

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The Code of Behaviour is effective on and from 30 August 2010. It will be reviewed annually.

The Code of Behaviour was compiled in consultation with all the school partners- including Teachers, Students Council, Leaving Certificate students, Parents, Board of Management and Trustees.

The policy applies to all students and relates to all school activities both during and outside school hours. In line with the traditions of the school and the strong pastoral approach taken with the girls, discretion will be exercised at all times when dealing with misbehaviour.

The Code of Behaviour of St. Mary's Secondary School, Macroom is based on the School's Mission Statement where the school aims to provide a caring and just environment for learning. Both the individuality of the student and the professionalism of the staff are recognised. The Code has, at its core a commitment to Christian values and standards as espoused by Catholic teachings.

Rationale

The purpose of the Code is to provide the whole school community with an agreed set of expected behaviours which are conducive to the best possible teaching and learning. In addition, it outlines specific boundaries in order to preserve the safety and well being of everyone in the school.

Vision

Our vision in St. Mary's Secondary School, Macroom is that all students will feel part of a strong school community, where they feel cared for and nurtured. Students, teachers and parents should be respectful of each other at all times. Listening and being open to each other's point of view will serve to build a happy school environment.

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to role model good behaviour. This behaviour will be explained regularly and reasons given for specific rules, in an effort to provide greater understanding of expected behaviours.

If a student or parent needs clarity or advice on any aspect of the student's behaviour, it is recommended that they speak to the student's Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal or Principal.

If a student/parent feels at any time that there are underlying issues causing the girl to misbehave, the school would be happy to provide the services of the Guidance Counsellor.

General Behaviour

Students are expected to interact with others in the school community with the highest standards of-

1. RESPECT
2. COURTESY

They will do this by way of: listening to each other and the teacher - only one voice at the time, being considerate of others and behaving at all times in a polite manner.

The school actively supports students to engage in positive behaviour. It is the policy of the school to reward and highlight exemplary behaviour. To this end, the school employs a number of strategies to promote good behaviour among individual students and groups.

Strategies to promote good behaviour:

1. Verbal and Non Verbal praise from teachers and Senior Management
2. Positive feedback
3. Written note in Journal
4. Praise by Year Head at Assembly
5. Praise on intercom system by teachers and Senior Management
6. Recognition in School Newsletter
7. Recognition at the annual public Catherine McAuley Awards Ceremony
8. Presentation of small gifts to individual students at a class/year group gathering by teachers, Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal
9. Certificates of Attendance
10. Verbal praise to parents at Parent Teacher Meetings and other school related activities.
11. Other rewards deemed appropriate at the time

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

In order to create the best possible learning, it is imperative that students attend school every day. It is also essential that there is a very high degree of punctuality for school, classes, and other activities.

The Education Welfare Act 2002 stipulates that the names of students who are absent for 20 days or more in any one school year have to be reported to the Educational Welfare Board. The Act also stipulates that parents will be held responsible for explaining their daughter's absence. The school is obliged to provide the Welfare Board with reasons for absences.

- If a student is to be absent from school on a particular day, it is essential that this information be communicated to the school through the Main office (026 41544) before 9.00am by a parent/guardian.
- If absent from school, an explanation written in full by parent/guardian in journal must be presented to each teacher concerned and to Deputy Principal if requested, stating the reason for the student's absence and bearing parents'/guardian's telephone number and the date in question.
- Absences are recorded twice daily at 9am and 2pm. Communication may be made with home by phone or text message to ascertain the whereabouts of a student if this is deemed appropriate.

Procedures to be followed by students who are leaving school during the school day:

- No pupil has permission to leave the school premises during school hours without express permission from the Principal/ Deputy Principal. This permission requires a written, dated explanation from parent/guardian in the pupil's journal in advance i.e. before 8.55am on the day of proposed absence. Parents of All students are required to report to the Principal / Deputy Principal when collecting their daughter.
- Students must report to Principal or Deputy Principal when sick and not make contact with parents directly.
- All medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours.

- 1st, 2nd & 3rd years will not be granted permission to leave the school grounds during lunch hour unless their parents sign a form stating that they are going home for lunch.
- Senior students may be allowed to leave the school for lunchtime only when they present a disclaimer form signed by Parent/Guardian.
- If late for school for any reason, a student is required to provide a written explanation and report to the Principal / Deputy Principal.
- If not studying a particular subject, a pupil must remain in the classroom and study privately.
- In the interests of safety, pupils are not allowed into specialist rooms until the teacher is present

APPROACH TO LEARNING

Learning, in the broadest sense of the word is the sole purpose of the school. The school will endeavour to provide a range of extra curricular activities to provide students with a holistic education where the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, social and physical development of the student will be supported.

