

**ST. PETER'S COLLEGE, WEXFORD
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

ETHOS

The Code of Behaviour at St. Peter's College is a statement of good practice that covers all aspects of a school that contributes to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive ethos. All members of the school are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, with courtesy and mutual respect as basic requirements. Good school discipline, which, fosters an effective and stimulating learning environment depends on full co-operation between all members of the school community. The support of parents/guardians can, greatly assist the school in the implementation of our discipline policy. Conversely if parents/guardians of pupils are at odds with the school in this area, school discipline becomes impossible.

AIMS

1. To encourage adherence to an agreed set of principles of behaviour by pupils.
2. To support effective teaching and learning.
3. To contribute to mutual respect.
4. To gain the agreement and support of teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

The Basic Code of Behaviour

- Follow School Rules
- Attend
- Be Punctual
- Work Hard
- Act Sensibly
- Treat Everyone and Everything With Respect

SCHOOL RULES

The following is a list of school rules to which all students must adhere.

1. Pupils will use their gifts of mind, body, heart and spirit to the best of their ability.
2. Pupils will be mannerly and courteous among themselves, with the school staff and all other people. Behaviour in class, which disrupts the work of others, will be seen as a very serious offence. Any disrespect or disobedience to staff is a serious offence.
3. Pupils are obliged to attend all classes and events organised by the school.
4. Pupils should show due reverence and fully share in the liturgies and other spiritual exercises of the school and must attend all religion classes and related activities. (Exceptions may be made for members of religious faiths other than Roman Catholic).
5. Pupils must present themselves neatly and well groomed as outlined by the school authorities. They are required to wear the school uniform in school and for all school activities (where practicable). Shoes must be worn at all times except for P.E. and break-time activities, or in the case of exceptional circumstances. Students who do not present themselves dressed in full school uniform must have an explanatory note from parents/guardians. In the absence of a note students must sign the “School Uniform Book” in the school’s office. After three defaults students may get a detention.
Pupils will present themselves for class and activities with the required books, materials, equipment etc. Physical Education is a core school activity and pupils must be properly togged out for these classes. Earrings, nose rings and eyebrow rings are forbidden in the school.
6. Pupils are expected to respect and take care of school property, the property of other people and their own property – vandalism and theft shall be dealt with severely.
7. Pupils are expected to be in attendance on all school days and to register their attendance both in the morning and the afternoon on the computerised “swipe card system”. Pupils are expected to be punctual. They must not absent themselves from school or leave the school or school grounds between 9.00 a.m. & 4.00 p.m. (9.00 a.m. & 3.30 p.m. on Wednesdays) without the permission of the school authorities.
Pupils who arrive late for class should sign the late register in the office and present a note in the School Journal the following day.
Failure to produce this note may incur a detention.
A record of students who arrive late will be kept in the office.
If there is a consistent pattern of lateness, the Year Head will contact parents and sanctions may apply.

8. No pupil is allowed to leave the school grounds during lunchtime with the exception of students who go home for lunch and they must have a Lunch Pass.
9. Pupils are not allowed to park or drive cars in the school grounds, with the exception of Leaving Certificate 2 pupils with written permission from their parents/guardians and the Principal.

10.The use of chewing gum and Correctional fluid is expressly forbidden

11. Pupils are forbidden to smoke in school and during school activities. Under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002, it is an offence for any person to smoke anywhere within the school boundaries. The school therefore deems smoking within the school boundaries a serious offence.

Any student caught smoking will automatically incur a one-day suspension, and/or the withdrawal of school privileges including evening study.

Repeated offences will incur more serious sanctions, up to and including expulsion. The student's attention will also be drawn to the Act and he will be advised that he will be reported to the Environmental Health Officer. He will also be reminded that he is liable to the penalties referred to in the Act, up to and including a fine of €3,000.

12. The consumption of alcoholic drink and bringing alcoholic drink to school or on school outings is expressly forbidden. Any student found in possession of, or under the influence of, or selling/offering alcohol, will be suspended.

The use of illegal drugs is expressly forbidden, as is the possession of illegal drugs in school or on school outings. Any student found in possession of, or under the influence of illicit substances (drugs), will be suspended and may be expelled.

13. Mobile phones must be switched off during and between all classes.

Mobile phones may only be used at break time and lunchtime.

Mobile phones with camera facility are expressly forbidden in the school.

If a mobile phone is confiscated for breach of the above rules, the school will retain it for two weeks.

In the case of a phone with a camera facility being confiscated, the school will retain it for four weeks.

