



St. Mary's Secondary School, Baldoye, Dublin 13

Code of Behaviour

Each Student has Respect for Self, Others and the Environment

Mission Statement

St. Mary's Secondary School for Girls, Baldoye is a Catholic school under the care of the Sisters of Charity. We aim for high academic standards and emphasize the moral, religious and social development of each student in a caring community. We work in partnership with parents to prepare our students to be independent, tolerant and compassionate.

Introduction

St. Mary's Secondary School seeks to create a school environment that encourages the holistic development of each student within a caring Christian community. This vision is encapsulated in the school's mission statement which informs and directs all the activities within the school, including matters relating to school behaviour.

St. Mary's Secondary School operates a Pastoral Care system that is aimed at creating a caring environment, enabling each student to become a self-disciplined, mature person. This will be achieved through co-operation, respect for self and others and accepting responsibility for one's own actions.

Effective learning requires a high level of concentration and participation on the part of students and the acceptance of school rules.

1. Positive Behaviour is highly Valued and Rewarded

The school encourages positive behaviour through various awards:

- **Commendation Awards/Merit Structure** aims to encourage positive behaviour in our students and to compliment the Code of Behaviour.
- **Leadership Initiatives**
 - Head Girl, Deputy Head Girl, Senior Prefects, Class Prefects
 - Student Council
 - Green School Committee
 - Student Enterprise Awards
 - Seachtain na Gaeilge
 - Friendship Day
 - An Gaisce



- **Mary Aikenhead Awards**
- **Attendance Certificates**
- **Merit and Excellence Certificates** at end of year to each year group
- **Academic Achievement Awards**
- **Academic Achievement Awards** for each **Class Subject in Sixth Year**
- **Senior Student of the Year** award presented at the end of the year
- **Transition Year Student of the Year** award presented at the end of the year
- **Junior Student of the Year** award presented at the end of the year
- **Sports Student of the Month**
- **Senior Sports Student of the Year**
- **Junior Sports Student of the Year**

The Commendation Award/Merit Structure aims to encourage positive behaviour in our students and to compliment the Code of Behaviour. Commendations are recorded on the school's online admin package – VShare – which parents can access.

Commendations may be awarded to students in the following areas

Academic Achievement, for example

- Excellent Test
- Excellent Homework
- Marked improvement in work
- Excellent Project
- Sustained effort
- Flash of genius
- Excellent oral participation in class
- Improved attitude
- Catching up very quickly on missed work following an absence

Social, for example

- Volunteering to help out with an event
- Participating in an event
- Representing the school
- Participation in an event outside school but of benefit to the school.
- Organising an event
- Showing initiative
- Displaying a caring nature
- Respectfulness
- Helping another student



2. Monitoring Student Behaviour

Students are expected to behave responsibly at all times and obey the school rules.

Inappropriate Behaviour

The school promotes an environment which supports and enhances the learning of every student. Any inappropriate behaviour which disrupts the teaching and learning environment will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour.

Strategies for dealing with misconduct focus on the behaviour, not the person, as the problem. The strategies are used to help all students appreciate and benefit from a positive learning environment.

Serious Breaches of Behaviour

Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner both inside and outside the school. Any behaviour which brings the school's reputation into disrepute is deemed a serious breach of discipline.

Breaches of behaviour include the following ...

- Showing disrespect to teaching staff, ancillary staff or any school visitors.
- Unruly or aggressive behaviour or language while in school uniform inside or outside school.
- Endangering the school's capacity to remain open through disregard of practices in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19 - See appendix.
- Interference with fellow students' right to learn.
- Disruptive behaviour in class or corridors or school grounds
- Bullying.
- Cyber bullying
- Forging parents'/guardians' signatures.
- Theft
- Copying at exams
- Defacement of school property
- Smoking/Abuse of substances
- Missing school/class without appropriate authorisation
- Serious breach of the school Acceptable Use Policy
- Second or subsequent use of mobile phone without permission.
- Serious breach of mobile phone policy.
- Breach of the Code of Behaviour while participating in school related activities. Further details in the school trip policy
- Failure to attend detention.
- Disruption and interference with any online learning
- The school rules also outline further breaches of behaviour and the school rules.

This list is not exhaustive



Parental Support and Involvement

For behaviour to be effective, it is necessary to have the mutual support and involvement of parents/guardians, students, and school authorities.

Parents/ guardians have access to the behaviour section of VSware and are required to monitor and track their daughter's behaviour.

Sanction

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable.

It helps to recognise the effects of their actions and behaviour on others, to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour and to realise that they have choices and that all actions have consequences.

A sanction may also help to reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour, and to signal to other students and staff that their well-being is being protected.

