

Columba College, Killucan



Code of Behaviour

Mission Statement

Columba College, as a Post Primary School, aims to provide a learning environment which will allow all students to achieve their full potential and enable them to develop into caring and responsible adults/citizens capable of contributing to and fulfilling their roles in the Community/Society.

Introduction

This Code of Behaviour has been prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board. Inputs have been received from the Board of Management, Teaching and other Staff members, Home School Community Liaison Officer, Parents/guardians and Students. It is hoped that this inclusive approach will help to maximise the benefits of this code to the school community.

Rationale

Under Section 23 of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, the Board of Management must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students. The Act requires that the school code of behaviour is prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB).

All students have the right to be educated. Therefore no student may disrupt the class and no student may remove the right to learn from another student. It is the right of all teachers to teach without any student interrupting or hindering the teaching process.

Scope

This Code of Behaviour is applicable:

- to class periods and break periods during the school day
- when students are on the school premises before school starts
- when students are taking part in extra-curricular activities or out on school related activities
- when students are wearing their school uniform in the vicinity of the school

Aims

- Columba College is characterised by high standards in all areas of school life. We aim to uphold our characteristic spirit of good discipline, a strong work ethic, high educational attainment and good relationships.
- To provide an environment within which students feel safe, secure and respected
- To maintain a positive climate where mutual respect and co-operation are fostered throughout the school community and where lapses are treated with constitutional and natural justice.
- to create a climate that encourages and reinforces positive behaviour
- to encourage self discipline and responsibility among students
- to help students mature into responsible participating citizens
- to facilitate good order and a positive teaching and learning environment

Objectives

- to encourage and recognise positive behaviour
- to ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and encouraged
- to create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour

School Rules and Procedures**In our school we expect our students to:**

- treat each person in school with respect
- arrive at school on time for assembly at 9.00 a.m.
- arrive to all classes on time
- go directly and punctually from class to class during the school day
- refrain from eating and drinking in class
- co-operate with teachers and others in the class in doing work in the class
- show respect for school property and keep the school litter free
- wear only the school uniform during class time (no hats, jackets etc.)
- remain on the school premises for the duration of the school day
- have their School Journal with them in all classes
- have all necessary books and equipment with them for each class
- complete all assigned homework both written and oral
- do nothing inside or outside the school to bring the school community into disrepute
- have their mobile phone/ iPods switched off during class periods and between classes. Phones and iPods may only be used at break and lunch times
- not use foul or obscene language
- comply with all systems and procedures in the school.

Students are forbidden from:

- smoking on school grounds or in the vicinity of the school
- consuming or having in their possession any illegal substance (e.g. alcohol, drugs) or product (e.g. fireworks) on school grounds or in the vicinity of the school
- consuming or having in their possession any substance or product which may be perceived as a substitute for an illegal substance or product
- undertaking any activity which endangers the life of themselves or any of their fellow students, teachers or staff
- using the camera facility on their phone except when authorised by a teacher to do so

Positive Behaviour

All Staff will make every effort to encourage and celebrate good behaviour, positive achievements and positive efforts of the students and will have high expectations for good behaviour.

Positive behaviour strategies will include:

- personal praise by a teacher or class teacher
- positive feedback in school reports
- verbal recognitions/praise and positive reinforcement
- positive comment in journal
- letter to parents/guardians
- assignment of positions of responsibility: student council
- publication in newsletter
- Awards Night
- class rewards such as outings
- any other appropriate strategy

Each student has the right to learn without interference from others and to an education free from disruption, intimidation or bullying of any kind.

Students with Special Educational Needs

Class Tutors and Specialist personnel (i.e. in Learning Support and Resource, Special Needs Assistants) will ensure that the code of behaviour is communicated in a way that students with special needs will understand. If a student with special needs is acting in a way that would usually be perceived as breaching the rules, every effort will be made to ensure that this student understands the rules and he/she may be given additional opportunities to practice the rules before a sanction is imposed. If a sanction is imposed, the student with special needs should understand the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable.

