraged through a whole-school approach:

<u>Method</u>	<u>Description</u>
Verbal praise and positive feedback	Recognising effort and improvement in the classroom.
VSWare/Student Journal affirmations	Communication with home acknowledging progress and/or positive contributions to school life.
Recognition at assemblies	Positive contributions to school life, Student of the Term, class awards, etc.
Whole-school rewards	Trips, certificates, badges, lunch passes, etc.
Social media/information boards	Celebrating students' work, leadership, kindness and participation.
Programmes and initiatives	Student leadership and student representation at school, local and national events.
Student Voice	Representation/participation in school committees and groups

Behaviour is taught as a skill - students are guided and supported to develop it.

4. Restorative and Fair Approach to Behaviour

A tiered, compassionate and consistent response is used:

Restorative Action	Purpose
Restorative Conversations	Rebuilding trust after incidents, listening to all sides.
Reflective Detentions	Students complete reflection forms, discuss actions and solutions and complete any prescribed additional work.
Behaviour Support Plans	Tailored support for students at risk of disengagement.
Report Cards	Visual progress tool reviewed daily with staff/parents.
Multi-agency and school supports	Link to NEPS, HSCL, SCP, SENO, CAMHS. FRC, Behaviour for Learning Teacher, Positive Behaviour Strategy Team (PBST)

This approach aims to prevent repeat behaviour and build skills, not just apply sanctions.

5. Sanctions (Proportionate and Fair)

Sanctions are clearly outlined and fairly applied:

Sanction	When Used
Lunchtime Detention	For minor breaches: lateness, uniform, low-level disruption, homework.
After-School Detention	Repeated non-compliance, misuse of technology, and moderate disruption.
Suspension	Persistent misconduct, aggression, and serious breaches (e.g., fighting).
Expulsion	Last resort. Used only after all supports and processes have been exhausted.

Rules and Guidelines for Students

1. Health and Safety

We are committed to the care and protection of everyone in our school community. Respecting health and safety is a shared responsibility. Students are required to cooperate with all measures which the school staff put in place to support health and safety.

Any action which undermines the health and safety of any member of the school community will be treated as a very serious matter. Such actions might include, but not be limited to

- Always follow staff instructions designed to keep everyone safe.
- Never interfere with or misuse health and safety equipment or hygiene supplies.
- Unsafe behaviour that puts others at risk will be treated as a serious offence.
- Students must not leave the school grounds without permission

Given the seriousness of any breach of health & safety, sanctions may be applied as appropriate up to and including permanent exclusion.

2. Attendance

Being present each day supports your learning, progression and strengthens our community.

- Attendance shows respect for yourself and your education.
- All absences must be explained via the VSware app or the Student Journal.
- After 20 days' absence, the school must inform Tusla (Education Welfare Service).
- Parents must furnish the school with an explanation for each period of absence, whether it is part of a day, a full day or several consecutive days
- The school is not responsible for the safety of students outside of school grounds, unless they are on an authorised school-related activity.
- *The school day starts at 8.52 am and finishes at 3.55 pm. Students are free to go over town at lunch-time provided their parents sign a Form of Indemnity. However, students are not permitted to leave the grounds at break-time (11.00-11.15) for insurance reasons.*
- No student may leave the school grounds at morning break-time or during class-time without the express permission of the Principal/Deputy Principal or Year Head. To get permission, the student must have contacted the school via the VS Ware App or have a permission to leave note (at the back of Student Journal) completed and signed by parents. The note **must have a contact phone number and must be signed by either the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.**

- The student must 'sign out' at the office and 'sign in' on returning to the College.
- When leaving the school grounds at lunchtime or at 3.55 p.m., **students must always leave by the pedestrian gate if walking.** Cars must leave by the larger of the front gates. Be careful to cross the road only when the Pedestrian lights allow.

 Attendance is monitored and supported through our DEIS plan.

3. Punctuality

Being on time is a sign of respect and responsibility.

- Students should be ready to enter class at the start of each session. Students should be ready to enter class at 8.50 am, 11.10 am and 1.50 pm each school day.
- Late arrivals require an entry on the VShare system or a signed note from a parent/guardian in the Student Journal.
- Students should move directly between classes — use toilets and lockers only at break times unless otherwise allowed. In such circumstances, the teacher may provide the student with a written note in his/her diary.

 Good punctuality helps you get the most from each learning opportunity.

