



St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School

Code of Behaviour

March 2019

1. Introduction

This document has been drawn up in accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 by the Board of Management of St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School. It has been developed following consultation between Management and Teachers, Parents, Students Council and the Prefect Body. The policy has paid particular attention to the Guidelines for development of a School Code of Behaviour, published by TUSLA (NEWB).

Students shall be deemed subject to the Code of Behaviour when on school premises, at school events, on school trips or tours and at any time they are recognisable as students of St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School.

St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School believes that its positive Code of Behaviour is firmly rooted in Christian values, mutual respect, justice, the common good and concern for health and safety.

An essential element of this is good, open communication between the partners in education. The School believes that such an approach will be beneficial for students, teachers, management, parents/guardians and the Board of Management alike. It should also encourage students to take a positive view of co-operation and interdependence into their adult lives. The Positive Behaviour Policy will have due regard for the rights and responsibilities of all the parties concerned within the school.

All the students attending St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School are actively encouraged to make a positive impact on the school community through positive behaviour. In our School, positive behaviour is considered to be a form of training which empowers students to make appropriate choices in a supportive environment.

Praise and positive consequences are seen as more important in maintaining a good relationship with students, than punishment and negative consequences.

Chairperson, Board of Management.

Please Note: The Code of Behaviour should be read in conjunction with other related policies that are listed below:

Admissions Policy

Homework Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

IT Student Acceptable Use Policy

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Mobile Phone Policy

Child Safeguarding Statement

School Trip & Tour Policy

Classroom Guidelines

Uniform Regulations

Health and Safety Statement

These are available to download from the school website.

2. Aims of the Code of Behaviour

The aims of this policy are to create:

- a) A safe, secure and happy learning environment.
- b) A sense of responsibility and self-esteem in the students.
- c) A high standard of self-discipline and good manners.
- d) Good habits e.g. honesty, trust, co-operation, respect, confidence, diligence, attendance and punctuality, etc. which will benefit children throughout their lives.
- e) School spirit, pride in the students, both in themselves and in others. Pride in their work, achievements and the school.
- f) Sanctions for inappropriate behaviour which are to be clear, fair and applied consistently.

3. Mission

Our Mission is:

- a) To ensure that all members of the school community, students, teachers and parents treat each other with dignity and respect. At all times communication should be carried out in a mannerly fashion, with each person having a right to be heard.
- b) To describe clear positive expectations for students' behaviour and outline the benefits for all if these expectations are met.
- c) To provide a system of supports and rewards that underpins these positive behaviours.
- d) To outline a system for the use of sanctions when required.
- e) To involve staff, students and parents in the development of our discipline policy.

- f) To hold the Health, Safety and Welfare of every person in the school community as paramount in any decision or action taken in relation to behaviour.

4. Positive Behaviour Code

In general, positive behaviours are based on:

- a) Respect for people and property
- b) Full cooperation with the teaching and learning process
- c) Responsibility.

Specifically, the expected behaviours include the following:

- a) All students are expected to do their best to **attend school every day**, and to **be on time** for class or any other school activity. (*Because* wellbeing and success at school is closely linked to good attendance and punctuality shows respect for others).
- b) All students are expected to **wear the full school uniform** every day unless otherwise instructed. Uniform must be neat and tidy. (*Because* the wearing of a uniform is part of the traditional of the school and learning to dress appropriately for school /work is part of students' education).
- c) **Make-up and jewellery**, if worn, must be discreet. (*Because* excessive jewellery and make up is expensive and can lead to unnecessary competition among students).
- d) **Hair**, if dyed, must not be of an obviously unnatural colour. Hairstyles must not be extreme. (*Because* hairstyle and colour should complement the formal uniform and not attract unnecessary attention)
- e) All students of the Grammar school are expected to come to school properly prepared for all of their classes. This means that you **bring whatever is needed to each of your classes**. (*Because* these things are needed for full participation in class and it causes disruption to the teaching process and the learning environment if you are not fully prepared).
- f) All students are expected to **strive for excellence in their class work and homework**. This means that you listen to the teachers, that you do your classwork and homework to the best of your ability and that you always carry your official school Journal and record your homework in it. (*Because*, teaching and learning is the core activity of the school.)
- g) All students are expected to **show respect** to all others at all times. This means being respectful both inside and outside the classroom, behaving in a mannerly way at all times and continuing to show the same respect to all concerned outside the school. (*Because*, everyone is entitled to proper respect, the school is the teachers' workplace and all staff members are entitled to their dignity both inside and outside of the school).

