



St Paul's College

Code of Behaviour

Document Control:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Date Policy Adopted: | March 2018 |
| Date for Review: | 2021 |
| New version adopted by BOM | 2023 |

Code of Behaviour

This document is divided into three sections:

- A. Introduction and Context
- B. College Rules
- C. College Sanctions

A. Introduction and Context

This Code of Behaviour is grounded in the Mission Statement and the Ethos Statement of St Paul's College, Raheny. The College Mission Statement is set out as follows.

Our Mission Statement

St Paul's College is committed to excellence. St Paul's College seeks to develop the whole person in a Catholic environment which allows each student to reach his full potential.

Our Ethos Statement

St Paul's College is a caring place with a Vincentian ethos and upholding Catholic values. In aspiring to high academic standards, St Paul's values a strong work ethic and an education that seeks to develop the whole person, intellectually, spiritually, socially, emotionally and culturally.

A1. WHY THE COLLEGE HAS A CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

1.1 The College has adopted this Code of Behaviour for the following reasons:

- to create a positive, orderly and structured atmosphere where teaching, learning and personal development can occur;
- to create a comfortable environment by identifying and supporting good behaviour while also identifying, recording and supporting means of correcting misbehaviour;
- to create a safe and healthy environment for students and staff;
- to set out roles, rights and responsibilities for everyone in the College;
- to encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour;
- to encourage a structure of effective communications between home and College;
- to ensure that students and their parents/guardians have a clear understanding of the standards of behaviour expected from the students and the consequences of failing to meet those standards;
- to help students to develop positive behaviours for life.

A2. PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

In line with the College Mission Statement, it is policy to encourage and reinforce positive behaviour. Towards this end, the College has a range of commendations and prizes to reward achievement, good behaviour and an overall positive attitude and to ensure that they are recognised by the College Community.

2.1 Opportunities are taken to publicly recognise achievements, good behaviour and positive attitudes of students.

2.2 Teachers may award a merit note in a student's journal where he has demonstrated positive behaviour.

2.3 At the end of the academic year a range of prizes and awards are made at a formal College assembly. These prizes include participation and contribution in many aspects of the College's life.

Examples are:

- Prizes for academic effort;
- Prizes for sporting contributions;
- Prizes for contribution to extra-curricular activities;
- Prizes for perfect attendance and punctuality;
- Prizes for displaying leadership qualities/ positive qualities e.g. humanitarian work, helping others and, good citizenship behaviour.

A3 THE COLLEGE RULES AS A FRAMEWORK

3.1 The College Rules form an important part of the College Code of Behaviour. The College Rules below provide the framework within which members of the College can live and work together in a happy and secure environment. They help to promote the system of values on which life in the College is based. The Rules are drafted to ensure that each individual is respected and that students are free to develop his own particular gifts and talents.

3.2 The Rules under each of their appropriate headings extend to every student whether present in the College or as a recognisable member of the College outside its bounds. The Rules also extend to any College occasion in or out of term and at any time when wearing the College uniform or representing the College. They apply on all College trips.

3.3 The College reserves the right of interpretation and revision of the Rules.

3.4 These Rules are drafted in the spirit of the Education Act, The Education Welfare Act and The Equal Status Act¹. Cognisance has also been taken of DES Circulars M34/91, M 33/91 and The Report of the Committee on Discipline in Schools.

B. COLLEGE RULES

B1. Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are necessary life skills which students should learn early in life and for which they should be encouraged to take personal responsibility.

1.1 Classes begin at 08:45 in the morning and at 13:50 in the afternoon. Break time is from 11:25 until 11:40 and lunch is from 13:00 until 13:50.

- Students are expected to arrive at 08:35 in the morning so as to prepare for the day's classes.
- Students are expected to be on time for all classes throughout the day.
- Students are expected to be on time for the afternoon classes at 13:50.

B.2 Attendance

2.1 It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have an explanation from home following an absence from school. Parents are asked to have access to the School App through which all communication regarding absences, punctuality and permission to leave should be stated.

2.2. Information on downloading the St Paul's College App can be accessed through the College Office.

2.3. If a student needs to leave school early for any reason (e.g. medical appointment), parents/guardians must inform the Year Head via the College App before 10am.

2.4 On the third consecutive day of an absence, parents are requested to inform the Year Head/Front Office of the reason for the student's absence.

B3. Uniform

Dress and personal appearance are indicative of self-esteem and also of consideration of others.

¹ In case of conflict the provisions of the relevant legislation will take precedence.

3.1. All students must arrive in full school uniform every morning. It is the duty of the parents/guardians to ensure their son is in the correct uniform.

