

**St. Patrick's Secondary School
Castleisland
Co. Kerry**



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Note: This policy is formulated in relation to the NEWB Guidelines -*Developing a code of behaviour: Guidelines for schools* and is intended to compliment these guidelines.

INTRODUCTION

The school's code of behaviour sets out for the whole school community the standard of behaviour expected, the supports in place to assist the students in upholding the code as well as rewards, sanctions and procedures involved in the code. All members of the school community are constantly striving to provide a caring, inclusive place of learning where positive behaviour is encouraged and recognised and where every effort is made to assist the students to comply with the code of behaviour. We encourage co-operation in all activities in order to create a more inclusive school society and to improve the social skills of the students.

This school is catholic in character, inclusive in its intake, allows for and encourages the active involvement of the whole school community in all aspects of school life, and has a curriculum suited to the needs of the students.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all students attending the school and is for the attention of all staff and parents/guardians of the students.

SCHOOLS'S VISION & ETHOS

The aim of the school is to provide a holistic education for all its students so as to help each student reach his full potential in academic, emotional, social and sporting terms. While our first concern is to prepare our students thoroughly for all public examinations we also aim to instil personal life skills which help to develop self-confident and mature individuals.

The school promotes and ensures strong links between home and school through structured and timetabled parent teacher meetings and individual appointments. This arises from the overall belief that balanced collaboration between home and school is essential and is most potent in instilling a code of self-discipline in the student. As a result of this students would be better enabled to take responsibility for their own positive behaviour.

The school's most fervent aspiration is to promote positive behaviour. We encourage our students to take pride in themselves, while at the same time respecting the rights of others. We help and encourage them to develop their talents so they can confidently face the challenges of the modern and fast developing world of today with hope and confidence. Hence our school motto – Mórtas is Dóchas - Pride and hope.

RATIONALE & OBJECTIVES

- (a) To instil in the students a respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and respect for the property of the school and that of others.
- (b) To set a pattern for adulthood, due to a deep seated self-discipline, so that they will be able to adapt more easily to characteristics such as punctuality, co-operation, application, and pride in their work.
- (c) To instil in our students a sense of responsibility so that each student will see it as his duty to ensure that his own behaviour and that of other students conforms to the school's code of discipline.
- (d) Since the disciplinary system is not repressive, it is hoped that our students, when they leave school, will be young men of integrity. Students who are in serious or persistent breach of the code of behaviour will be dealt with through the school's discipline procedures.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

SCHOOL RULES (General)

School Motto - Mortas is Dochas

- Each student is entitled to benefit from his education in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and he must not be prevented in the pursuit of his educational goals by the disruptive behaviour of other students.
- Students must be respectful and courteous to all members of the school staff and to one another at all times.
- The authority of all teachers extends to all students within the school and in the course of school related activities.
- Students must uphold the good name of the school at all times.
- Students must help in creating a positive, caring and trusting atmosphere in which they are sensitive to the needs of each other.
- The school authorities of St. Patrick's Secondary School see as one of their primary functions the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere free of bullying and intimidation. To this end the school has formulated a policy to ensure that all students will be protected at all times. Any violation of this code will be viewed in a very serious light and students and their parents are encouraged to bring to the attention of the school any occurrences of bullying and intimidation that may occur.
- It is school policy that homework is assigned each night and that the student completes his homework in a neat well-presented manner and on time.

SCHOOL RULES (Functional)

Dress Code

- The full school uniform must be worn at all times.
- The school uniform consists of a grey school jumper, blue shirt, tie, grey trousers and black dress shoes. **Sports shoes of any colour with logo's are not acceptable.**
- Hairstyles must be neat, clean and tidy.
- The wearing of earrings or any such similar items is forbidden, as is the wearing of necklaces or obtrusive items of personal jewellery of any kind.

- Rules relating to dress and general appearance also apply to students while they are outside the school during lunch-break, on their way to and from school and on all school related activities.
- An explanation in writing or by means of text message must accompany any failure to wear full school uniform.

Absences from School

- An explanation by note or phone call from a parent must be provided in relation to any absence from school.
- A text message/note/phone call must be submitted in advance where an absence is planned e.g. a doctor's or dentist's appointment, a planned family event etc.
- Students will not be allowed to leave the school without prior permission being received from parents which also indicates by whom the student is being collected.