Please note that **Foul Language; Physical Violence; Bullying; Unruly Behaviour; Possession of Improper materials/Introduction of Improper Materials To School** shall be dealt with severely.

**MEASURES TO BE TAKEN WHEN A
STUDENT FAILS OR REFUSES TO
OBSERVE THE STANDARDS OF
BEHAVIOUR**

Teachers may apply the following measures/sanctions, depending on the seriousness of the offence:

- Reasoning with student
- Verbal warning
- Additional work or punishment exercises
- Written warning in diary
- Loss of privileges
- Lunchtime detention
- After school detention
- Referral to Year Head
- Meeting with Parents/Guardians
- Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal

Any student who incurs more than **FOUR** detentions may be suspended. Further detentions could lead to suspension or expulsion.

In addition to the above sanctions:

- (1) The Principal/ Board of Management may suspend a student from school.
- (2) The Board of Management is empowered to expel a student from the school.

PROCEDURES

After School Detention:

In the case of After School detention, parents/guardians will be informed by letter, of the student's misbehaviour, and the date and time of the detention. Should a meeting between parents/guardians and the teacher be necessary, it will be held by appointment only.

Any appeal against a detention should be addressed to the Principal.

Students who fail to sit a detention must present a letter from their parent/guardian to the Detention Co-ordinator explaining why they were absent and give a commitment that they will attend the next detention. The student may not be permitted to attend class until this letter is received. The letter must be signed by both the student and by

the parent/guardian. The Co-ordinator will contact parents/guardians if this letter is not received. If students do not attend the next available detention, parents/guardians will be asked to attend for appointment with school management.

Suspension:

The Principal may suspend a student for gross misconduct, for continuously refusing to co-operate and abide by the code of behaviour, or for incurring more than four detentions. Suspension will only be considered after an appropriate investigation by the Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal in relation to the incident/incidents. The Principal may also consult the Disciplinary Committee for guidance and advice. Parents/Guardians will be contacted and fully briefed on the nature of the incident/incidents. Both the parents/guardians and the pupil will be informed that a suspension is being considered.

In the case where a suspension is being imposed the parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the reason for and the date and time of the suspension. Before returning to the school, the Principal may request that both the student and parents/guardians give a written undertaking that the student will abide by school rules.

The Principal/ Board of Management may also impose agreed conditions for the pupil to remain in the school.

A suspension may be appealed in writing to the Board of Management. A suspension will not be served while an appeal is being processed.

Expulsion:

Only the Board of Management is empowered to expel a student.

Expulsion will only be resorted to in the most extreme cases of indiscipline and only after every effort at rehabilitation has failed and every other sanction has been exhausted.

Before a decision is taken to expel a student, parents/guardians will be informed in writing that such an action is being considered. They will be invited to attend the Board of Management meeting to present their case.

In a case where an expulsion is being proposed, the parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the decision of the Board and the reasons thereof.

The student will not be expelled from the school, before the passing of 20 school days, following receipt of the notification, by the relevant Education Welfare Officer. The above is without prejudice to the right of the Board of Management to take such other reasonable measures, as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school and that the safety of students is secure.

Appeals Procedure:

The procedure for appealing against the decision of a teacher or of the Board of Management is covered under Section 28 and Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Section 28 states:

- (a) The parent of a student or, in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal to the Board of Management against the decision of a teacher or other member of staff of a school.
- (b) Grievances of students, or their parents relating to the student's school (other than those which may be dealt with under paragraph (a) or Section 29, shall be heard.
- (c) Appropriate remedial action shall, where necessary, be taken as a consequence of an appeal or in response to an appeal.

Section 29 states:

- (1) Where the board or a person acting on behalf of the board-
 - (a) Permanently excludes a student from a school, or
 - (b) Suspends a student from attendance at a school for a period to be prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph, or
 - (c) Refuses to enrol a student in a school, or
 - (d) Makes a decision of a class which the minister, following consultation with patrons, national association of parents, recognised school management organisations, recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, may from time to time determine may be appealed in accordance with this section, the parent of a student, or in the case of a student who has reached 18 years of age, the student, may, within a reasonable time from the date that the parent or student was informed of the decision and following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school or the patron, in accordance with section 28, appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the department of education and science and the appeal shall be heard by a committee appointed under subsection (2).

The full section of this appeals procedure is available on request from the school.

