

**St. David's, Holy Faith Secondary School,
Greystones, Co. Wicklow**

Code of Behaviour Policy Document

***This Code of Behaviour Policy Document was ratified by the
Board of Management 21st May 2019.***

This Code of Behaviour Policy document was ratified by the Board of Management on 21st May, 2019.

The Code of Behaviour of St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School (the "School") has been formulated after consultation with management, teachers, parents/guardians and students with due regard to the relevant legislation as well as guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills.

Our school encourages improvement, good behaviour and good order, and accepts there is a need for sanctions where unacceptable behaviour is detrimental to learning and teaching. Accordingly, failure to comply with our school rules will result in disciplinary action.

Our Code of Behaviour is designed to maintain a Christian environment in which the student learns self-discipline, personal responsibility and an acute awareness of the rights of others. Our aim is to administer it with fairness, understanding and compassion at all times but to ensure that the principles of natural justice are applied at all times.

Sanctions are imposed for those who bully, lie, steal, harass, cheat, fight, disobey, endanger others, verbally abuse or in other ways, show disrespect for any member of the school community, damage school property or engage in other serious misconduct. This is clearly stated in the School's Anti-Bullying policy. Depending on the gravity or persistence of breaches of the Code of Behaviour, the sanction(s) up to and including expulsion, may be imposed.

As discipline is vital for students to achieve academic excellence, breaches of rules which impinge on the diligent and consistent application to study or learning process(es) are subject to sanctions. Consistent minor breaches of discipline will be treated as a major breach of rules. Disruption of class is never tolerated and may be subject to serious sanctions.

All actions/behaviours, which in the opinion of school management contravene the ethos of the School, are deemed a breach of this Code of Behaviour. Students who do not adhere to our rules will always be held accountable.

These guidelines are not a definitive list of all our school rules, and school management reserve the right to interpret what constitutes a breach.

Attendance:

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time to achieve maximum results in our school.

Progress at school requires optimum attendance and punctuality, therefore:

- **Procedure in the event of a student being absent:** A signed and dated note from a parent(s)/guardian(s) to the Deputy Principal (via school office) is required to explain absences
- **Procedure in the event of a student being late:** A student must present a note when reporting to the school office when late. If no note is presented a phone call or email from parent(s)/guardian(s) that day is required. If none of the above are provided that school day, a two hour detention, for first offence is imposed. For a second or subsequent offence, a one day suspension is imposed
- Students must obtain permission from the Deputy Principal/Principal if they need to leave school during school hours at all. A note from a parent(s)/guardian(s) must be presented at the school office at all times to leave for medical/dental appointments. Please make such medical/dental appointments are outside school hours, where possible
- Students should be in designated areas of the school at all times during the school day.

Respect for one another:

Each member of the school community must remain conscious of the rights and responsibilities of all to enjoy and to contribute to a safe and effective learning environment:

- As St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School is a co-educational school, boys and girls must show mutual respect at all times to one another
- Students must not bully or intimidate fellow students. Cheating, bad language, dishonesty or unruly behaviour will never be tolerated
- Aggression, verbal or physical, is absolutely forbidden
- Any form of harassment, verbal, non-verbal, physical or sexual, will always be severely sanctioned
- Sexual interference with, or abuse by word or deed, of another student is completely unacceptable and may result in expulsion, in accordance with the procedures laid down by our school as per our Anti-Bullying Policy ratified by the Board of Management on 30th May, 2017.

Interaction with staff:

Each member of the school community must recognise the responsibility of staff, who in the interest of all, must implement the codes and practices of the school in an atmosphere of mutual respect and ensure maximum academic achievement.

In order to facilitate learning and teaching:

- Students are required to show respect for and obey staff members at all times in class, on the school premises, on outings and at functions. Bringing our school into disrepute will always be considered a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour and a serious sanction will always apply

- Students must have all books and equipment necessary for class
- Students are required to be punctual for all classes and to move quickly from one class to the next
- Homework must be completed and submitted as directed
- Disruptive behaviour in class will never be tolerated. Teachers must be allowed to deliver the curriculum and students to learn, in a calm and orderly environment, to ensure maximum academic achievement
- Sexual interference with, or abuse by word or deed, of a member of staff or visitors to the school is completely unacceptable and may result in expulsion.

Incidents of violence towards staff will be firmly dealt with in accordance with the guidelines set out in Circular M18/99 as issued by the Department of Education and Skills.