All students experience success when they apply themselves to their work. This increases their self confidence, provides them with coping skills for life and gives them an opportunity to pursue whatever course of study/work they choose in life.

Good teaching and learning can only take place effectively when-

1. students are attentive in class
2. students actively engage with the teacher
3. students ask questions of the teacher when they don't understand a particular concept
4. there is absolute silence in the classroom when the teacher is teaching or a student is speaking
5. there is cooperation
6. students present for class with the required books, copies and other materials
7. students take notes, participate in experiential learning as instructed by the teacher
8. the opinion of every student and teacher is respected
9. all homework is completed on time and demonstrating a very high degree of effort
10. students do not eat or drink during class

UNIFORM

A school uniform is a representation of the reputation of a school. St. Mary's Secondary School aims to achieve a very high reputation as an educational institution in Macroom town and its hinterland. A school with a high reputation enables the student to develop to her full potential, socially, personally and academically during her time in school and in her future. All students with their parents, have chosen this school as their preferred choice of secondary school.

The following items will constitute school uniform for all students :

- Navy Blue skirt for Senior students/ navy/green tartan skirt for Junior students.
- White shirt
- Navy school jumper with crest
- Navy trousers with pale green stripe
- Black shoes or navy boat shoes. Shoes must be low heeled. For health and safety reasons, heels must be no higher than 6cms. Students are not permitted to wear stilettos
- or runners.
- Navy tights
- School jacket.
- Plain unadorned red/navy scarf.
- N.B. All items of uniform should carry student's name.

The school aims to phase in a knee length skirt. To this end, all 1st and 4th year students must purchase a knee length skirt. The length of the skirt worn will be monitored in subsequent years.

The manner in which the student wears her uniform is a reflection of her attitude to her school.

Notes re. spillages, broken zips, ripped hems, ragged sleeves or uniform left in other peoples' houses and other such notes are not acceptable. Coloured tops/ hoodies/fleeces and other garments are not allowed. Students must present themselves in a clean uniform, free from tippex marks or other stains. Hair must be worn in a tidy fashion.

It is essential that the uniform is worn correctly. This means that students present themselves in a tidy manner. Shirts must be worn tucked inside skirt or trousers and with the collar flat.

For Health and Safety reasons, excess jewellery is not allowed. A pair of stud earrings, watch and two rings are permitted. No other jewellery is allowed.

Students may not wear facial studs or body piercings/tattoos. Discreet make-up is allowed. Nail varnish is not allowed.

Uniform will be monitored on a daily basis.

All personal appearance, including hair style, must be acceptable to management and in keeping with the school's standards and practice. Any major change to physical appearance, for charitable or other purposes, must be approved in advance with management.

PE UNIFORM

White polo shirt (No logos). Plain navy tracksuit ends (No stripes). Runners.

Students may be allowed to wear their navy tracksuit after a match.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Board of Management will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of the students. This commitment is set out in more detail in the school's Safety Statement

It is essential that students adhere to instructions given by teachers in order to maintain a safe environment for all. The attention of students is drawn in particular to instructions that apply to the following areas-

- Science laboratories
- Home Economics Room
- Computer Room
- Art Room
- Canteen area
- Sports Hall

Year Heads and Teachers of subjects in the above areas will outline the rules governing these areas at regular intervals.

BULLYING

St. Mary's Secondary School operates a zero tolerance policy to bullying. See School Anti-Bullying Policy.

OBSCENE LANGUAGE.

No student is allowed to shout or use obscene language within the school.

FORBIDDEN/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Students are forbidden to smoke or be in possession of cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) in school, in uniform or during a school related activity.

Any student in breach of this regulation will face suspension from school and referral to the Environmental Health Officer.

The consumption and/or possession of alcohol and illegal substances are also forbidden in the school, on its grounds, in uniform and /or prior to all school related activities.

Breaches of this regulation will result in suspension from school, referral to the BOM. and to the Gardai.

It is imperative that these regulations are upheld in order to protect the health and safety of the full school community.

Any student who fails to adhere to the above rules governing alcohol and illegal substances on a trip away from the school may be sent home immediately. Parents/guardians will be held responsible for putting the necessary arrangements in place for same.