Attendance

Good attendance impacts greatly on academic achievement. In accordance with the Attendance Policy students should swipe in between 8:50 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. each morning. In addition they must swipe in between 1:50 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. from Monday to Thursday. Students with good attendance are rewarded through the Perfect Attendance Reward System. Loss/damage of swipe card will incur the appropriate fee. Failure to swipe in may incur sanctions in accordance with the attendance policy.

Absences/Lates

Where possible, the school should be notified in advance of absences. Reasons for absences should be recorded by parent(s)/guardian(s) in the relevant section in the Student's journal. Students are discouraged from leaving school for appointments etc. during the day. Where it is absolutely necessary to leave before the end of the school day, students must have written permission and must be collected by their parent/guardian or a nominee of their parent/guardian. Details of a student's departure should be recorded in the 'sign out' sheet at front office where the parent/guardian must sign the student out. 'Lates' will be recorded in the 'lates book' and will be dealt with in accordance with the Attendance Policy.

Uniform

The full uniform should be worn at all times.

Boys and Girls

Navy Jumper with school crest

Blue Shirt

Grey Trousers

Black or navy socks

Black Shoes

This is a new school uniform and in the changeover to this uniform a white polo shirt and navy trousers for girls are also acceptable.

If it is absolutely necessary to wear further clothing under a school uniform it must not be visible. Football jerseys of any colour are not allowed to be worn under shirts. Hoodies are not allowed to be worn under jumpers.

The school reserves the right to ask students to remove excessive jewellery, in particular in practical classes for health and safety reasons. One pair of small earrings is acceptable. Any other facial jewellery is not permitted.

Disciplinary Committee

The committee will consist of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Post Holder(s) and Class Teacher. A quorum will consist of 3 members.

The Right to Search

In the interests of the general student body, the school reserves the right to search a student's property i.e. schoolbag or to give an instruction to a student to empty his/her school bag or pocket or remove a jacket. This may arise in the context of substance abuse, theft or possession of any item that may endanger the health and safety of others. The search will be authorised by the Deputy Principal or the Principal. The search will be conducted in the presence of at least two staff members.

Parental Concerns or Complaints

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are welcome to contact the school in the event of any concerns or complaints relating to the behaviour of their child. The School will arrange a meeting of the relevant personnel at the earliest opportunity. The School expects that all such meetings will be held in an atmosphere of constructive interaction between all parties.

Students aged eighteen years or more/PLC students

If an adult student requests the school to restrict or limit communication with parents/guardians or to limit parental involvement in matters relating to their education, the school will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student about the change in practice and the reasons. If adult students or PLC students are deemed to be exempt from any part of this Code of Behaviour, the exemptions will be communicated in writing to the students.

Sanctions

The purpose of these sanctions is to help students understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour. The level of misbehaviour dictates the sanction that applies. The absence of misbehaviour from the lists below does not mean that a sanction will not apply and sanctions may vary depending on the misbehaviour.

1) Low Level Misbehaviour

- a. Minor breaches of school rules
- b. Chewing gum/littering
- c. Failing to do homework
- d. Disrupting class by talking/laughing etc
- e. Failing to bring required books/equipment to class
- f. Being late for class
- g. Eating and/or drinking in class

Sanctions

- i. Separation within the classroom
- ii. Penalty work or punishment exercises or extra work appropriate to current areas of study
- iii. Verbal reprimand
- iv. Note to parents/guardians in Journal
- v. Collecting litter/removing chewing gum etc
- vi. Detention
- vii. Letter of apology

2) Medium Level Misbehaviour

- a. Use of abusive language
- b. Throwing objects
- c. Persistent classroom disruption
- d. Refusal to carry out teacher's instruction
- e. Aggressive behaviour
- f. Continuous low level misbehaviour
- g. Disrespectful behaviour towards other students, teachers or their property
- h. Shouting/horseplay in corridors
- i. Failure to attend lunch time detention