Junior Uniform: 1st – 3rd Year

Grey shirt, grey trousers, junior tie, and grey jumper with St Paul's crest

Senior Uniform: 4th -6th Year

White shirt, black trousers, senior tie, and black jumper with St Paul's crest

For all Students:

Black footwear, St Paul's College jacket with the school crest

3.2. The school uniform should be kept clean and in good condition.

3.3. Hair must be kept clean, neat and tidy and in its natural colour. Facial hair must be kept neat and trimmed.

3.4. The College's PE uniform may be worn on days that students have PE only.

3.5. Parents/guardians are asked to ensure that their son's clothes, books and sports gear are all clearly labelled.

B4. Homework/Journal

4.1. Every student is expected to purchase a school journal at the beginning of the school year.

4.2. Students must have their journals with them in all classes all day.

4.3. Homework must be filled into the journal for every subject.

4.4. Students are expected to do all homework to the best of their ability. If this is not possible, a note from their parents/guardians to the class teacher is required. Please see Homework Policy for further details.

B5. Break/ Lunchtime

5.1. Students should respect the canteen staff at all times. At the end of both small break and lunch, tables and surrounding areas should be kept clean and tidy, each student taking responsibility for clearing his place.

5.2. 1st- 3rd year students must remain on the school premises at both small break and lunchtime.

5.3. All students must remain on the school premises during small break.

5.4. Students are not allowed to enter the main school building (unless otherwise stated or weather permitted).

B6. School Grounds & Buildings

Boundaries are necessary confines within which the College can reasonably supervise the safety of the students. The College acts “in loco parentis” in supervising the students during the school day. The College cannot reasonably be expected to extend that same supervision beyond the College premises.

6.1. The following areas are out of bounds during lunchtime:

- Priests’ House & Grounds
- C Block & fenced off areas
- Back Fields/ School Pitches
- Astro Pitch
- Classrooms
- Computer Rooms
- Store Rooms

6.2. Students are expected to keep the College tidy and free from litter. It is not permitted to eat or drink in the classrooms or corridors unless permission is given by the class teacher. Chewing gum is not permitted inside the College buildings.

6.3. Bicycles and other specified personal property must be stored and locked as directed.

6.4. Cycling is prohibited on the College grounds. Bikes may be stored in the designated compounds only. Students are encouraged to wear cycling helmets while cycling to and from school.

6.5. Students are prohibited from driving any mechanically propelled vehicle into or within the College grounds.

6.6. Students staying for evening study, for sport or recreation may not leave the College grounds before the end of the session unless instructed by or under the supervision of a member of staff or person in authority. They must have written permission from a parent to leave early.

B7. Fire and Safety

A high standard of fire precaution is vital to ensure the safety of all. Offences in the area of fire safety are also covered by the Criminal Law.

- 7.1. The College will deal severely with anyone endangering the lives or safety of others.
- 7.2. Everyone shall be familiar with the fire regulations of the College and shall attend all organised fire drills. Failure to co-operate with fire-drill will be treated as a serious offence.
- 7.3. Interference with fire - fighting equipment, alarm systems or emergency keys is strictly forbidden and will be treated as a very serious offence.
- 7.4. Possession of highly flammable substances e.g. lighter fluid, fireworks or bangers is a very serious offence.

B .8. Fostering Health

- 8.1. Smoking/vaping in any part of the school building or its environs is prohibited in compliance with legislation passed by the Oireachtas.
- 8.2. Smoking/vaping while in school uniform, and the possession of cigarettes/vapes, is also strictly prohibited.
- 8.3. The consumption of alcohol and the use of or possession of illicit drugs by students in the school building and school grounds, in school uniform, on school trips or while representing the school are strictly forbidden.

C. College Sanctions

C1. General Principles Applying to Rules and Sanctions

Every effort is made in the College to explain the purpose of the rules to the students. When rules are broken the following sanction(s) will apply. They are listed below; more than one sanction may be imposed.

Responsibilities of the College:

- 1.1 To generate a spirit of excellence in the College in academic, spiritual, social and physical aspects of education.
- 1.2 To help each student to fully develop his talents and to achieve his highest standards in work and behaviour.
- 1.3 To recognise good work and behaviour and to seek modification of behaviour which disadvantages other students or interferes with their learning.
- 1.4 To cultivate a sense of pride in the College through good example, professional standards and recognition and reward for student's contribution to life in the College.

1.5 To promote close co-operation with parents/guardians for the benefit of each student's education.

1.6 To promote close co-operation among the whole staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians

1.7 To show by example that they support the College in setting the highest standards in all it tries to do.

1.8 To make sure that students come to the College regularly, on time, suitably presented, appropriately dressed and ready to work.

1.9 To take an active and supportive interest in their son(s)' work and progress.

1.10 To show support for the authority of and discipline within the College, by helping their sons to achieve maturity, self-discipline and self-control.

1.11 To support the College, in whatever way they can, in all its endeavours to promote and improve the education of their son(s).