4. Uniform

Wearing our uniform promotes equality, pride, and unity. This consists of:

Girls: Navy V-necked jumper (with school crest), **grey skirt with two pleats or trousers, skirt must be knee-length**, blue blouse, navy tie with yellow and grey stripes, black shoes, white, navy or grey knee-length socks or with grey or navy tights, black shoes.

Boys: Navy V-necked jumper (with school crest), grey trousers, blue shirt, navy tie with yellow and grey stripes, black shoes, navy/black socks.

Overcoat: The outer coat/anorak should preferably be navy or grey.
No jackets/coats are to be worn in school and are to be placed in the locker upon arrival at the school.

Earrings: Studs are the only permissible earrings for health and safety reasons.

Make-up: Only 4th, 5th and PLC students are permitted to wear light make-up while in school. Junior students are not permitted to wear makeup while in school.

PE Uniform Our school PE uniform can be worn for the day the student has PE class, or while representing the school and at school sporting events.

Wearing denim to school is not allowed.

Students should change out of their uniform as soon as they reach home.

 The uniform reflects a respectful and inclusive school identity.


5. Textbooks and Equipment

Being prepared supports excellent learning.

All books and equipment should be obtained before the start of the school year through the Book Rental System. **Students should have all books, copies, pens, instruments, PE gear, etc.** that are needed for classes on any particular day. **For extracurricular events, you must bring proper gear with you, depending on the activity.** (i.e. top, shorts/bottoms, runners/football boots, socks, towel).

Books and materials should be organised daily based on your timetable.

- Student Journal must be brought to each class every day, with homework and feedback on learning recorded in it for every subject.
- Lost or damaged books must be replaced, and this may affect future access to the book rental scheme. A full policy is available on the school website

 Take pride in your learning tools and treat them with care. School bags should be checked the night before against the following day's timetable.

6. Homework

Effort outside the classroom builds success inside it.

- Complete all homework set by your teachers—written and oral.
- Use your Student Journal to track your assignments.
- Parents/guardians should check the homework every night and sign the journal weekly.
- All subjects require work to be done at home regularly, whether it is written / online exercises, or work to be read over and memorised.
- Junior Cycle: 1.5–2 hours per night.
- Senior Cycle: 2.5–3 hours per night.

The school offers an **After-School Study Club** to all students. Priority is given to Examination Years.

Homework performance will be monitored closely from the outset, and any lack of effort will be dealt with by subject teachers and if necessary, through the procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

All homework given by teachers should be noted in the Student Journal. List subjects for each day on the left of the page. Note whether the homework given is written homework or work to be learned off.

 A quiet study routine helps you achieve your best.

7. Behaviour

Your behaviour shapes our school community.


- Show kindness, cooperation and respect at all times.
- Use appropriate language; avoid rowdiness, bullying or negative conduct.
- Behave respectfully on school grounds, at events, and while travelling.

 You are a representative of yourself, your family, and our school.

8. Bullying and Cyberbullying

Everyone has the right to feel safe and included.

- Bullying of any kind—physical, verbal, social, or online—is never acceptable.
- If you're being bullied, tell a teacher, Year Head, or trusted adult immediately.
- Our school follows the *Bí Cínéalta* anti-bullying approach.
- The sending, requesting or sharing of any inappropriate or explicit image by or with any minor (including sexting) is unacceptable in our school. In many cases such images or texts are illegal. The school will inform the Garda Síochána and Tusla under Child Protection procedures in such circumstances. The school will also apply sanctions as appropriate.

 We promote kindness, care and respectful digital behaviour.

9. Movement and Safety

Safe, respectful movement keeps our school calm and welcoming.

- Students are required to line up in an orderly fashion outside their room when waiting for their teacher. Students are required to line up in an orderly fashion outside their room when waiting for their teacher.
- Keep to the left on stairs and paths, and follow the one-way system in corridors and stairways.
- Students are not to gather in restricted areas (e.g., walkway to woods). This walkway is designed for public use as a path to the local Woods. Students gathering here without permission will receive a sanction.

 Respect others' space and safety at all times.

10. Property and Environment

A clean and respectful environment benefits us all.

