

Sligo Grammar School

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SLIGO GRAMMAR SCHOOL CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Introduction

This Code of Behaviour will reflect the ethos and vision of Sligo Grammar School. The school is an Incorporated Society School under the auspices of the Church of Ireland. The code is therefore designed to encourage behaviour which reflects Christian values and promotes a rounded and holistic development of pupils within a safe environment. The school's community is both multi and non-denominational. We similarly commit ourselves to creating an atmosphere that celebrates diversity

The code applies both on campus and off campus where pupils engaged in extracurricular activities are identifiable with the school. The responsibility for the implementation of the code first and foremost rests with the school management and staff. It is expected that parents / guardians will fully support the school in the implementation of this code.

It is the responsibility of all the adults in the school community, staff, teachers and board members to model in their dealings with one another and with pupils, the high standards of behaviour which the school expects.

This current code has been developed, over the Academic year 2010-11, by staff in consultation with BOM; School Council and Parents through The Parents' Association. It has been informed by the NEWB "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (2008) and the requirements of the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Purpose of the Code

The code, in a positive way, seeks to promote behaviour which enables each member of the community to reach their full potential. It is underwritten with a belief in the right of each member of the community

- to have the opportunity to learn
- to be happy both in the academic and leisure environments
- to be treated fairly
- to be safe

The code seeks to ensure that pupils are aware of the high standards of behaviour that are expected of them and the way in which inappropriate behaviour will be responded to.

Aims of the Code

1. That each pupil will develop and demonstrate good behaviour appropriate to the circumstances surrounding them.
2. To develop good behaviour enabling pupils to take their place as responsible members of society.
3. That the teaching and learning environment is orderly and conducive to the pupils' right to learn.
4. To ensure fair and equal treatment of each pupil
5. To support the moral and social development of each pupil.
6. To promote respect for the diversity of backgrounds, opinions, cultures and needs of others.
7. That each member of the community respects both personal and school property.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Respect, courtesy and tolerance

The school community includes the Board of Directors, Board of Management, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and the pupils. The purposes of the school are best served where each member of the community displays courtesy, manners, tolerance and respect for each other. Each member of the community has a right to be treated with good manners, courtesy, respect, tolerance and kindness. This applies to behaviour, to speech and use of language. Inappropriate behaviour and offensive language must be avoided. Visitors to the school should be treated with similar good behaviour.

The importance of the adult population modelling each of these behaviours for pupils in their own relationships with pupils and with one another is recognised.

Pupils and staff have a right to be free of intimidation of any kind. Bullying and any form of harassment, or exclusion, will not be tolerated - the school has a separate Anti-Bullying policy. It is essential anyone who is concerned about such an activity informs an appropriate person as recommended in the policy

Behaviour in class

As already stated, the right to learn is a fundamental right. Teachers have the right to teach. Knowledge of and adherence to routines helps to promote a good learning environment and such is expected of both pupils and teachers. Parents are requested to ensure books and stationery requirements are met and it is expected of pupils that these are brought to class.

Each pupil is responsible for maintaining a high level of personal behaviour and co-operation in the classroom. The pupils take responsibility for their own learning and are expected to do their best. Growth towards independent learning is encouraged.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. In taking responsibility for their own learning pupils develop good private study habits. Homework journals are provided to facilitate pupils noting work set by teachers. Such further study reinforces and develops classroom activities and it is expected that homework will be completed. Parents are requested to encourage and to monitor study and to facilitate it by providing an appropriate study space. Parents are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with the separate homework policy.

Out-of-class behaviour

All pupils are encouraged to participate in and commit to the wide variety of activities that take place in the school

Each pupil is expected to maintain a high standard of behaviour at all times when identified as being a Sligo Grammar School pupil.

There is a separate Trips Policy.

Property

The school endeavours to provide an environment that is appropriately well-kept and is therefore a pleasant working environment. Pupils should respect this and avoid behaviour which would damage school property either accidentally or wilfully. Casual dropping of litter is disrespectful to all other members of the community.