Sanctions

- i. Supervised detention by the teacher
- ii. Removal from class and placed elsewhere under supervision
- iii. Report to class teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal
- iv. After School Detention
- v. School/Community Work (e.g. litter picking)
- vi. Report Card
- vii. Internal Suspension
- viii. Fines charged to repair damage

3) Serious Misbehaviour

- a. Continuous Medium Level Misbehavior
- b. Bullying or harassment of other students.
- c. Verbal or Physical Assault, threat or abuse of a member of the school community or a visitor to the school
- d. Damage to property of staff or students
- e. Putting a teacher's or fellow student's health or safety at risk
- f. Possession of fireworks, drugs, alcohol or substitute products
- g. Consumption of drugs, alcohol or substitute products
- h. Sale, or distribution of fireworks, alcohol, drugs or substitute products
- i. Possession of knife or offensive weapon.
- j. Malicious damage to property.

- k. Theft within the school.
- l. Use of social networking sites or other media to discredit another student or staff member
- m. Serious misbehaviour on school-related activities.

Sanctions

- i. Exclusion from school trips and sports trips
- ii. Suspension
- iii. Reduced Timetable
- iv. Possible Expulsion
- v. Any combination of the sanctions for Medium Level Misbehaviour.

The School will at all times seek to be fair and consistent when imposing sanctions. Each individual's involvement in disciplinary incidents is judged separately. A consequence of this is that the sanction imposed on an individual may vary from one to another even though on occasion they seem to have been in breach of the code in a similar way.

Procedures for Detention

Detention may take place at break time, lunchtime or after school.

- Lunch detention can last up to 30 minutes and can begin at 1:20 p.m.
- Friday After school detention will begin at 1:30 p.m. and finish at 2:30 p.m.

Appropriate work will be assigned for each detention period.

Parents will be notified by letter/telephone call if their child is to attend Friday after school detention.

Discipline Structures: Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to correct breaches of discipline if these come to their notice at any time and in any place within the school grounds.

Subject Teachers:

- 1) are responsible for discipline in their own class
- 2) share with other teachers a common responsibility for good order within the school and school grounds
- 3) should develop in consultation with students a simple set of clear rules and routines for their class
- 4) will attend to occasional minor misbehaviour routinely, effectively and consistently

- 5) may impose a range of sanctions to maintain high standards of behaviour necessary for effective teaching and learning. These may include:
- ✓ recording misbehaviour in journal
 - ✓ verbal reprimand
 - ✓ comment in journal
 - ✓ telephone contact/meeting with parent
 - ✓ changing seating position
 - ✓ break or lunchtime detention
 - ✓ school community work e.g. tidying classroom, cleaning desks, picking up litter in classroom or outside
 - ✓ referral to Class Teacher
 - ✓ removal of student from class to supervised location. This may only be done in consultation with the Class Teacher or Deputy Principal. No student may be removed from class indefinitely. Exclusion from class should be related to serious misbehaviour. Exclusion from class is a serious matter and should rarely occur.

Class Teacher:

- 1) will ensure that students in their class are familiar with the School Code of Behaviour
- 2) will monitor students' journals weekly
- 3) will consult with subject teachers in relation to students' positive and negative behaviour
- 4) may impose a range of sanctions appropriate to the level of misbehaviour
- 5) will refer students to the Deputy Principal where further intervention is required
- 6) will attend a Disciplinary Committee meeting when it involves a student from their class

Deputy Principal:

- (1) is responsible for the general Application of Code
- (2) will liaise with class teachers and subject teachers regarding referrals made by them
- (3) is a member of the Disciplinary Committee
- (4) will liaise with outside agencies where necessary
- (5) may impose a range of sanctions appropriate to the level of misbehaviour
- (6) will liaise with the Principal in relation to serious misbehaviour

Principal:

- 1) is responsible for the application of the Code of Behaviour

- 2) will investigate serious incidents
- 3) is the final arbiter in most cases of serious indiscipline
- 4) is responsible for ensuring that the implementation of the Code is
 - a) fair
 - b) equitable
 - c) consistent
- 5) may impose suspensions
- 6) is a member of the Disciplinary Committee
- 7) will communicate the recommendations of the Disciplinary Committee to the Board of Management

Board of Management:

This Code of Behaviour is given formal approval by the Board of Management. The Board of Management will support the Principal and teaching staff in its just implementation. Only the Board of Management can expel students. It hears appeals from parents/guardians in instances of suspension which exceed 20 days. It decides on the recommendation of the Principal to expel a student following a full hearing of all parties concerned.