- Do not damage or deface school property—repairs must be paid for.
- Keep your Student Journal neat and tidy; replacements cost €10.
- Place all waste and recyclables in the bins provided.
- Eating in class is forbidden. Students may drink water only with the permission of their teacher. No energy, fizzy or full sugar drinks or chewing gum are permitted in the school.
- **Smoking (including smoking electronic cigarettes, vapes, etc) is not allowed under any circumstances within the school environs. *Your parents may be notified* if you are found engaging with these substances, and a sanction will be applied.**
- The staff car park is reserved for use by the staff. Students are not allowed to use this car park and are not allowed to congregate in this area.
- Any student wishing to bring a car to school must seek the permission of the Principal.
- Students must not damage lockers in any way. The lockers are rented but remain the property of the school. The Principal (or Deputy Principal) reserves the right to search a student's locker if it is suspected of containing items which should not be there (such as fireworks, alcohol, stolen items, weapons of any description, drugs, etc).

 We take pride in our school community.

11. Electronic Devices

Technology should support — not disrupt — learning.


- All devices must be stored silently in lockers when not in use unless required for medical or teaching and learning purposes. This includes on arrival in the morning, between classes and during breaks. The phone must remain silent when used for educational purposes during class and under the teacher's direct supervision.
- Misuse may result in confiscation and contact with parents.
- Students who need to contact home in exceptional circumstances during the school day must go to reception, whereupon the administrative staff will facilitate them.
- Should the student use the device at any time or for any purpose while not under the supervision of a teacher, appropriate sanctions will be applied up to and including assigning an After School Detention.
- Failure to hand over a phone in such circumstances will be regarded as a serious misdemeanour and will be dealt with accordingly.
- Repeat misuse may result in suspension.

 The school is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen devices.

Discipline Management

We focus on restoring relationships and promoting learning.

- Behaviour is managed through Restorative Practice whenever possible.
- Proportionate sanctions may include Lunchtime Detention, After-School Detention, and Report Cards.
- Students with ASD may be supported with tailored behaviour plans.

 Everyone has a role in building a respectful school environment.

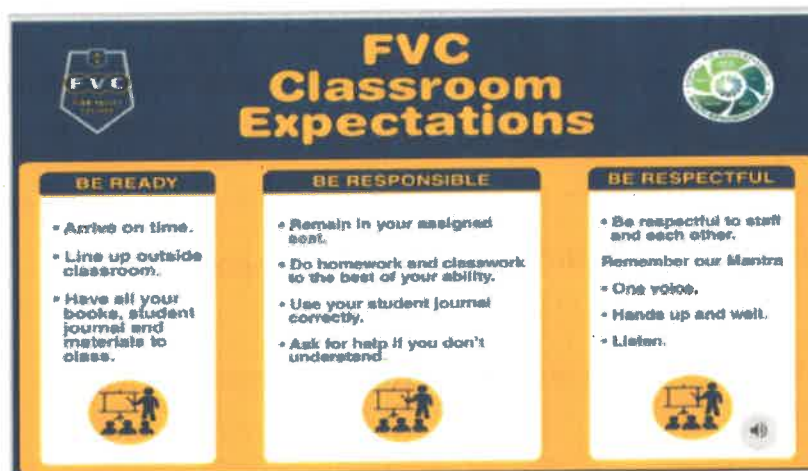
Overview of Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility Summary
Subject Teacher	Manages classroom behaviour using restorative conversations and proportionate sanctions. May assign detentions or additional work.
Class Tutor	<p>Mentors students, supports subject teachers, celebrates positive behaviour, contacts parents, and supports student wellbeing.</p> <p>Support student wellbeing, monitor daily attendance and reinforce the Code of Behaviour during tutorial class.</p> <p>Tutors meet their class each morning for 8 minutes and build positive relationships.</p>
ASD Coordinator	Provides tailored behavioural interventions for autistic students, using a multidisciplinary approach and individual support plans.
Year Head	Pastoral and behavioural support. Can issue Report Cards, detentions, and liaise with parents or school leadership on serious issues.
Behaviour for Learning Teacher	Delivers a solution-focused programme to support students in managing their behaviour and improving emotional wellbeing.
Principal / Deputy Principal	Handles serious behaviour matters, applies suspensions and may recommend expulsions to the Board of Management.

Procedures followed for breach of the Code of Behaviour

Subject Teacher's Role: First Line of Intervention

- **Action:**
 - Address minor behavioural issues (e.g., disruptions, lack of homework, unpreparedness without class materials, not applying themselves in class, uniform, not adhering to classroom rules)
 - Use verbal warnings, notes in the diary, additional work, or lunchtime detentions using restorative practices and positive reinforcement to encourage students to improve their behaviour
 - Address serious incidents (e.g. inappropriate language, safety concerns) by de-escalating and/or seeking support from nearby staff or leadership.
 - Escort the student from the classroom, only when necessary, to ensure safety and allow time to calm down.
 - Write incident reports promptly for all major incidents.
 - Ensure compliance with classroom expectations, including being prepared for class and completing assignments.