<p> GROUNDS FOR REMOVING A SUSPENSION IMPOSED IN RELATION TO A STUDENT</p>
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- In the case where a suspended student is appealing said suspension under section 28 or section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the suspension will be removed pending the outcome of the appeals procedure.
- In the case where an appeal has been successful under section 28 or section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Parents/Guardians are reminded that written records of pupil behaviour are kept by the school throughout a student's career in the school as a matter of policy. These records are open to inspection and discussion by parents by means of appointment with the school authorities.

The following are also a sample of basic directions to which students should adhere in order to ensure a safe and secure environment for all the community.

IN CLASS

MAKE IT EASY FOR EVERYONE TO LEARN AND FOR THE TEACHER TO TEACH

This includes:

- * Attend every class
- * Arrive on time
- * Bring all the equipment you need in a suitable bag and finish eating and drinking before the class begins.
- * Where practicable, put bags and coats away.
- * Begin and end the class in a polite and orderly way
- * Listen carefully
- * Follow instructions
- * Work hard
- * Ask for help when you need it
- * Help each other when it is appropriate but don't distract or annoy anyone
- * Put your hand up to ask or answer a question.
- * Be sensible at all times
- * Do your homework as well as you can and hand it in on time.

IN GENERAL

SPEAK POLITELY TO EVERYONE

This includes:

- * Using language which is neither abusive or offensive
- * Offering to help others
- * Being polite to visitors

CARRY YOUR SWIPE CARD AT ALL TIMES

LISTEN TO OTHERS AND EXPECT TO BE LISTENED TO

This can include:

- * Trying to understand other people's point of view
- * Not interrupting anybody or being interrupted by others
- * Being silent when required
- * Not answering back

KEEP THE SCHOOL CLEAN AND TIDY SO THAT IS ALWAYS A WELCOMING PLACE, WHICH WE CAN BE PROUD OF

This includes:

- * Taking great care of our displays/photographs/etc.
- * Keeping the walls and furniture clean and unmarked (ie. no graffiti, no defacing of desks etc.)
- * Putting all litter in bins (even if this means carrying it until you find a bin)

- * Wear the correct uniform at all times
- * Reporting any damage you see to the Principal or Deputy Principal
- * Using toilets and showers in an appropriate way

OUT OF CLASS

MOVE QUIETLY AND GENTLY ABOUT SCHOOL

This includes:

- * Lining up sensibly outside classrooms when waiting for teachers
- * Walking to class rather than running, pushing or barging past others
- * Being ready to help by opening doors
- * Being ready to help by offering to carry things
- * For safety, **please keep to the right along corridors and on stairways**
- Behave sensibly in the School Complex, Playing Fields and Campus.

REWARDS

Statement

We consider it is important that praise and rewards should have a considerable emphasis within St. Peter's College, and pupils will thus achieve recognition for a positive contribution to school life. Such a contribution includes sound academic work and effort, positive contribution to school activities, good behaviour and adherence to the Code of Behaviour. The attention of our school should not be limited to those whose academic work is outstanding or to those whose behaviour is consistently poor.

It is expected that good standards of behaviour will be encouraged through the consistent application of our Code of Behaviour supported by a balanced combination of rewards and sanctions within a constructive school ethos.

Aims

To develop a consistent pattern of rewards, which are known, understood and agreed to by all.

To support the Code of Behaviour.

Implementation

This may be achieved in the following ways:

1. To distinguish between **informal** rewards (such as giving praise for appropriate behaviour in and outside the classroom) and **formal** rewards such as the giving of merits, privileges etc. for further agreed aspects of school life.
2. Examples of situations and circumstances in which formal rewards (such as merits, certificates, privileges) may be awarded will be reviewed, drawn up

- and agreed upon in consultation with staff. Year Heads may wish to consider whether or not rewards need to be differentiated for different age groups.
3. A list of rewards, both formal and informal, may be drawn up for pupils, in order to support the development of consistency.

Examples of informal rewards which staff are encouraged to use for academic achievement, appropriate behaviour and outstanding effort include:

- ◆ General praise and encouragement in class, which should be used as much as possible
- ◆ The Principal/Deputy Principal/Year Heads or other appropriate members of staff to be invited to praise individuals, groups or classes and being invited into classrooms as appropriate
- ◆ A letter home/ newsletter to parents to be used covering a wide variety of academic and non academic achievements.

Absences from School

The school authorities are obliged under The Education Welfare Act 2000 to put in place a system of strategies and measures, which encourage regular school attendance. We therefore, ask parents/guardians to work with the school in fostering an appreciation of learning among the students and in encouraging pupils to attend school regularly.

The school is also obliged to forward information in relation to absences to The Education Welfare Officer.

Every absence of a student must be accounted for by the parents/guardians of the student.