Punctuality

- Students must present themselves on time for school and classes each day. All students are required to be in school by 8:50am. Students who are late without a valid reason and who are persistently late will be detained at lunch time.
- Students who arrive late must present themselves to the Principal or Deputy Principal before being admitted to class.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

- Smoking within the school grounds and the environs of the school is strictly forbidden. Smoking is also forbidden while in school uniform or while engaging in any school-related activities. Students found to be smoking or in possession of cigarettes will be suspended.
- Possession or use of alcohol or drugs within the school grounds and the environs of the school is also strictly forbidden. Possession or use of alcohol, drugs or any other illegal substances when in school uniform or while engaging in any school-related activities is also strictly forbidden, punishable by suspension & in serious cases expulsion.

Respecting the School Environment

- Students must show respect for the total school environment, classrooms and the school grounds must be kept litter free and chewing gum is strictly banned from the school. Students must at all times show respect for school property and any damage caused must be repaired at the student's expense.

Use of Electronic Equipment

- Mobile phones, radios, personal music players or other such appliances must be turned off before the student enters the school grounds.

Students who are found to have any of the above equipment switched on in school will have the item taken and retained by the school – The first offence = 1 month, second offence = 2 months, etc.

Bullying:

Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying may be in several forms e.g. threatening, teasing, taunting or refusing to speak to, etc. Parents should notify the school authorities if they have the slightest suspicion of bullying. Please ask your son not to “give as good as he gets” this only adds to the problem. Talk to your son about bullying. Look out for the signs or behaviour that may indicate your son is being bullied. **Contact the school immediately – the strictest confidence is guaranteed at all times.** Once contacted the school authorities will :

- (a) take all necessary steps to eliminate the problem
- (b) make available to parents books on bullying from school library
- (c) refer the parents and the student to a free counselling service that specialise in bullying and related problems, if the parents so wishes.

Any student found to be guilty of bullying will be suspended for a minimum of 3 school days.

All students are expected to be of good conduct during morning, lunchtime and evening while off school premises. Please ask your son to refrain from standing outside people’s entrances and to respect other people’s property, privacy and rights.

Parents:

- (a) If you wish to visit the school please contact the school to make an appointment in order to avoid unnecessary disruption of class.
- (b) If your son has any or develops any medical problem it is in everyone’s interest that the school be notified immediately.

DISCIPLINARY SANCTION**DETENTION**

Certain breaches of discipline are punishable by detention. Detention is an approved sanction in the school. It will be used reasonably and will be appropriate to the offence, and will be sanctioned by the year head. Parents will have due notice of detention by signing the record of the detention in the school journal. Detention will be held at times agreed by school management.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is a serious sanction and will be imposed by the Principal in cases where other efforts to resolve a disciplinary situation have failed or where the nature of the incident dictates that a student be removed from the school. On suspending a student the Principal will inform the parents in writing of the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension and the requirements that must be met to gain re-instatement. The school will require a student to give an undertaking (oral or written) that she will behave appropriately if permitted to return to the school from suspension. Parents are fully informed of their right to appeal to the Management against the suspension.

In accordance with section 21 Education Welfare Act 2000, where a student is suspended for six days or more, the Principal must report by notice in writing to an educational welfare officer.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the most severe sanction imposed by a school. It will only be imposed for serious breaches of school discipline (gross misconduct) or for a consistent and progressive failure to abide by the school Code of Behaviour and values. In accordance with the Deed of Trust the Principal may, for a cause, which he/she judges adequate, recommend the expulsion of a student to the Management. The parents will be informed of the complaint. The case against the student will be put to the student in the presence of her parents/guardians and they will be given an opportunity to respond. Parents will be provided with a fair opportunity to challenge the evidence. The parents

are informed in writing of the decision, the reasons for it and the right to appeal to Department of Education and skills.

THE EQUAL STATUS ACT, 2000

Schools are now regulated by the Equal Status Act 2000, which aims to promote equality and prohibit types of discrimination, harassment and related behaviour in connection with the provision of services, property and other opportunities to which the public generally has access. A school has duties under the Act i.e. under section 4,5 and 7 of the Act. An “educational establishment” such as a school is “a provider of a service” for the purposes of s.4 of the Act as it provides the service of education to students. A school may also be involved in the disposal of goods or in the supply of services under section 5 or as an “educational establishment” under section 7. There are nine heads of discrimination contained in section 3(2) of the Act. They are: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age (over 18 years), disability, race and traveller community.