Class Tutor's Role: Pastoral Support

- The role of the Class Tutor is to act as a holistic support to the student body in their care.
 - Recording daily attendance
 - Supporting Student Journal use
 - Reinforcing the Code of Behaviour
 - Building a relationship with the student
 - Consulting as necessary with subject teachers in a supportive role
 - Monitoring progress
 - Discussion of topical issues/school calendar/key issues that may impact wellbeing. If required, they may be called on to collaborate with the Year Head for further interventions if required.

Year Head's Role: Targeted Interventions following further escalation of behaviour

- **When:**
 - Report received from the subject teacher after 3 reports received for minor offences, e.g. homework, lack of materials.
 - Escalated concerns from teachers or serious disciplinary breaches (e.g., ongoing persistent low-level behaviour, bullying, scheming).
 - Breach of PBST initiatives
 - **Action:**
 - Meet with the student and set clear behavioural expectations, utilising restorative and preventative measures.
 - Initiate a **Behaviour Card** as needed
 - Assign detentions (lunchtime or after school) for specific violations, ensuring the parent is informed.
 - Implement additional DEIS-related supports, such as mentoring or attendance monitoring, to address underlying issues.
 - **Documentation:**
 - Record incidents in the discipline system with referrals made to other personnel
 - **Parent Involvement:**
 - Communication and/or facilitate meetings with parents to discuss resolutions and further steps.
-

4. Behaviour for Learning Teacher's Role: DEIS-Specific Supports

- **When:**
 - Students require additional support beyond classroom and pastoral measures.
- **Action:**
 - Use the Behaviour for Learning Programme to address barriers to learning and support emotional and social development.
 - Develop individualised interventions focusing on DEIS literacy, numeracy, and well-being priorities.
- **Documentation:**
 - Maintain a record of progress and communicate updates to Year Heads and parents.
- **Parent Involvement:**
 - Communicate and/or facilitate meetings with parents to discuss resolutions and further steps.

5. Deputy Principal and Principal's Role: Serious Incidents

- **When:**
 - Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour, including disrespect to staff, damage to property, or threats to health and safety.
 - **Action:**
 - Conduct a formal review of the incident, ensuring compliance with the FVC Code of Behaviour and DEIS principles.
 - Apply sanctions such as suspension while focusing on student retention and re-engagement.
 - **Parent Involvement:**
 - Facilitate meetings with parents to discuss resolutions and further steps.
-

6. Board of Management: Final Stage of Referral

- **When:**
 - Persistent breaches or cases that may warrant expulsion.
- **Action:**
 - Convene a hearing to review the case, ensuring adherence to fair procedures and DEIS principles.
 - Explore alternatives to expulsion where feasible, prioritising the student's continued education

School-based detention

- The student may be given a specific assignment to complete during a lunchtime period at the discretion of the teacher, with at least 24 hours' notice in advance. Parents may also be contacted to discuss the student's behaviour and/or progress. Students subject to this sanction may have the incident recorded in their permanent discipline file.
- Failure to complete the assignment or to present for detention may result in further detentions or more serious sanctions being applied.
- Disruption or defiance of the school-based detention may result in further detentions or a more serious sanction as appropriate.

After-school detention

When After-school detention is allocated, the student and his/her parent or guardian will be given two days' notice of the day(s) and time for the detention. **It will be the parents' responsibility to make arrangements for the student to be collected afterwards.** Students subject to this sanction will have the incident recorded in their permanent discipline file.

Students may be put in After-school detention for one or more days for more serious misdemeanours, some examples include:

- Serious incidents of defiance or disrespect
- Derogatory comments about students or staff
- Failure to present for lunchtime detention and/or consistently late
- Isolated incidents of defiance
- Damage to school property
- Disruption of examinations

Refusal to attend After-school detention may carry a penalty of suspension; the student may be put on report upon return to school, and the parent may be called for an interview with the Principal. The incident will be recorded permanently on the student's discipline record.

Report and Parental Involvement

Behaviour Card

Students are initially put on a card for a period of time to monitor the behaviour of the student if serious and unacceptable behaviour occurs within school hours. It may also be used for persistent low-level discipline issues which have not been adequately resolved by previous interventions.