Procedures for dealing with misconduct

- Outlined below are the procedures for dealing with misconduct.
 - At any stage, the Principal/Deputy Principal may be consulted and participate in the process.
1. Misconduct will be dealt with by the class teacher in the first instance
 - Reasoning with student
 - Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
 - Provision of additional work.
 - Teacher will remind student of the behaviour requirements of his/her class.
 - Student can reform and move forward.
 2. Teacher will record a behavioural note on VSware and parents will have access to the Behaviour Notes on VSware
 3. Teacher may inform the office to send an email from the school asking parent/guardian to check VSware behaviour.
 - Teacher may contact parent to discuss the class behaviour.
 - Repeated misbehaviour will result in referral to Form Tutor and/or Year Head.
 - One mis-conduct may be treated as a serious breach depending on the opinion of the teacher.



4. When necessary, a student will be put “**On Positive Behaviour Report**” for a specified number of days or weeks by the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal and in consultation with the Form Teacher.

The student must present the report Document to each teacher for comment. This is also signed by parents/guardians on a daily basis and monitored by the Year Head.

5. If a student is consistently disruptive or there is a serious breach of behaviour, she may be suspended from her timetabled classes for up to a week, to allow other students to progress with their work. The student involved will be supervised during this time.

Once three minor offences have been recorded, the pupil may be assigned a detention. This is at the discretion of the Year Head.

One serious misdemeanour may merit an immediate detention or detentions and/or further sanctions, for example:

- Missing class without permission
- Verbal abuse of authority
- Bullying

Detention take places on assigned afternoons afternoons from 3.45 pm to 5.15 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday or 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm on Wednesdays and is supervised by staff. The day varies according to the roster of supervising teachers.

The Year Head verbally confirms the detention and date of detention with the student and also provides details of the detention. **This alone is confirmation that the student must attend detention.** Parents will receive an email or text from the relevant Year Head also confirming the detention and the date of the detention to enable them to make any necessary travel arrangements.

Students **must** attend Detention. Failure to attend will lead to further sanctions which may include suspension.

After the second consecutive detention or otherwise on the third non-consecutive detention: Parents and student will meet with Year Head. Deputy Principal will be informed.

Should a subsequent detention be assigned, the parents and student meet with the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal keeps the Principal informed.

Should improvement in behaviour not occur the Principal will be notified and further sanctions such as suspension may be necessary. This is at the discretion of the Principal.



6. **Refusal** to follow an instruction by the Principal or Deputy Principal may lead to Suspension.

7. **Sanctions may begin at a later stage depending on the seriousness of the breach of behaviour.**

During COVID 19 restrictions this particularly applies to any behaviour that undermines the school's capacity to stay open or, given the inevitable increased reliance on digital technology, that seriously breaches the school's Acceptable Usage Policy.

8. **Suspension** from class or school for a specified period may be sanctioned by the Principal and/or Board of Management.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Principal may sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with the parties concerned. In this case the parents/guardians will be contacted by phone and informed in writing of suspension. Following consultation with a parent, a student may be allowed to leave the school immediately. A student will be supervised until her parents/guardians have been informed and she has been collected from school by them.

Following a suspension

- Parents/Guardians may be required attend with the student on her return to the school
- A Contract of Good Behaviour may be required in writing.

Further details are available in the Suspension Policy which is available on request.

In accordance with section 29 of the *Education Act, 1998*, a decision of the the Principal to suspend a student may be appealed to the Board of Management. A decision by the Board of Management to suspend a student may be appealed to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science in accordance with the procedures of the Department.

The Principal will inform the **Educational Welfare Officer** if a student is suspended for a period of 6 days or more or if the suspension leads to a cumulative absence of 20 days or more in one school year.

9. **Expulsion:**

This is the ultimate sanction imposed by the school and is exercised by the Board of Management in extreme cases of indiscipline.

After consultation with the Board of Management, expulsion from the school will be considered for continuous serious misdemeanours or a single grave misdemeanour which threatens the safety and well-being of the school community



In accordance with section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, a decision of a Board of Management to expel a student may be appealed to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science in accordance with the procedures of the Department.

3. Interventions

The following interventions may be used to assist students and to give specific help to those who find it particularly difficult to uphold the Code of Behaviour. We do so in consultation with their parents/guardians.

- Interview between students and member of staff.
- Referral to a Guidance Counsellor
- Referral by the school to an outside agency for assistance in behaviour modification
- Referral to a psychologist for testing and/or help in behaviour modification.

4. Evaluation and Review:

The policy is monitored on an-ongoing basis by Principal and Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Form Teachers and Staff.

