

Coláiste Íde - Student welfare

At Coláiste Íde the welfare of the Student is paramount and we strive to ensure that Students have a safe and happy environment in which to grow, develop and be educated. Our policy is based on and drawn from the following:

The welfare of the students is paramount

- A proper balance will be struck between protecting students and respecting the rights and needs of the parents/guardians, however the students' welfare will always come first in the event of a conflict
- The Student has a right to be protected, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into account
- We adopt the safest possible practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening
- Staff must ensure that they understand how to minimise risk.
- Developing a policy of openness with parents/guardians that involves consulting them about any serious concerns about Students
- Make links with other relevant agencies in order to promote Student protection and welfare policies and practices
- All care staff will be garda vetted and will have completed TUSLA Children First E-Learning course

Coláiste Íde is committed to:

- Ensuring a safe environment for all students: Coláiste Íde will try to ensure that no action or omission on its part would be damaging to the welfare of its students. The school's policy is to develop self-esteem, confidence and independence of thought.
- Minimising risks in order to safeguard the interests of the student and members of staff: every effort will be made to ensure that the health and safety of Student and staff by adhering to health and safety regulations, fire safety regulations and by regular and thorough safety checks and necessary maintenance. The college; all advice to date has been carried out and the college is committed to the upkeep of these safety measures for the health and safety of both student and staff (see Health and Safety Policy).
- Ensuring parents/guardians are informed of any concerns regarding their daughter(s): it is our policy to inform parents immediately if we fear that a Student may be showing signs of distress or if the Student may be intending to harm herself. We expect parents to pay serious attention to our concerns in this regard.
- Ensuring appropriate medical attention is sought for any student when it is required: if a student falls ill while at Coláiste Íde she will receive the appropriate medical attention. Parents must sign a form to give consent to make decisions to transport the student to medical centre or hospital, as well as providing a full medical history for the student.
- Administering medicines where appropriate: with parents consent in the form of a signed form, parents can give or refuse permission for care-staff to administer over the counter medications.
- Ensuring concerns of care-staff for students are taken seriously: care-staff report their concerns to their superior who in turn will report this to management. All concerns will be investigated and where parents will be contacted.
- Supporting all victims of abuse: Coláiste Íde commits to protecting the best interests and welfare of the Student. If abuse is suspected it will be reported and dealt with in a sensitive and caring manner and without delay. The welfare and well-being of the Student must always be the priority
- Treating students with care and respect: no favouritism or discrimination by students or staff will be tolerated at Coláiste Íde. All students and staff will be treated equally and with respect. We endeavour to maintain a healthy and happy environment for both staff and student.
- Expect parents to inform the school if for any reason their daughter is upset or may need extra care. It is imperative that the school be advised without delay in order to give the

attention it requires. Parents are asked not to unduly upset boarding students before bedtime unless it is absolutely necessary, for instance if there has been a death in the family including the death of a family pet. If the Student is not to be removed from the school that night then we ask that parents wait until the morning to notify the student, and to advise the school where appropriate of distressing news.

- Medical care at Coláiste Íde: each parent will provide the school with an accurate and up-to-date medical history updated during the year should that be necessary. This will be used by the nursing and care-staff.
- Medicine; No student is allowed to keep medicine including over the counter medications in her possession. Vitamin supplements are allowed however as we cannot monitor the administration it is the parents' choice to permit them. If it is necessary for a Student to bring medicine to the school the medicine must be handed up on arrival to a member of the care staff, with a letter from the doctor or parent explaining why and when the medicine should be given. Prescription medication will not be administered by without either a prescription or written permission from the parents. A consent form must be signed each year by parents giving or refusing permission for staff, including non-medical staff, to administer certain commonly used over the counter medicines to their daughter. This form must be checked each and every time medicine is to be administered.
- In the event of a Student requiring hospital treatment: In the event that an ambulance is called a member of staff will travel with the student in the ambulance. Parents will be contacted immediately and where possible parents should meet them at the hospital and resume the duty as parent. Staff will not leave a student until either the student is admitted to hospital or until the parent arrives.