- Students put on report for behavioural reasons may also be placed on School-based detention or After-school detention by the Year Head, Deputy Principal and/or Principal, depending on the circumstances. Students subject to this sanction will have the incident recorded in their permanent discipline file. Students may also be given work to complete. In addition parents may be requested to attend the school to discuss his/her child's behaviour.
- If a student's behaviour has not improved while on a Behaviour Card, or if there is a repeat of any serious misbehaviour or if an incident in itself is deemed to be so serious that it requires a more incisive intervention, then a student may be placed on another Behaviour Card. This will be viewed as a very serious intervention, and any student placed on detention for the duration reflecting on their behaviour may be given extra work while on this behaviour monitoring card and may have other privileges removed. This will include a discipline record kept on file.

Contract of Good Behaviour

In exceptional and very serious circumstances, the Principal or Deputy Principal may require that a student and his/her parent(s) sign a Contract of Good Behaviour to monitor the behaviour of the student monthly. Should this be breached, the school authorities may consider permanent exclusion of the student.

Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion

These are serious responses used when other supports do not work.

- Suspension may be used for dangerous, disrespectful or repeated misbehaviour.
- Expulsion is a last resort and only occurs after consultation with parents and the Board of Management.
- Students and parents have the right to a fair hearing and, if necessary, to appeal decisions under Section 29.

 Everyone is treated with fairness, dignity and due process.

1. Suspension

The authority to suspend a student for three days has been delegated to the Principal by the Board of Management. In exceptional circumstances where health & safety is a consideration, the authority to suspend for up to five days has been delegated to the Principal by the board.

Any suspension exceeding five days will be determined by the Board of Management.

Suspension is viewed as a serious sanction and will only be imposed by the Principal/Deputy Principal/ Board in cases:

- where previous efforts have failed to resolve the problem
- where there has been serious disrespect/defiance shown towards persons or their property
- where the incident is so serious that suspension is the most appropriate sanction

Before suspension is implemented, parents/guardians will be informed in writing or verbally of:

- The reason for the suspension
- The period of suspension

Students will be regarded as being in the care of parents/guardians from the end of the school day before the student's suspension commences.

The student will be given a reflection document along with additional work to complete during the suspension. At the end of the suspension period, the student, along with his/her parent may be asked to report to the Principal/Deputy or Year Head on the morning of his/her return to school. The student must present this work on their return. The student may be placed on a Behaviour Card upon their return to school.

The student's behaviour file will be reviewed, and the Principal may decide to place further probationary conditions on his/her return.

However, serious misbehaviour may warrant instant suspension and possible expulsion following an enquiry by the Principal or Deputy Principal in cases including but not limited to:

- Foul and Abusive language is directed at any member of staff
- The nature of the incident dictates that the student be immediately removed from the school.
- Behaviour which constitutes a threat to the health and safety of any member of the school community (including the perpetrator of the behaviour).
- Damage to school property
- Disruption of Examinations
- Mithing/ Scheming from school
- The offence involves substance abuse
- Violent Behaviour
- Bullying of any form

The parents will be notified in writing, informing them of the problem and the school's intention to apply a sanction. The parents may present a case to the Principal.

Having heard their case, the Principal, acting as Secretary to the Board of Management, will inform them of his decision or recommendation or the decision of the board where the suspension is longer than five days.

Appeals

Regulations and procedures drawn up by the Department of Education & Skills determine that there is no Appeal mechanism for suspension by the Board of Management (or the principal where authority has been delegated to him) which are of a period of less than 20 days cumulatively or for a single incident.

Procedure for Expulsion

1. The Principal informs parents by letter of the immediate suspension.
The Letter will explicitly state:
 - Expulsion is being considered.
 - The Board of Management meeting will be convened
 - Parents will have an opportunity to present their case
2. Parents may seek an immediate meeting with the Principal to clarify the circumstances.
3. The chairperson of the Board of Management will be contacted, and a BOM meeting convened. The Board will be informed of the facts of the case. School discipline records relating to the student in question will be used as evidence.
4. The Parents and students will be invited to attend this meeting. The Deputy Principal or a member of the Board will act as Recording Secretary.
The case will be presented objectively by the Principal
The Parent(s) will make their reply.
There will be opportunities for both parties to respond to statements.
The Principal may answer further questions if asked.
The Parents, student and Principal will then withdraw from the meeting
The matter is discussed by the Board, and a decision is made.