Safety and Health:

The school promotes a safe and healthy environment and so sees the safety of all staff and students as paramount:

- Students must avoid any action which could cause physical, emotional or psychological injury to any other person in the school. If, so, as per this Code of Behaviour policy, disciplinary action may include sanctions up to and including expulsion
- Students must never smoke or have cigarettes, e-cigarettes, lighters or matches in the school or on the school grounds or when participating in any extra-curricular activity or at any time while wearing the school uniform. If so, as per this Code of Behaviour policy, disciplinary action will result in suspension
- Aerosols (especially spray deodorants) laser pens, and other such items can be dangerous and therefore students must never use or have these in school or on the school grounds
- Drinking alcohol or being in unlawful possession of alcohol in school or on the school grounds or when participating in any extra-curricular activity is forbidden and is liable to serious disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion
- The possession, use, promotion for sale, or sale of solvents or controlled drugs is forbidden and liable to serious disciplinary action, including expulsion. With regard to alcohol or controlled drugs any such breach of discipline will also be reported to the Gardaí as per this Code of Behaviour policy
- Being in possession of a weapon, or using any potentially dangerous object as a weapon, will be treated with the utmost severity and will be reported to the Gardaí and full rigours of this Code of Behaviour put in place. Such a case will be liable to serious disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion sanctions to include suspension and/or expulsion
- Searches of students lockers will be conducted if applicable, and only in circumstances where it is deemed necessary. Such searches will be conducted in the presence of the Deputy Principal/Principal or appointed person
- Interference with any safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, defibrillator or alarms is a very serious matter and will be dealt with accordingly, as per this Code of Behaviour policy, and such behaviour is liable to serious disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Property:

Each member of the school community must be conscious of our responsibility as citizens and of the need to respect our environment and all property:

- Students must not damage or interfere with property belonging to the school, the staff, other students or visitors to the school
- It is expected that all students will contribute to the maintenance of a clean environment at all times. Disposal of food or litter must be placed in bins provided.
- Chewing gum is not allowed in school
- In the interests of a graffiti free environment, permanent markers and aerosol spray paints are strictly forbidden
- Mobile phones, music players and electronic games systems may only be used prior to the commencement of tutorial, at the mid-morning break and during lunch time and must be switched off at all other times
- The taking of photographs or photographic images by students or staff member(s), student(s), visitor(s) to the school, school events by any media e.g. camera phones, cameras, camcorders etc. is prohibited, unless permission is obtained from the teacher(s), student(s), event organiser(s), school authorities. This refers to both on the school premises and extra-curricular activities/events off the school premises. Any breach of this regulation will be considered a serious breach of school discipline and may lead to a severe sanction
- The posting of any images or information (real or alleged) by students(s), of any teacher(s), student(s), school event(s), visitors to school, whether on the school premises or in an extra-curricular setting off school premises, in any medium be it print, T.V. internet sites, camera phones or any other medium is strictly forbidden, without permission of the teacher(s), student(s), visitor(s) to the school, event organiser(s), school authorities. Such posting of unauthorised image(s)/information is a serious breach of school discipline and will be considered a serious breach of school discipline and may lead to a severe sanction
- Students may use school facilities only under supervision authorised by the Principal/ Deputy Principal.

Uniform/Hair/Jewellery:

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child/children are in full uniform, no exceptions to this rule is permitted. It is also the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that:

- Students respect our school's uniform and appearance code
- The school expects that students take pride in their appearance and that they promote the good image of the school by wearing their uniform correctly. Students know that their uniform is a badge of belonging
- Only badges/insignia approved by the school authorities are permitted on uniform both indoor and outdoor
- Students must wear full school uniform as indicated on the uniform list (posted on our website). This list conforms to the requirements of the Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2015. All items of school uniform should be clearly marked with the student's name in full
- Students must wear their school jumper in school, at all times. During warmer months students are allowed to remove their jumper in class

- Students must wear black walking shoes, no trainers of any description are permitted with the exception during PE class
- For students wearing school trousers, the hemline length of the trousers must reach the level of their shoes. For students wearing the school kilt, the hemline length of the kilt must reach knee level
- For all year groups, the only jacket permitted is the school crested navy jacket
- Students are only permitted to wear black socks or black tights – no other colour permitted
- Whilst wearing their school uniform, students' conduct on buses, trains and elsewhere in public, must be in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour
- Losing items of school uniform or having items of uniform in the wash will not be considered an excuse for failing to arrive to St. David's properly attired. Students will be sent home and will only be permitted back to school in their full uniform
- Body piercing is never permitted under any circumstances. This includes face, tongue, nose, eyebrow, lip and ear cartilage piercings. Students are permitted to wear one small discreet stud/earring on each lower ear lobe. Students are never permitted to wear the following:
 - Bling studs
 - Ear gauges such as plugs, tunnels or any other form of earlobe stretching jewellery
 - Hoops
 - Long earrings of any sort
 - Upper ear earrings