Parental Responsibilities

- It is a duty of the parent to ensure that all medical and other relevant information is provided to the college and is both up-to-date and accurate.
- To provide and keep the school updated of contact phone numbers in the case of emergency
- To inform the school immediately if they are concerned for their daughter's health or welfare.
- Parents should provide the college with information of any serious/contagious illness that occur whilst the girl is out of the school.
- A student should never be returned to the school whilst still ill.
- If a student contracts a contagious illness that may put other students at risk e.g. winter vomiting bug, parents will be requested to collect the student as soon as reasonably possible.
- If a student is thought to be a risk to herself and this is reported to the parents, the parents must take the girl home and see a medical professional without delay.
- If a Student harms herself, medical attention will be immediately sought and parents will be notified. The welfare and well-being of the girl will be paramount. The parents must remove the girl immediately from the boarding school and return her to the safety and security of her family home environment. The girl must receive the professional help of a registered clinical psychologist/psychiatrist to safeguard her well-being. The necessary authorities will be notified; the HSE and /or the Gardaí. A report from a registered clinical psychologist/psychiatrist will be required by the school before the girl can be returned to ensure the girl's health and for the safety of the other girls in the boarding school. The girls at the school will be offered counselling should it be deemed necessary.
- To co-operate with relevant authorities if necessary.

Mental health and wellbeing

Coláiste Íde takes mental health issues such as depression, in its various forms, eating disorders, of any sort etc. seriously. We look to prevention where possible, and take care to notice and report any concerns to parents as early as possible. The school policy is if a concern is raised by a member of staff to contact the parents immediately and in the meantime to carefully look into the

matter, monitor the situation and to contact the parents immediately. Students who self-harm or if a concern about potential self-harm is raised the student will be monitored carefully until the parent comes to take the student home. In circumstances where there is a concern for the welfare of the student, it is policy to return the student to the safety of their families immediately to address their need and to provide them with the relevant support. A written report from a medical profession e.g. clinical psychologist will be necessary before the student returns to Coláiste Íde stating that it is safe for the student to return to Coláiste Íde boarding as a full time boarder.

In the event of self-harm or concern about self-harm

If a girl harms herself or if a concern is raised about potential self-harm whilst at school it is the policy of Coláiste Íde to:

- Seek immediate and appropriate medical attention for the girl
- Contact the girl's parents/guardians
- Deal with the girl in a kind and sensitive manner
- Respect the rights of the Student and parents but where there is a conflict the welfare of the Student will always come first
- Report the incident to the relevant authorities
- Ensure that the girl is returned to the security of her family home immediately and is given access to relevant professional medical care
- Ask for a report from a registered clinical psychologist/psychiatrist confirming that the girl is no longer a risk to herself and can return to the boarding school as a full time boarder.

A counsellor is available to students at a designated time. The counsellor meets with both groups and individuals throughout the year. The counsellor forms part of our student care team. Students will be informed of this service at the beginning of the year.

Student support team

A Student support team is in place in Coláiste Íde and is made up of: nurse, counsellor, management and care staff. This team is in place to provide support for the students in our care and will meet at least once each term. A member of this team is always available, and the students will be informed of the names of team members each year.

Trips away from Coláiste Íde

- Written parental consent is required for all trips which take place.
- Normal school rules will apply at all times as outlined in the college's code of behaviour and any misconduct while away from the school will be looked on gravely
- The same dictates of prudence which apply to exercising a duty of care in Coláiste Íde apply on school trips
- If in the case of an emergency a supervisor deems it necessary to be in a student's room without another adult they will immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and make a record of the circumstances.
- Should a student be transported to a hospital, a supervisor should endeavour to bring a further two students in the car/taxi
- It is the policy of Coláiste Íde that matters of safety are always considered and that the health and safety of the Student is always paramount.

Risk/contact Sports

Sports such as rugby, horse-riding and sailing require parents to sign a consent form. Coláiste Íde demands that all sports which involve the students be managed in a professional manner by trained staff, however accidents can still happen. We ask parents to carefully consider all aspects of a sport before signing the consent form. The reason a consent form is required is because Coláiste Íde considers the sport to involve an element of risk.