

Code of Practice outlining Expected Behaviour

Mission statement

To create a learning environment where students, teachers and staff are encouraged and supported in a Christian atmosphere in partnership with parents and the wider community.

The code of practice of expected behaviour of St. Mary's College is based on guidelines issued by the DES (1993), the National Educational Welfare Board (2008), Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (DYCA) 2011 and the National Centre for Technology in Education (2012).

This Code of Practice encompasses the following school policies:

- An acceptable usage policy (AUP).

- An anti-bullying policy.

- The school's code of behaviour.

Code of Behaviour

This document is based on guidelines issued by the NEWB for developing Code of Behaviour for schools and on Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (DCYA) 2011. This policy applies to all students of St. Mary's College and relates to all school related activities. It is part of the anti-bullying policy, the acceptable use of the internet policy and the school's policy on child protection and is integral to the health, safety and welfare of each member of the school community.

Aims

This Code of behaviour was developed in consultation with students and the Student Council, parents and the Parents' Association, teachers and the Board of Management. It reflects the school's mission statement in which the learning environment is encouraged and supported in a Christian atmosphere and in partnership with all stakeholders.

At St. Mary's College we endeavour to the greatest possible extent to maximise the education of all pupils, and in that context, the right to education of the overwhelming majority of pupils must not be subverted by a disruptive minority. Consequently any event or incident which frustrates this process can be characterised as disruptive behaviour.

In recognising the aspirations of the mission statement, there is a duty and responsibility for everyone to comply with this Code and to recognise the rights of all to proceed in their roles without threat, danger or obstruction and with the support and respect due to each person.

Students, support staff, teachers, parents and all members of the school community are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning and to foster an atmosphere of courtesy and respect.

Objectives

- To provide teaching and to promote learning for our student body.
- To ensure that teaching and learning can occur without disruption.
- To ensure all students, parents and guardians are aware of expectations of behaviour.
- To promote the ethos of the school.
- To ensure that the principles of natural justice apply in all our dealings.

Behaviour and Conduct

Students must:

- Come to school prepared and ready to learn i.e. having the appropriate attitude, the necessary books and equipment.
- Behave in a respectful manner in the classroom, on the corridor and school grounds at all times and on all school related activities.
- Have a written note in their journal from their teacher if they are on corridors during class time.
- Ensure their homework is recorded in their journal at the end of each class.

- Complete all homework assignments.
- Maintain their journal in good condition and replace if lost or defaced at the student's expense within two days.
- Ensure that their journal is signed by parent/guardians at the end of each week.
- Wear the school uniform at all times including school functions and exams.
- Wear appropriate PE gear.
- Respect all school property.
- Keep mobile phones and all audio, digital and electronic equipment switched off and out of sight at all times except break and lunch times.
- Obey all classroom rules and regulations.
- At all times, respect fellow students, teachers, support staff and visitors to the school.

Unacceptable Behaviour

- Defying authority and deliberately disrupting.
- Fighting – verbal or physical threat or action against another person.
- Stealing.
- Interfering with school property or the property of others.
- Bullying, harassing or intimidating other students or staff.
- Leaving school or class without correct permission. The school will not be responsible for the welfare and safety of students who leave the school without permission from parents and the school authority.
- Interfering with the education of any student by being disruptive or by hindering the progress of the class.
- Using foul language or being abusive in any way.
- Smoking.
- Loitering in any area of the school.
- Possessing or using of any hazardous materials.
- Being late to class without a valid excuse.
- Consuming alcohol or illegal substances.
- Eating or drinking in class.

- Being at lockers between classes without permission.

Interventions

There are times when students do not observe the school's code of behaviour; therefore the following may occur;

- Apology.
- Reprimanding – verbal warning explaining the expected behaviour.
- Reasoning with the student.
- Moving position within class.
- Temporary removal of student from class.
- Additional work.
- Communicating with parent.
- Report card – comment at end of each class from teachers.
- Detention.
- Referral to the Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal.
- Behaviour contract with school Year Head/Principal/Teacher.
- Referral for evaluation with outside agencies.
- Contact with parents; guardians.