The Code of Behaviour will be evaluated and reviewed at the end of each academic year or sooner if required.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 19 May 2022

This policy will undergo a Board of Management Review during 2022-2023

5. We have read and agree to abide by St. Mary's Code of Behaviour.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 18 April 2023

This policy will undergo a Board of Management Review during 2023-2024



Appendix

Health and Safety Control of COVID-19 Policy for students St. Mary's Secondary School, Baldoyle

1. Introduction

Under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the board of management of St. Mary's Secondary School, Baldoyle, as employer is required to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all employees of the school. The employer is further required to manage and conduct the school in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that individuals at the place of work who are not employees, such as students, parents/guardians, visitors to the school, are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare.

This policy is influenced by the need to minimise the risk of introduction of COVID-19 into the school community and to prevent its spread. Although it is acknowledged that no single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19 transmission, adherence to this policy will contribute to the reduction of that risk of transmission. In accordance with this policy students are expected to comply with the standards of behaviour set out in this policy or as directed by the school to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 control measures are consistent with current advice from the HSE, the Health and Safety Authority, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Foreign Affairs and, as such, may be subject to change. Students and parents/guardians will be notified of any changes to the control measures.

Students are expected to comply with all directions from school staff in relation to the school's COVID-19 control measures. Any failure or refusal to comply with this policy or to follow instructions of school staff should be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. Parents/guardians are required to supply the school with a phone number/s of available person/s who can be contacted at all times and who will be available to collect a student from the school should the need arise.

2. Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to symptoms of cold or flu.

The most common symptoms are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell or taste.

More information regarding the most up-to-date signs and symptoms of COVID-19 is available on the HSE website, <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>



3. Standards of Behaviour expected of students to help prevent the introduction or spread of COVID - 19 in the school.

Students are expected to comply with any control measures directed by the school to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19, including, but not limited to:

- maintaining a social-distance of at least 1 metre and where possible, 2 metres, from other students and staff;
- wearing a face covering.
- All students are required to wear a face covering subject to a limited number of exceptions set out in relevant Department of Education guidance. Face coverings must not contain any slogans/logos/images that may cause upset or be deemed offensive to any member of the school community.
- performing hand hygiene with a hand sanitiser on entering the school.
- repeating hand-hygiene at regular intervals throughout the school day and when directed by school staff;
- maintaining good respiratory-hygiene.

In this regard students should:

- cover nose/mouth with a tissue when coughing/sneezing and dispose of used tissue in waste bin and perform hand hygiene or cough or sneeze into the inner elbow (upper sleeve) rather than into the hand, if no tissues are available.
- keep contaminated hands away from the eyes and nose
- carry out hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials
- not spit or deliberately cough or sneeze at or towards any other person in the school
- not sharing materials or stationery, such as pens, calculators, rulers, etc. with other students;
- not attending school for 14 days after returning from travel out of the country in line with Government guidelines for travel;
- not attending school if displaying COVID-19 like symptoms and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- not attending school where tested positive for COVID-19 and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- not attending school if identified by the HSE as a person who has been in contact with another person who has contracted COVID-19 and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice;



- not attending school if a member of the student's household is displaying COVID-19 symptoms and remaining out of school for such period as is required in accordance with HSE/GP advice
- telling a teacher or other member of staff where a student feels unwell at school.
 - In that regard
 - the student will require to be collected from the school as soon as possible by a parent/guardian or a person designated by the parent/guardian for such purpose.
 - parents must ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details so that they can be contacted by the school if required.
- complying with any other such directions as advised by the DES and/or HSE and communicated to the school community. Students should be aware that the above is a non-exhaustive list.
- Students are expected to follow all instructions from staff which aim to prevent the introduction COVID-19 into the school and minimise its spread.

4. Failure to comply with the standards of behaviour.

Failure by a student to comply with the standards of behaviour expected to help prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 will constitute a breach of the Code of Behaviour of St. Mary's Secondary School, Baldoyle and she may be subject to sanction up to and including suspension or permanent exclusion.

Any actions or sanctions taken in respect of alleged breaches of the code of behaviour will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the school's code of behaviour, the requirements of the NEWB Guidelines on Developing a Code of Behaviour and relevant requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Sanctions will be proportionate to the nature, seriousness and context of the behaviour.

A student engaging in aggressive, threatening or unacceptable behaviour that creates or increases the risk of COVID-19 infection for staff, other students or visitors to the school may be removed from class and, if necessary, from the school premises with immediate effect, pending any further action to be taken in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

The above policy took into account HSE/DE guidelines and directives on return to school in late August 2021. New HSE/DE guidelines and directives will take precedence over this policy. Changes will be acknowledged by email and policy will updated on the website.