PROPERTY

Students must respect all school property. In the case of a student being identified as having defaced or damaged property, she will be expected to pay the cost of repair and/or restoration.

CHEWING GUM

Chewing gum is not allowed in the school.

STEALING

Any student identified as having stolen the property of another student must make restitution.

Each student is responsible for her own property. Items should be labelled with student's name. Lockers are provided for books and equipment.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones must be switched off at all times during the school day and kept in a locked locker. The same rule applies to the use of Ipods and other such devices.

During In-House exams, mobile phones should be switched off and placed face down on the student's exam desk.

In exceptional cases, a student may be allowed to have her mobile on in class if medical evidence is supplied in writing. In all other cases, students are welcome to reception at any time to make contact with home regarding serious medical conditions. In addition, parents/guardians are free to ring the school about their daughter's serious medical condition at any time.

SCHOOL TRIPS

The behaviour of students applying to participate in school trips/exchanges will be taken into consideration before permission is granted.

The BOM of this school reserves the right to modify the details of the Code of Behaviour at short notice in response to events or circumstances that were not foreseeable when the Code was being drafted or subsequently. Written notification of such modification will be posted to families prior to its becoming operational.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Under Section 28 of the Education Act, 1998:

- (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 BOM against a 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 a successful appeal or in response to a grievance.

Such an appeal may only be made following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school in accordance with Section 28.

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, there are three contingencies in which the student (over 18) or the parent may appeal to the Secretary General of the DES, as follows:

- I. where the Board permanently excludes a student from the school,
- II. where a student is suspended for a period of 20 days or more in one school year,
- III. where the school refuses to enrol a student.

Such an appeal may only be made following the conclusion of any appeal procedures provided by the school in accordance with Section 28.

Appendix 1

Possible Sanctions

The school authorities will endeavour at all times to take into consideration the personal circumstances of individual students. The following is a list of possible sanctions which may be imposed for specific misdemeanours for a first offence.

1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning – note in journal to be signed by a parent/guardian
3. Student sent to another class
4. Verbal reprimand by Principal/Deputy Principal
5. Student put on Report
6. Communication with parents/guardians to inviting them to the school to discuss daughter's behaviour
7. Lunchtime detention
8. After School Detention
9. In House Suspension
10. Suspension

Appendix 2

The school authorities will investigate, where necessary and invoke the principles of natural justice and fair procedure in all instances of a breach of Code of Behaviour.

Teachers, Year Heads and Management will at all times use their discretion when dealing with a student who has committed a misdemeanour, however, the following sanctions may be employed:

Attendance and Punctuality

Truancy from school	In House Suspension
Truancy from class	In House Suspension
Late for class on 3 occasions per half term	Detention
Late for school on 3 occasions per half term	Detention
Forging note	Detention
Failure to adhere to Signing In/Out Procedure	Detention

Approach to Learning

Creating a disturbance in class	Detention
No homework	Detention
Copying of homework	Detention
Chewing gum	Detention
No books, copies or other materials	Detention
Bad manners eg cursing, swearing, being disrespectful to another student or staff member.	Detention
No School Journal	Detention

Uniform and Appearance

Incorrect Uniform	Detention
Incorrect uniform outside of school	Detention
Unclean uniform	Detention
Forget PE Uniform /Ingredients or Materials for H.E.	Detention
Incorrect PE Uniform	Detention
Excess jewellery	Detention
Excess Makeup (at the discretion of Management)	Detention
Shoes	Detention
Untidy uniform	Detention
Unnatural hair colouring	Sanction up to and including suspension

Health and Safety

Not adhering to safety regulations	Detention
Giddiness during the fire drill	Detention
Bullying	Sanction up to and including Suspension

Forbidden and Illegal Substances

Smoking	1 day suspension
Possession and/or consumption of alcohol	3 days suspension
Possession of illegal drugs	5 days suspension, report to Garda
Possession of alcohol/illegal drugs on school trips	Sent home immediately, plus 3-5 day suspension

Use of Mobile Phones/IPods/Other Technical Devices

Misuse of Mobile phones/iPod etc	Confiscation
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Property

Deface/Damage Property	Pay the cost.
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Ratified by the Board Of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School, June 2010.

Amended May, 2013

Amended 2015 (regarding e-cigarettes)

Amended Sept 2016 (sanctions)

Signed:

 

Chairperson

Principal

Date: 06/09/16