5. The Principal as Secretary to the Board of Management is instructed to communicate the decision to the parents, the Chief Executive of Donegal ETB and the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. The Board of Management, through the principal, must inform the Parent of the right to appeal its decision to the Department of Education and Skills (a Section 29 Appeal).

Section 29: Appeals Process

An Appeals process (Section 29 Appeals) is available to parents/guardians (or a student who has reached the age of 18) where a student has been suspended for more than 20 days (including cumulatively) in the year, or where a student is to be permanently excluded from the school.

This Appeals process will be conducted in accordance with the procedures set down by the Department of Education & Skills.

A letter informs parents (or a student who has reached the age of 18) that expulsion will take effect 20 school days after the Education Welfare Officer receives notification of the intention to expel the student.

Parents (or a student who has reached the age of 18) will be advised in writing that they have the right of appeal. A copy of the procedures relating to an appeal, as well as an Appeal form, will be provided to the parents (or a student who has reached the age of 18).

The Section 29 Appeal is made directly to the Department of Education and Science.

In lodging an Appeal, parents/guardians (or students who are over 18 years of age) will be required to submit the following information:

- Name and date of birth of the student
- Date on which the appeal is being submitted
- The type of decision being appealed
- The grounds on which the appeal is being made
- Any extra information directly relevant to the case - the relevance of the information will be determined by the Appeals Committee.

The school principal will support any parent/guardian (or student who has reached the age of 18) in the Appeals process.



Finn Valley College **Coláiste Ghleann na Finne**

Drumboe Lower, Stranorlar, Lifford PO, Co. Donegal

Principal: Séan Mc Fadden 074 9131684 E: finnvalleycollege@donegaletb.ie

Student Declaration

I, _____ D.O.B. _____

Having read the Code of Behaviour pertaining to Finn Valley College and having discussed it with my parents/guardians, will abide by all its conditions as outlined.

Signed: _____

Student

Date

Parents' Declaration

I / We, the parents of

Student's Full Name:

Class

having read the Code of Behaviour pertaining to Finn Valley College and having discussed it with my son/daughter, hereby undertake to support the Board of Management, School Management and Staff in the implementation of the school rules and guidelines and disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Code of Behaviour for the duration of his/her period of education and study at Finn Valley College

Signed:

Parent/Guardian

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date

Bullying Policy

Finn Valley College Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Finn Valley College has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students, and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as **targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.** The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Our Response

- Finn Valley College has a separate comprehensive Bí Cinealta Policy and set of procedures, which is included in all school journals and is available on the school website
- Every person in Finn Valley College is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.
- Our school is anchored on a climate of respect and promotes positive habits of self-discipline and responsibility among its students and indeed its entire staff.
- We strive to make our school a safe place in which all students feel comfortable.
- Students and staff work together to ensure that any occurrence of undesirable behaviour that comes to our attention is
 - treated seriously
 - dealt with immediately in accordance with the school's Bí Cinealta Policy.
- We stress to the students that **reporting an incident of bullying is responsible behaviour and that they should not feel embarrassed or guilty about seeking help.**

Implementation

The Code of Behaviour is effective

- During school hours, while officially under school supervision and in the school environs
- At school-sponsored events or while representing the school

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This code of behaviour has been drawn up by reference to the appropriate legislative and regulatory framework. It complies with the relevant sections of the Education Act 1998; the Education (Welfare) Act 2000; the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2004; the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007; the Guidelines on Developing a Code of Behaviour drawn up by the National Education Welfare Board (2008) and also with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2013).

The Code has been subject to consultation and review by the staff, Student Council and Parents' Council of the school. It has been reviewed by the Board of Management.

It is recommended that these rules and guidelines be formally reviewed on a regular basis and an opportunity given to the relevant stakeholders to review and amend them where appropriate. This is a stand-alone item on the agenda of a formal meeting.

The Code has been ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on the 19th of June 2025 at which the Bí Cinéalta Policy was an agreed item on the agenda.

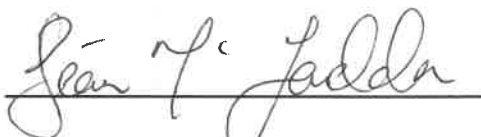
Signed: _____



Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: _____

19/6/2025



Secretary (Principal)

Date: _____

19/6/2025

Date of next Review: _____