The school works in an environment of trust. Pupils and staff have a right to feel their property is safe and will not be interfered with. Pupils are advised, however, not to bring valuables to school and if they do so they do so at their own risk.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for a positive learning experience. Under legislation we are required to seek detailed explanation for any absence or latecomers as per NEWB (National Education Welfare Board) Guidelines. The school may contact the Parent / Guardian where it deems that absence remains unexplained.

Parents are asked to ensure that if pupils need to leave school early or arrive in late that they have a note for the appointed Teacher on Duty. The school is also under law required to keep a record of these.

In addition, in order to maximise the teaching and learning experience family holidays should only take place during school holidays. In exceptional circumstances the school should be consulted.

Uniform

At Sligo Grammar School we take pride in our excellent school reputation. School uniform identifies the school community with this reputation and so is worn with pride. Parents are requested to familiarise themselves with the school's uniform policy.

Promoting good behaviour

Promoting good behaviour is a main goal of this code. A range of strategies exist within the school for promoting good behaviour at both classroom and school level. The school also has a tradition of recognising and rewarding achievements. These methods include:

1. Personal acknowledgement to pupils through praise
2. Compliment when "catching" someone "doing good"
3. A system of commendation

4. Specific recognition of pupils considered to have made a special contribution, inside or outside of school, by the awarding of, for example, an item of clothing, a badge or a certificate.
5. Recognition at a Whole School Assembly
6. Academic effort is acknowledged 5 times a year by the “Effort Mark” system
7. Annual Prize Giving
 - Academic effort is acknowledged by “Effort Prizes” in each class/subject
 - Academic excellence is acknowledged in each class/subject
 - There are special prizes for outstanding Academic achievement
 - A number of special prizes are awarded for outstanding achievement in non-academic areas

Response to inappropriate behaviour

Where pupils behave in a manner which is inappropriate we aim to resolve issues in a positive way by adopting a problem-solving approach so that the pupil learns to behave in an acceptable manner.

We see the school, pupils and parents working in partnership to achieve a positive outcome for all and create an encouraging learning environment

Referral Procedure and associated Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to respond to inappropriate behaviour and to intervene so as to effect change. Certain staff, however, have specific responsibilities. The following is an ascending ladder of staff interventions which may involve support and / or sanctions.

1. The teacher talks to the pupil regarding the problem and discusses appropriate methods to improve behavior and implements an appropriate sanction. Parents maybe made aware of the situation.
2. The form teacher talks to the pupil and discusses the issue. In consultation with the teacher and after listening to the pupil, he/she puts in appropriate measures to resolve the issue and / or implements an appropriate sanction.

3. The Coordinator works with the teacher and form teacher and parents in helping to resolve the problem. Pupils may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor if it is deemed necessary and only after consultation with the parents. Other members of the Pastoral Care team may become involved. An appropriate sanction may be implemented.

4. The Deputy Principal acts as facilitator with the coordinator in resolving the problem and may implement an appropriate sanction.

5. The Headmaster meets parties involved to resolve issues

6. The matter may be referred to the Board of Management. In this case all procedures will be followed in accordance with the Education Act, 1998 and the NEWB Guidelines entitled "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools".

It must be noted that certain actions which a member of staff considers are of a serious nature may be referred directly to the Coordinator, the Deputy Principal or the Headmaster.

Sanctions

There are times when sanctions are needed as a response to inappropriate behaviour. Examples of such inappropriate behaviour include responding disrespectfully to a teacher, swearing and physical violence. It should be noted that this list of inappropriate behaviour is not exhaustive.

Once again the school emphasises the purpose of sanctions is to change behaviour. Every effort will be made to use sanctions in a way that is transparent, equitable, fair and consistent.

A range of sanctions which it may be considered appropriate to use include:

1. Verbal warning.
2. Moving a pupil within a classroom.
3. Being given a minor imposition such as, an extra piece of work or being detained during a school break
4. A note in the pupil's journal for parental / guardian's signature.