In the event that a student wears any of the above banned piercings, these items will be confiscated by the Deputy Principal and not returned to the student until the end of the academic term. Additionally, detention is given to the student. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that their child abides by these rules and regulations. In the event of a second or more offence(s), an automatic suspension may be imposed

- No unconventional haircuts or hair dye(s) permitted
- No make-up permitted
- Students are not permitted to have a grade zero or grade one head shave.

Students who breach these rules will be sent home.

Supports and Sanctions:

The Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads and all teachers are here to support and encourage all students. Every effort is made to adopt a positive approach to behaviour in school.

The school has one counsellor who is available to students. The counsellor will involve other support agencies as required or appropriate, in consultation with parents.

Overall, responsibility for discipline in the school is vested with the Principal, who is charged with ensuring that the school's Code of Behaviour, is administered in a manner which is consistent and fair to all students.

Each teacher has responsibility for maintenance of discipline within his/her class while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises.

A written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour is maintained, and shared with all parties (students and parent(s)/guardian(s)). The normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians are utilised and the active co-operation of parents/guardians is sought in helping a student who has disciplinary problems to change their behaviour.

Refusal to comply with school rules will result in disciplinary action for the common good as per this Code.

Strategies and Sanctions:

The following are some of the strategies as outlined in this Code of Behaviour policy, which may be used to deal with unacceptable behaviour:

- Talk with students, to explain why the behaviour was unacceptable and how to improve
- Loss of privileges
- Payment for the repair or replacement of damaged property
- Confiscation of inappropriate or distracting items or materials. iPods, games systems mobile phones, iPads etc. are confiscated for one month or end of term whichever arises first
- Detention by subject teacher, with parents/guardians notified via the official homework journal/letter/phone call
- Detention by Year – Head, parent(s)/guardian(s) notified by letter
- Detention by Deputy Principal for 'lates' (first offence) whereby no note/email or phone call on day of 'late' is not received and one day suspension in event of second or subsequent day late without a note/phone call/email from parent/guardian
- Student put on daily/weekly report to Year-Head
- Referral to Principal/ Deputy Principal.

Suspension from school:

All suspensions are imposed by the Principal and notified to the Board of Management. Automatic suspension ensues for smoking/use/possession of drugs or alcohol. This may be followed by further sanctions in the case of drugs, alcohol, defiance, active aggression and 'lates' (without same day note/email/phone call for second or subsequent time). Where a suspension is for longer than five days, the Board of Management will review the situation and decide:

- to allow the student return on probation, or
- to continue the suspension for another period, or
- to impose conditions for the student's return, or
- to request parents/guardians withdraw the student from the school, or
- to consider a refusal of re-registration, or
- to expel the student.

If a student's behaviour involves repeated suspension, such a student, with their parent(s)/guardian(s) may be interviewed at a disciplinary meeting consisting of his/her Year-Head and the Principal and/or Deputy Principal. At this interview the student and parent/guardian will be clearly and formally warned by the Principal and/or Deputy Principal that, should the

student's behaviour not improve, the Board of Management will be asked to review their continued presence in the school.

Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 gives parents/guardians and students, who have reached the age of eighteen, the right to appeal suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to twenty school days in any one school year to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

Expulsion is most serious disciplinary sanction and will be resorted to for gross misconduct, the use and sale of forbidden substances, including drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment and other serious breaches of this Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. If it is proposed to expel a student, St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School will notify the education welfare officer, in accordance with the requirements of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

Parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to meet with the Board of Management, to hear the complaints against their child and to give a written and/or oral response to the Board of Management. Parents/guardians, if they wish, may bring a representative with them to this meeting.

In the event of a student being expelled, the student (if over the age of eighteen years), or if (the student is under eighteen years) his/her parents/guardians shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Trustees and under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, to the Department of Education and Skills.

Furthermore, a student shall not be expelled from the school before the passing of twenty school days following receipt of notification by the Education Welfare Board, as stated above.

The Board of Management reserves the right to take such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in our school and that the safety of students is secured.

Any of the above sanctions, or a combination of them, may be implemented depending on the gravity of the offence.

The decision of the School Principal or School Deputy Principal in the interpretation of this Code of Behaviour is final.