1.12 To keep the College fully informed of any health issues or concerns that pertain to their son(s).

1.13 To sign off students' journal.

Responsibilities of Students:

1.14 To aim at the highest standards of academic achievement, commensurate with his ability and to contribute positively to all aspects of life in the College.

1.15 To attend school on time, with the required equipment, be well prepared, suitably presented, appropriately dressed, ready to learn and participate in College life.

1.16 To ensure that, in regard to other students, their behaviour never disadvantages or interferes with their rights to learn and participate in College life.

1.17 To fully co-operate with all staff and to accept the authority and rules of the College.

1.18 To take into consideration and have respect for themselves.

1.19 To respect others.

1.20 To respect the property of all in the College community.

C.2 Behaviour Issues Dealt with by the Class Teacher

The following are examples of level one breaches of discipline and may be dealt with by the class teacher:

- Talking without permission.
- Eating/ Drinking in the classroom.
- Littering in the classroom.
- Out of uniform/ untidy appearance.
- No textbook/ copy/pen/equipment/journal/homework or unsatisfactory homework in class.
- Late arrival to class.
- Not following a teacher's instruction.

The Sanctions Applied by the Class Teacher May Be:

- Verbal reprimand.
- Reassign seating.
- Written work/ penalty sheet.
- Note in journal/ phone parent/guardian or write to parent/guardian.
- Other similar minor sanctions.

If there are repeated instances the class teacher may refer the student to the Year Head in writing using the referral form (indicating sanctions already applied).

C.3. The following are examples (not exhaustive) of level two breaches of discipline and may be dealt with by the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal

- Fighting with another student.
- Refusing to direct instructions.
- Not signing out when leaving the school grounds.
- Throwing items in class.
- Student does not present at class but remains on the premises.
- Repetitive level one offences.
- Theft.
- Foul language to a student/teacher.
- Sexual/ inappropriate comments/gestures
- Bullying behaviour.
- Leaving the school grounds without permission.
- Being absent from school without parental permission.
- Other similar offences.

- Cumulative level one breaches.

The Sanctions Applied By the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal May Be:

- Verbal reprimand.
- Issue written work/ penalty sheet.
- Write in journal/ write to parent/ guardian/ phone parent/ guardian.
- Put student on report card.
- Assign student to a detention (Prior written notification may be given).
- Assign cleaning duties (Prior written notification may be given).
- Out of School Time Detention e.g. Wednesday afternoon, Saturday morning detention etc.
- Internal suspension.

C.4.The following are examples of serious breaches of discipline and will be dealt with by the Deputy Principal or Principal:

- Fighting with/Assault of a fellow student.
- Assault of a member of staff.
- Substance abuse on school grounds.
- Abusive language to a teacher.
- Threats to a teacher.
- Theft/ Vandalism.
- Missuse of school computers.
- Property damage to school, student's property, classrooms etc.
- Reckless behaviour causing injury or damage.
- Other serious breaches of discipline.
- Cumulative breaches of discipline that, taken cumulatively, amount to a serious breach of discipline.

A range of sanctions may be applied by the Deputy Principal or Principal including:

- 4.13 Fines
- 4.14 Extra duties
- 4.15 Detention
- 4.16 Suspension (Internal & External)
- 4.17 Recommendation of expulsion to the Board of Management

C5. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

These procedures are intended to develop an attitude of personal accountability in students for their personal behaviour.

5.1 A record is maintained for each student in a personalised file. There is a variety of ways to record a breach of discipline by a student.

- A teacher may record an incident in his/her own register.
- A note may be written by a teacher in the student's journal.
- A referral form may be passed directly to the year head.

5.2 For minor sanctions no communication is made home to parents but a record is kept on the student's file. The teacher/ year head must note the sanction in the student's journal after the sanction has been completed.

- A detention may be issued at any time by the Year Head for a level two offence.
- Depending on the severity and/ or accumulation of records, the Year Head may issue a Detention. A letter indicating this is sent home with the student for signing by the parent/ guardian. This signed letter is presented at Detention. The Year Head will keep a record of the number of Detentions issued. Generally, if a second Detention is issued, a copy of the student record is sent by the Year Head to the student's parent/ guardian stating that the student is required for detention and the student's parents/ guardians are invited to contact the Year Head for consultation. This signed letter is presented at Detention.
- Further steps may require a consultation with the Deputy Principal and/ or Principal. The Principal may at this stage suspend the student. The record is sent to the parents/ guardians. Prior to the student's return the student and his parents/ guardian are required to meet with the Principal where a re-integration process will be undertaken.
- Other sanctions may be used by class teachers for individual offences. The College considers the regular non completion of homework to be a serious offence as it does any other acts or omissions which disrupt the teaching/ learning process in a class.
- In extreme circumstances a student may face immediate suspension arising from a particular type of offence. These circumstances are outlined below in the section dealing with suspensions.