As stated in the school rules, pupils may only leave the school during school hours with permission from the school authorities. In order for such an absence to be permitted, a note from the student's parent/guardians, explaining the reason for the student being absent must be given to the school authorities prior to the student leaving the school.

If it is known in advance that the student will be absent, it is expected that parents/guardians will advise the school by ringing the office or by putting a note in the student's school journal.

On the day a student returns to school after an absence, an absence slip must be proffered to the school explaining the absence. There are absent slips at the back of the student journal for this purpose. These absence slips must be given to the relevant class tutor, who will forward them to the co-ordinator(s).

Attendance:

Every student must take responsibility for recording his own attendance at school. All students are issued with a personal "swipe card". Students must "clock in" for both morning and afternoon classes. If for any reason a student is unable to clock in, he must report to the Deputy Principal at the appointed time. A student who does not swipe in, will be recorded as absent on the school records. Failure to co-operate with the school attendance procedure will be regarded as a serious offence and may warrant disciplinary action.

Illness and Injury

The school should be notified immediately by parents/guardians of any infectious illness affecting their child. Likewise the school should be informed of any medication being taken by a student.

In the event of a student being injured or taken ill during school hours or while on school outings/activities, the school will inform the parents at the earliest possible opportunity by telephone call.

It is essential that the school has a contact number for parents/guardians at all times.

A Statement on Bullying

“Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour while they should not be condoned, can scarcely be called bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying” (Department of Education and Science).

Types of Bullying

Verbal Bullying:

Persistent name calling or slagging, which hurts, insults or intimidates. Using a person as a butt of jokes.

Physical Bullying:

Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping one up. It also includes assaults or threats of physical assaults. It may take the form of damage to one's clothes or personal property such as school books, sports gear, school bag, laboratory equipment.

Gesture Bullying:

Non-verbal threatening gestures, glances that convey threatening and frightening messages.

Exclusion:

Socially isolating, excluding or ignoring someone.

Extortion:

The deliberate extraction of money or other items of property accompanied by threats. Victims may also be forced to commit anti-social acts, e.g. theft or damage of property.

Direct bullying consists of physical aggression, hurtful words or nasty gestures. Indirect bullying involves ignoring, isolation, spreading rumours or falsehoods, passing around nasty notes or writing up insulting remarks in public places e.g. on whiteboards, toilet areas, school desks/tables. SMS texting and electronic mailing of rumours, falsehoods and insulting remarks is also a form of indirect bullying.

Parents/Guardians, School Authorities and Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that pupils are not involved in bullying of other pupils. Therefore communication between the home and school is essential as it allows bullying behaviour to be challenged and remedied.

The school aims to tackle issues of bullying in our community and what follows is a defined policy on bullying.

School Policy on Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression, psychological, verbal or physical, conducted by an individual or a group against others. Examples of bullying might include:

Pushing/Hitting/Fighting

Threatening/Shouting/Intimidating

Interfering with property

Jeering/Taunting/mocking/name calling

Unwelcome texting

Exclusion from peer group

Derogatory comments about family/friends

It is the school policy to promote an environment, which is safe, non-threatening and free from bullying. The following procedures are used to this end.

- **The pastoral care programme endeavours to heighten awareness of bullying issues. The S.P.H.E programme encourages assertive behaviour as opposed to passive or aggressive behaviour.**
- **Students are encouraged to report bullying incidents to the Class Tutor, any teacher, parent or guardian. Confidentiality is respected.**
- **All cases of bullying are monitored on an on-going basis by the teachers, Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal.**

Once an incident is reported:

- **The teacher will report and consult with the Tutor/Year Head. The incident will be investigated.**
- **The action taken will depend on the nature of the bullying. The students concerned will be consulted and interviewed. The Year Head may consult with the parents of both the student being bullied and the student(s) engaged in the bullying behaviour.**
- **An interview may be arranged for both the student being bullied and the student engaging in bullying behaviour with the Chaplain**

In serious cases the Deputy Principal or Principal will be involved. An interview with the student engaging in the bullying behaviour will be arranged. Sanctions may be imposed. These will be determined by the gravity of the offence. Sanctions may include, verbal warnings, punishment exercises, withdrawal of privileges, detentions, suspensions or expulsion.

SCHOOL SAFETY STATEMENT

St. Peter's College Secondary School aspires to create a safe environment for all members of the school community. The school has a detailed safety statement, which is available from school authorities on request.

Modification Clause

The management and authorities of St. Peter's College Secondary School reserve the right to modify details of this code of conduct at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever - changing environment and social context.