Role of Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians act as the major role models for their child. They can contribute to the School's Code by:

- Ensuring full attendance at school
- Ensuring student arrives at school on time, wearing the full uniform and is prepared for school
- Checking the journals regularly for homework and teacher comments and signing the journals weekly.
- Providing current and active phone numbers
- Informing the school of any cases where concerns at home may impact on a student's school work.
- Co operating and working positively at all times with the rules and codes of the school
- Bringing concerns to the attention of the school
- Attend Parent/Teacher meetings
- Developing a sense of self worth in their child
- Recognising their child's effort and achievements
- Support the Parents' Association

The school must be able to contact parents at all times, particularly in the case of an emergency. Parents must supply current and active phone numbers and addresses. Should there be any change in either, in the interest of student welfare, the school must be notified. In the event that the school is attempting to contact parents, first by telephone and then by letter and is unable to do so, then a student may be asked to remain at home until contact is established.

Recording Misbehaviour

- Students should be informed when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record
- The School Standard Recording form should be used to record the misbehaviour
- Records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

A filing system exists in the Principals Office that contains records of all students. A students file contains the students enrolment form, assessment and examination results, a record of any misdemeanours, misbehaviours etc. Written records of behaviour are kept throughout a student's time in the school. Participation in school tours and outings may be withdrawn, for safety reasons, due to poor behaviour.

Suspension and Expulsion

In instances of suspension which exceed 20 days or in cases of expulsion, the parents/guardians (or the student if aged 18 or over) have the right of appeal to the Board of Management.

Suspension

Authority to suspend has been delegated to the Principal and Deputy Principal by the Board of Management.

Procedures in the case of a Suspension

The Parents/guardians and student will be informed of;

- the allegations being made
- the investigation procedures
- the student's right to respond to the allegations
- the student's right to be heard and respond to the sanction if it is of a serious nature

Implementing the Suspension

The Principal/Deputy Principal will notify the parents/guardians and the student in writing and/or by telephone call of the decision to suspend. The letter/conversation will confirm:

- the period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- the arrangements for returning to school
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management where the suspension exceeds 20 days

The Principal reserves the right for immediate suspension in cases where it is appropriate.

Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student.

The School will take significant steps to address unacceptable behaviour which may result in expulsion. These steps include:

- meeting with parents/guardians and the student to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour
- making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour, if it should persist

- ensuring that all other possible options have been tried
- seeking the assistance of external support agencies where possible

Procedures in respect of Expulsion

1. The student will be suspended immediately pending a decision on expulsion.
2. The Principal will inform the student and their parents/guardians in writing of the details of the alleged misbehaviour and that it may result in expulsion.
3. The Principal will give the parents/guardians and the student an opportunity to respond to the allegations
4. A detailed investigation of the alleged incident will be carried out under the direction of the Principal
5. The investigation will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee
6. The Disciplinary Committee will make a recommendation to the Board of Management
7. Where the Principal forms the view that expulsion is warranted, following the investigation and the recommendations of the Disciplinary Committee, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion
8. The Principal will inform the parents/guardians and the student that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
9. The Principal will ensure that the parents/guardians have records of; the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board is being asked to consider expulsion
10. The Principal will provide the Board of Management with the same records as given to the parents/guardians
11. The Principal will notify the parents/guardians of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to the hearing
12. The Principal will advise the parents/guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
13. The Principal will give sufficient notice to parents/guardians of the Board of Management hearing.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed every two years.