C6. Suspensions

6.1 Suspensions will usually only occur after the Principal has ensured that:

- All discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented;
- All appropriate support personnel have been involved;

- Communication has taken place with the student and parent/guardian regarding the breaches of discipline which the College considers warrants a suspension;
- A written copy of previous breaches of discipline has been provided to the parent/guardian together with advice that if continued will lead to a suspension.

6.2 The Principal may suspend immediately in certain circumstances e.g. violence, threat of violence, presence of illegal drugs/alcohol, presence of weapons, persistent refusal to obey an instruction, persistent disruption of class, the use of foul or abusive language to a member of staff, leaving the College premises without prior permission or any grossly inappropriate behaviour.

6.3 When a student is returning to school after suspension he may be required, with his parents/guardians, to meet the Principal or his nominee to sign a Letter of Undertaking regarding an agreed reintegration programme. This will be witnessed by the Principal and the student's parents/ guardians. A student will not be allowed to return pending this being completed.

6.4 The Principal may suspend a student for up to 3 days, or up to 6 days with the agreement of the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Any suspension for longer than 6 days must be approved of by the Board of Management. Any suspension which would result in the student being suspended for greater than a cumulative total of 20 days or more in one school year must be approved of by the Board of Management.

6.5 If a student is suspended for 6 days or more the Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer. If a student is suspended for a cumulative total of 20 school days or more in one school year, the Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer.

Grounds for Removing a Suspension

6.6 Grounds for removing a suspension include:

- New circumstances which come to light;
- An act of clemency.

Appeal Against a Suspension

6.7 A parent/guardian, or a student aged 18 or more, may appeal against a suspension.

6.8 For an appeal against a suspension of up to 6 days, the appeal shall be made to, and be determined by, the Principal.

6.9 For an appeal against a longer suspension, or where the suspension would result in the student being suspended for greater than a cumulative total of 20 days or more in one school year, the appeal shall be in writing and made to the Chairperson of the Board of Management. It shall setting out the grounds for such appeal. The Board, or a duly authorised committee, will meet within three working days to consider the appeal.

C7. Expulsion

7.1 Expulsion is the ultimate sanction. Authority to expel is reserved to the Board of Management. It is a sanction to be used for serious cases of indiscipline or a case of a student persisting in a repeated disruptive behaviour even after other sanctions and short suspensions have been imposed. It may also be warranted due to the culmative nature of previous breaches of discipline.

7.2 Where the initial investigation of indiscipline by a student indicates that a recommendation for expulsion may be warranted, the following steps shall be followed:

- A detailed investigation shall be carried out by, or under the direction, of the Principal;
- The student and his parents/guardians shall be informed of the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion;
- The student and his parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint, preferably via a meeting, prior to the conclusion of the investigation.

7.3 Where the Principal, having considered the outcome of the investigation, considers that the student's indiscipline warrants a recommendation to the Board of Management that the student be expelled he shall:

- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour has been applied and documented;
- Inform the parents/guardians of his intention to recommend expulsion to the Board of Management;
- Make a formal expulsion recommendation to the Board with supporting documentation.
- Furnish a copy of his recommendation, together with any supporting documentation to the parents/guardians;
- Invite the parents/guardians to the relevant Board meeting;
- Invite the parents/guardians to make a written submission prior to the Board meeting;

7.4 On receipt of a recommendation to expel a student the Board of Management shall:

- Hold a meeting at which the Principal shall present their recommendation for expulsion;
- Hear any submission that the parents/guardian, or the student, may wish to make;

7.5 Following these submissions the Principal, the parents/guardian and the student, shall withdraw from the meeting. The Board shall then:

- Examined all the documentation presented;
- Considered the student's total record in the College;
- Considered whether a lesser sanction is warranted;

- Form an opinion as to whether the student should be expelled or whether to impose a lesser, or no sanction.
- Communicate the decision in writing to the parents/guardians formally through the Board Secretary

7.6 Where the Board forms an opinion to expel a student they shall inform the Education Welfare Officer under section 24(1) of the Education Welfare Act 2000 of their opinion in writing and the reasons therefor.

7.7 A student shall not be expelled before the passing of 20 school days following receipt of the notification by an Education Welfare Officer.

7.8 The Board may take such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the College and that the safety of students is secured during the 20 day period.

C.8 Appeal to Department of Education and Skills Against Suspension/Expulsion

8.1 Under the Section 29 of The Education Act 1998 a parent/guardian, or a student over eighteen, may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against:

- an expulsion, or
- a suspension for a period or periods totalling not less than 20 school days in school year.

The Board shall advise the parents/guardians in writing of this right of appeal and shall furnish the parents/guardians with the Appeal form.