5. Withdrawal of privileges.
6. Carrying out a useful task within the school (parents will be informed, where appropriate)
7. Being reported to a form teacher. Co-ordinator, Deputy Principal, Headmaster.
8. Being detained outside of school hours. This will only take place following contact with parents by formal letter.
9. Being placed on report – where the pupil's work and effort are reported on by the class teacher at the end of each class.
10. Meeting with parents to explain the issues and to obtain their support.
11. Suspension from school or expulsion

On rare occasions withdrawal from a particular class or year group to a supervised location on a temporary basis may be deemed appropriate in order to ensure the right to learn of other pupils.

Procedures for suspension and expulsion and Appeals

Access to education shapes the life chances of children and young people in a fundamental way. For this reason, a proposal to exclude a student, through suspension or expulsion, is a serious step, warranted only by very serious misbehaviour. Suspension and expulsion will only be exercised by the Headmaster / Board as a proportionate response to a student's behaviour.

Suspension or expulsion will occur as deemed appropriate by the Headmaster/Deputy Principal following investigation into any incident or series of incidents. A parent/guardian may appeal this decision to the Board of Management. In all cases parents/guardians are notified in writing of their right to appeal.

The Board of Management reserves the right to remove from the school register any student who puts the health and welfare of other students or staff at risk, or any student who engages in persistent or serious misbehaviour which undermines the ethos of the school, undermines the education of other students or the work of the school staff.

In certain circumstances, where the Headmaster deems it necessary in the interests of the students and staff, a student may be suspended prior to a full investigation taking place. In the circumstance of immediate suspension the parents of the suspended student will be informed as soon as possible.

A separate policy document gives details of Pupil Exclusion Procedures.

Illicit substances and activities; Smoking and Alcohol.

The school prohibits the use of, possession of, supply of or the organisation of supply of illegal drugs or substances by pupils.

If the school suspects a pupil is involved in such activity it reserves the right to require the pupil to undergo a medical examination as determined by the school. This would be done with the consent of parents / guardians.

The possession of dangerous objects, weapons or illicit or harmful substances is considered by the school to be a very serious offence and is likely to lead to suspension or expulsion.

The school also reserves the right to involve the Health authorities and / or the Gardai if it considers this appropriate.

Smoking or the consumption of alcohol or facilitating pupils to engage in these activities are also strictly forbidden and will be treated as a serious breach of this code.

There is a separate illicit substances abuse policy.

Health and Safety

It is clearly important that the school is both a healthy and a safe place. It is important that no one behaves in a manner which is detrimental to the health and safety of others. Pupils are required to become familiar with safety procedures especially in laboratories and when involved in sport.

No pupil should be sent to school if suffering an infectious disease. Parents / guardians are requested to inform the school if their child has an infectious disease or specific medical condition.

Hand held devices such as Mobile Phones or Portable Media Players

It is recognised that such devices are widely used by pupils and brought to school. Such devices have immediacy and urgency in their nature, distract the user and are invasive. It is therefore a policy of the school that these devices should neither be switched on nor visible during the school day. Such devices may be confiscated for up to 7 days.

The school is not responsible for how pupils use their hand held devices.

Privacy

Respect for others includes respect for their privacy – both of their person and their property. This applies to all members of the school community.

Specifically, recording of conversations or capturing of either still or moving images must only take place, in exceptional circumstances, with the permission of the teacher and individual/s concerned.

The school network contains the filtering system provided by the DES. Discretion and care is advised in uploading files at all times to social networking sites.

The school has a separate ICT Acceptable Usage Policy.

School Expectations

A summary of the expectations of the school will be provided to ensure the smooth running of the school and operate in conjunction with this code and with school policies. It is expected that pupils will co-operate with these rules in a positive manner.

Role of Parents

The success of this code is greatly assisted by the expected support that parents/guardians will give the school in its implementation. It is vital that any Parent/Guardian who has concerns over their children's behaviour or work, or who have information regarding a circumstance which impacts on their child's behaviour/work, contacts the school. Utmost confidence is ensured where that is required

Review of the Code

This code will be reviewed bi-annually and more frequently if legislation or circumstances dictate. Parents may share their views with the Parents Association or in writing to the school.

2011

Code ratified by Board of Management: November 2011

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Due for review 2017