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination occurs when, on any of the above discriminatory grounds, a person is treated less favourably, was treated less favourable or would be treated less favourable than another person.

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF DISABILITY

“For the purposes of this Act discrimination includes a refusal or failure by the provider of a service to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability by providing special treatment or facilities, if without such special treatment of facilities it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail himself or herself of the service. A “provider of a service” includes “educational establishment”. Thus, a school is required “to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability by providing special treatment of facilities, if without such special treatment of facilities it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail himself or herself of a service” (2) A refusal or failure to provide the special treatment of facilities to which subsection (1) refers shall not be deemed reasonable unless such provision would give rise to a cost, other than a nominal cost, to provider of the service in question”.

“Where a person has a disability, that in the circumstances could cause harm to the person or to others, treating the person differently to the extent reasonably necessary to prevent such harm does not constitute discrimination.

SEXUAL OR OTHER HARASSMENT

The Act prohibits sexual and other harassment. Sexual harassment takes place where a person:-

- Subjects another person (“the victim”) to an act of physical intimacy
- Requests sexual favours from the victim, or
- Subjects the victim to any act of conduct with sexual connotations, including spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials

In order to constitute sexual harassment, the act request or conduct must be:

- Unwelcome to the victim and could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating, OR
- The victim must be treated differently by reason of his or her rejection of a submission to the act, request or conduct complained of, or it could reasonably be anticipated that the victim would be so treated.

Harassment without sexual element, is also prohibited by the Act and takes place where a person, subject the victim to any unwelcome act, request or conduct including spoken words, gestures, or the production display or circulation or written words, pictures or other material, which in respect of the victim is based on any discriminatory ground and which could be reasonably be regarded as offensive humiliating or intimidating to him or her.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Section 11(2) provides that “A person (“the responsible person”) who is responsible for the operation of any place that is an educational establishment or at which goods, services or accommodation facilities are offered to the public shall not permit another person who has a right to be present in or to avail himself of herself of any facilities, goods or services provided at that place, to suffer sexual harassment or harassment at that place”.

GROSS MISCONDUCT:

Where a student has behaved in a seriously unacceptable manner or there has been a serious incident, the normal progressive disciplining process would not be appropriate. In this case the procedure is as follows:

1. Teacher writes a note and sends a student to the Deputy Principal, Principal, Year Head Teacher.
2. Deputy Principal, Principal, or Year Head withdraws the pupil from the class.
3. Deputy Principal/Year Head undertakes a full investigation.
4. Student is made aware of complaint.
5. Parents are informed and made fully aware of complaint.
6. Parents/Guardians are invited to attend a formal meeting at which the student will be given an opportunity to fully state her version of events.
7. Deputy Principal /Year Head/Principal will carefully consider all the relevant facts and recommend an appropriate course of action.
8. If a penalty/sanction is appropriate it may range from a verbal warning to recommendation of Board of Management for expulsion.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

STEP 1

Teacher: All general classroom/outside classroom behaviour

STEP 2

Year Head: Persistent behaviour noted in year head journal

STEP 3

Year Head: The Year Head Journal

Step (a) Initial consultation with year head may result in a warning re future behaviour.

Step (b) The 1st entry is following consultation between the year head & teacher concerned.

Step (c) The 2nd entry is an automatic detention on the following day.
(Detentions must be recorded in class journal and are given after consultation with the year head.)

Step (d) A referral of the student to the Guidance Counsellor by year DP and year head

Step (e) A student may be placed on Subject report followed by a general report at the discretion of the Deputy Principal and year head to continually monitor behaviour. This is recorded in the Student's Journal.

STEP 4

D. Principal: Student is referred to D. Principal by year head.

On the 3rd entry to the year head journal, parents are updated in writing of behaviour to date.

STEP 5

Principal: Student referred to Principal – Parents/Suspension

STEP 6

Suspension: On return – use of Restorative Justice .

NOTE:

Where a teacher reports the behaviour of a student that is considered to be unacceptable and where the class teacher and Deputy Principal have investigated the reported behaviour, the class teacher and Deputy Principal can refer the matter to stage 5 of the procedures without having to follow stages 3 and 4 of the procedures.

RATIFICATION:

This Code of Behaviour has been updated and ratified and is the operating policy of this school until the next review/update

Signed: Denis O'Donovan
Principal

Denis O'Donovan
Manager

Date: 01/09/2014

Review Date: 29/05/2015

Amended 20/10/2014