- h) All students of the Grammar School are expected **to treat the school buildings, furniture, equipment and grounds with the utmost care and respect**. This means that you take care when using furniture and equipment and when moving around the school grounds and buildings and that you **do not chew gum**. (*Because*, it is important for each individual to protect the school environment and to make sure that it remains a clean and healthy place to work and study in, chewing/bubble gum destroys carpets, floor coverings, clothes, furniture etc. and chewing in class is disruptive).
- i) All students are expected to comply with the regulations included in school policies relating to:
- The use of mobile phones
 - Attendance & Punctuality
 - Acceptable use of the internet
 - Anti-bullying
 - Smoking, Consumption of drugs or alcohol and misuse of solvents

5. Promoting Positive Behaviours

The role of all of the partners in education

Teachers, students and Parents/guardians can all promote wellbeing in school by fully supporting the School Code of Behaviour and by discussing the expected behaviours and discussing the reasons for them.

The specific role of the teacher

Every teacher is responsible for maintaining a positive learning environment in his/her classroom as well as around the school and should develop systems to promote positive behaviour and when necessary a system of appropriate sanctions to deal with misbehaviour and breaches of class rules that complies with this school Code of Behaviour. Student voice should always be considered in developing these systems.

Teachers at St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School will promote positive student behaviour by:

- Modelling good behaviour at all times.
- Verbal praise: in class, outside class, in Assembly.
- Complimenting good behaviour, initiative, courtesy, neat appearance etc
- Saying 'thank you' and generally showing appreciation of good manners.
- Giving responsibility to students: Class Captains, Monitors, Prefects, Students Council, ushering at school services and functions, assisting staff or other students at any time etc.
- Encouraging and promoting extra-curricular activities.
- Posting students work, awards etc on school walls, notice boards, website.
- Giving 'Commendations' for excellent work, major improvement in work or effort, and co-operation and helpfulness above the norm.
- Written praise on Reports and TY Certificates.
- Awarding a TY 'Student of the Year' and an overall 'Student of the Year'.
- Monthly 'Effort Marks'

- Awards at Prize Distribution, Sports Day and following other competitions.
- Awards for good attendance.

6. Sanctions for Inappropriate Behaviour

In implementing sanctions it should always be clear that the student's actions have invited sanctions and this should be explained to the student and to his/her parent/guardian if necessary.

There should always be a clear learning intention associated with the implementation of sanctions. Where practicable the principles of restorative justice should be employed.

Records will be kept of sanctions applied to individual students and will form part of their school record. Sanctions should be recorded on pupils' behaviour profile on VS ware.

Ladder of Referral

As a small school we do not need to operate a formal ladder of referral for dealing with most disciplinary incidents. Classroom teachers, form teachers, Deputy Principal and Principal may be involved at any stage in a disciplinary process depending on the circumstances and the individuals concerned. However, as outlined below, the Principal has a special role in relation to suspensions and expulsions. Form teachers also have a number of special roles (outlined below) and are generally involved in communication with parents/guardians. The Deputy Principal and Principal can offer immediate support when serious incidents occur during the school day and will often get involved in investigating disciplinary incidents and in facilitating sanctions such as after school detention.

Minor Breaches

Minor breaches of the code will, as far as possible be dealt with by the relevant class teacher or teacher on break duty or teacher that witnesses the mis-behaviour. The teacher will use their professional judgement to decide what constitutes a minor breach and the teacher will decide on appropriate sanctions. Teachers may seek advice from the Deputy Principal or Principal in this regard. Sanctions may include any or all of the following:

- Verbal warning stating that the behaviour is inappropriate and advising the student to make a sensible choice and return to task.
- Extra work is assigned – this should be fair and reasonable and there should be a clear learning intention associated with the work given.
- Student to move position in class.
- Class teacher 'lunchtime detention' or solution focus interview by class teacher with the student.
- Penalty exercise assigned – this should be fair and reasonable. It should also be thought provoking and if possible related to the inappropriate behaviour.
- Student may be sent to a designated teacher (to allow teaching and learning to continue).
- Form teacher notified .

Serious breaches

In addition to any of the above, for **serious breaches** of the code of behaviour or for repetition of minor breaches, any of the following sanctions may be applied:

- Reflection Form (The student to explain incident, suggest how to put things right and indicate how they will behave in future). The reflection form to be signed by Student, Parent and Class Teacher.
- After school detention. (24 hours notice will be given unless agreed otherwise with parent/guardian).
- Student placed on Daily Behaviour Report by the Form Teacher.

In addition to the implementation of sanctions the form teacher may also consult with the school 'Care Team'

More serious Breaches and/or Persistent breaches of School Rules

In addition to any of the above, for more serious breaches of the code of behaviour or for repetition of less serious breaches, any of the following sanctions may be applied:

- Extended detention.
- Daily Behaviour Report or daily Homework Report: whichever is appropriate for inappropriate behaviour and for poor effort/work.
- Removal of a privilege outing, trip, tour etc.