Sanctions

- Loss/withdrawal of privileges.
- Demerit.
- Detention.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

The Principal/Deputy-Principal /acting Principal of the school may intervene at any stage in the imposition of sanctions where it is deemed that the conduct of the student is inappropriate and require immediate intervention.

Notes on Sanctions:

Deliberate damage to school property.

This will result in the application of the school's procedures for breaches of school rules in addition to payment to repair the damage caused, or suspension in the event of safety equipment being damaged.

Smoking.

Under the 1995 Tobacco (Health Promotion and Protection) Regulations and the Public health (Tobacco) Act, 2002 (Section 47) Regulations 2003, smoking is illegal in all schools and enclosed places of work. Smoking in the school grounds and going to and from school is forbidden. If students are in breach of these rules an evening detention or period of social duties will be imposed. Parents/Guardians will be informed and, if necessary, the statutory authorities may also be informed.

Student Absenteeism without permission.

A student who is absent from school/class without permission on a particular day will incur 30 minutes after school detention/community service.

Twice absent from school/class without permission will incur 1 hour after school detention/community service.

Repeatedly absent from school/class without permission will require meeting with parents/guardians and the demerit system will apply.

Leaving School Grounds.

Students leaving school grounds at any time during the school day (between classes and/or lunch time) without permission will warrant a warning.

A second time leaving school grounds will incur 30 minutes after school detention/community service.

A third time leaving school grounds will incur 1 hour after school detention/community service.

Repeatedly leaving school grounds without permission will require a meeting with parents/guardians and the demerit system will apply.

Roll Call & Lateness.

If a student arrives late in the morning they must proceed directly to their Year Head, sign in and show note in journal outlining reason for being late and proceed immediately to class.

If a student arrives late in the morning but has no note in their journal outlining a reason for the lateness they must still sign in with their Year Head and proceed immediately to class. A demerit will apply.

Failure of a student to sign in will mean a demerit.

An unexplained lateness to class will mean a demerit.

Use of Lockers.

Students using their lockers without permission will incur a detention.

Year Head Report – ‘On Report’.

To help our students comply with our code of behaviour an ‘on report’ system will be used. A student may be put on report by a class teacher or a Year Head and school authority or at the request of a parent/guardian. The student will present the report card to each teacher at the end of the class. The report will be signed by the teacher for a period of up to one week. A parent/guardian must sign-off on the card each night. For each day that an excellent note for all 9 classes is presented to the Year Head a merit will be awarded to the student.

Failure to return a report card which is incomplete or not signed will result in the student’s period of being on report extended.

Detention/Community Service.

If a student accumulates 5 demerits they will incur 30 minutes after school detention/community service.

If a student accumulates an additional 5 demerits they will incur 1 hour after school detention/community service.

If a student accumulates an additional 5 remarks/demerits this will warrant a review of their behaviour and may incur a suspension. Parents/Guardians will be notified.

Homework.

Failure to attempt assignments will warrant a demerit.

Telephones & All Electronic Equipment.

Misuse of mobile phones and all audio, digital and electronic equipment will result in disciplinary action. Such devices will be confiscated and held by the school for two weeks. They will be returned only to parents/guardians after the two week period. Parents/guardians will be informed of the breach by the teacher concerned.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

- Merit system.
- Positive comments in journal.
- Verbal praise and encouragement.
- Recognition at assemblies and over intercom, school newsletters and website.
- Prize-giving.
- Academic achievement awards.
- Display of students work.
- Rewards e.g. trips.
- School reference.
- Postcards.

Whilst individual responsibility for behaviour rests with the student, overall responsibility for behaviour and discipline rests with the Principal and Deputy Principal. Year Heads, Tutors and teachers also have a role in monitoring the behaviour of students.

Management in consultation with stake holders reserve the right to modify this code of behaviour where appropriate.