Form teacher should keep detailed records of all meetings and strategies decided upon.

In addition to the implementation of sanctions the Form Teacher to initiate a 'problem solving approach' with, Parents and Student. TUSLA (NEWB) guidelines recommend:

Gather information.

Try and understand context for behaviour.

Try and explain to the student the effect his/her behaviour has on themselves /teacher /class / learning outcomes in the short and long term.

Generate ideas (with student) about possible solutions.

Decide and agree on specific strategies.

Implement agreed strategy consistently.

Review progress.

Meeting of Form Teacher with parent(s). Agree strategy. Implement strategy. Review with Parent.

Major Breaches

Major breaches such as deliberate vandalism or threatening the health and safety of others or persistent disruption of teaching and learning will normally result in suspension or expulsion.

Suspension:

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked.

The Principal will decide upon an appropriate level of suspension up to and including FIVE school days.

In cases where the Principal feels the matter deserves a suspension of longer than five days, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and an emergency Board of Management meeting will be called.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is having a very detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to the health and safety of other student(s).

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. For example, the student has either brought illegal substances to school, used them on school premises or while on a school trip/outing, clearly in defiance of the Code of Behaviour.

In all cases where a suspension is being considered the principles of natural justice will apply. All relevant parties will have the right to be heard and to answer any allegations against them. Where appropriate, relevant third parties may be consulted. At all times the privacy of all concerned will be respected as far as possible.

In all cases of the suspension of a child the Parents/Guardians will be informed, in writing, of the decision to suspend and of their right to appeal the decision. In the case of students over the age of 18 the written notification will be given to the student themselves.

The letter will also set out the reason for the suspension, its duration, and arrangements for return to school.

Expulsion

In all cases where 'expulsion' is being considered, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management.

Only the Board of Management of St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School has the authority to expel a student. This authority shall not be devolved to any other person.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student has, on more than one occasion, either brought illegal substances to school, used them on school premises or while on a school trip/outing, clearly in defiance of the Code of Behaviour.
- the student has either supplied or arranged for the supply of illegal substances to (an)other student(s) of the Grammar School either inside or outside the school premises.
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the health or safety of a member of staff or to other students.

- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- The student has made obscene or libelous comment in any form, including any form of social media, about any member of the school community which is of an extreme nature such as to cause them real distress.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. However, they will generally be of a more serious nature or be more persistent. Where expulsion is considered, the school authorities will usually have tried and exhausted a series of other interventions

In all cases of Expulsion the procedures outlined below will be followed:

- 1) Recommendation by Principal to the Board of Management (BOM).
- 2) The Principal will provide the BOM with the reasons why the Principal considers that expulsion should be considered.
- 3) Parents will be informed of this decision and the student will be suspended pending the BOM meeting.
- 4) The BOM will be given written records of all allegations, investigations and the grounds for the case.
- 5) A Special meeting of the BOM will be held. Parents will be notified of the date and time of the meeting and invited to attend.
- 6) Parents may provide written or oral submissions to the BOM.
- 7) Consideration by BOM of recommendation followed by a hearing
- 8) The BOM shall review the initial investigation and ascertain that it was conducted according to fair procedures
- 9) The BOM shall review the documentation
- 10) The BOM shall HOLD A HEARING at a Special Meeting of the Board and follow due process:
- 11) Principal and parents/student 18+ shall put their respective cases in each other's presence
- 12) The BOM may question the evidence of each party. The BOM must be seen to be impartial
- 13) Parents may be accompanied but not by a lawyer/solicitor/barrister.
- 14) The BOM will consider the evidence following this meeting the Principal and parents/ student will not present during these deliberations
- 15) BOM Deliberations and actions following the Hearing
- 16) The BOM will decide whether expulsion is warranted
- 17) If the BOM decide expulsion is warranted they will inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) in writing giving the reasons.
- 18) TUSLA reporting procedures shall be observed.
- 19) The expulsion will not take effect until 20 school days have passed. If there is a threat to safety of others or that the student poses a risk to good order and discipline in the school, they will be suspended during this time.
- 20) Parents/Student 18+ will be informed in writing of the decision and the next steps
- 21) Consultation arranged by EWO
- 22) EWO will consult with the Principal, parents, student and anyone who may be of assistance
- 23) The EWO will convene a meeting of those who agree to attend – looking at options such alternative interventions or alternative educational possibilities
- 24) Confirmation of the expulsion

25) When the 20 school days have elapsed and the BOM remains of the view that the student should be expelled the BOM will FORMALLY confirm the decision to expel. This task may be delegated to the Chairperson of the Board of Management (or their nominee) and the Principal.

26) Parents will be notified in writing as well and informed of the right to appeal. They will be supplied with the standard appeal forms.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 5th March 2019