



Code of Behaviour: Patrician Secondary School

“The Patrician Secondary School as a Christian Community commits itself to the development of all of its members in an environment of co-operation and mutual respect.”

The Code of Behaviour has been developed in accordance with the school's mission statement. The rationale of the Code of Behaviour in our school is to promote, reward and maintain positive behaviour in our school, to acknowledge the importance of caring relationships within our community and to create a safe learning environment where all are encouraged to grow, with dignity, to their full potential.

We believe that in caring relationships, members of our community;

- Learn to respect self and others.
- Learn to appreciate and develop their talents.
- Learn to value their contribution to create a positive learning environment.
- Learn the true meaning of an inclusive community by accepting differences and gaining mutual respect.
- Learn to mature into responsible participating citizens.
- Develop awareness of and responsibility for their actions.

Our Code of Behaviour is supported by and encompasses the following policies.

- Pastoral Care Policy.
- Attendance and Participation Policy.
- Homework and Study Policy.
- Personal Electronic Device Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Board of Management Policy on Fighting.
- Board of Management Policy on Violent Behaviour.
- Acceptable User Policy for IT and the Internet.
- Substance Abuse Policy.

A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the way in which pupils and teachers treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and help in forming a strong sense of social cohesion with the school. We strive to acknowledge and affirm positive behaviour in our daily interactions.

We *aim* to create a positive school environment which is open, inclusive, respectful, fair and which seeks to support and encourage the holistic development of all students and adults working with all students. The Patrician Secondary School has a range of school supports in place in order to foster positive behaviour amongst our students.

- *Credit System* - Students are rewarded for effort and positive behaviour in class. These credits build up over the term and students receive a reward at the end of term. There are additional end of year awards for students who have received credits throughout the school year.
- *Hidden Hero Awards* - This positive award system is run in association with Subway. Students who are reported to have shown kindness to others receive a Hidden Hero Award. (A voucher from Subway).
- *Tutor System* - The class tutor has a pastoral role and aims to build a positive and vibrant work ethic in the classroom. Cooperation and honesty of effort is encouraged. Praise and commendation both written and verbal form is given often in order to raise students' self-esteem and confidence. Achievements and positive contributions of students can be recognised in a variety of ways. For example; Words of praise and encouragement. Note to parents in journal. Extra responsibility given. Display of work. Inform Year Head/Principal/Deputy Principal who will reinforce achievement.
- *Homework Club* - Is provided by the school to students who may have difficulty doing their homework in the home environment. Help and support is provided by the supervising teacher and volunteers from the Transition Year Programme.
- *One Good Adult* - This support is provided for students who may need it. Students will check in with a staff member on a daily basis. This teacher will act as a listening ear and mentor to the student.
- *A Behaviour Support Team* is in place in the school. Some students are withdrawn from class and given behaviour support, if a particular student has high needs, it may be individual withdrawal. There are sensory, emotional, social and anger supports in place for students who are referred by Year Heads/Management to the Behaviour Support Team.
- *Time Out Cards* - Time Out Cards are issued to students who are struggling with school for one reason or another. The Deputy Principal/Principal issues a time out card. When the student feels that he needs a "Time Out", he must report to the Deputy Principal/Principal. He will then be assigned a Time Out space and will return to class accompanied by the Deputy/Principal.
- *School Refusal* - Deputy Principal/Principal in consultation with parents/guardians, may visit the home, if deemed necessary. The aim of these visits is to encourage the student to engage with his learning again. A reduced timetable may be issued to students who are struggling with school, in particular, school attendance. This is done in consultation with parents/guardians, Year Head and the Principal/Deputy.
- *Restorative Practice* - A number of members of staff have been trained in this area and it is hoped that members of the Student Council will be trained in this practice. The Restorative Practice model is used on a regular basis in dealing with challenging students and situations.
- The *observational role of the SNA* is key in pre-empting behavioural and other issues that may arise.
- *Care Team* - The Care Team meets on a weekly basis. It involves the Senior Management Team, a member of the SEN team and Guidance/Counselling Team. The aim of the weekly meeting is to discuss the needs of vulnerable students and plan towards providing them with the support that they may need. A link has been established with an external Counsellor. Students are referred to an external counsellor in consultation with the Guidance Department and Parents/Guardians.

- The school's *SPHE programme* supports the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help our students develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, assertive behaviour and conflict resolution skills. It aims to foster self-esteem and help students accommodate differences and develop citizenship.
- The *role of the Subject Teacher* is very important in encouraging positive behaviour amongst our students. In order to elicit the cooperation and effort from students, praise and commendation both written and verbal are given in an effort to raise each student's self-esteem and confidence. Subject teachers aim to build a positive and vibrant work ethic in the classroom. Their approach to classroom management will be fair, inclusive and consistent.
- *Transition Programme for 1st Year Students* - This programme is key in helping first years settle in and feel comfortable in their new school environment. All incoming first years are interviewed, with their parent(s)/guardian(s), by the Principal/Deputy Principals during the month of June. Information from these interviews is then passed on to the relevant Teachers/Tutors/Year Heads. All first years are given a talk about responsible online behaviour during their first month in the school, as part of the transition programme. Parents are given a separate talk on how best to support their sons in being a responsible online citizen. This is in line with our approach to responsible use of mobile phones in the school.
- *PASS Surveys* - These surveys are carried out every year and focus on 2nd year students, in particular. These confidential surveys measure the students' attitude to school, learning and success. The survey is split into 8 sections; Feelings about school, perceived learning capability, self-regard as a learner, attitudes towards teachers, general work ethic, confidence in learning, attitudes to attendance and response to curriculum demands. The results are shared with the Year Head and used to support students throughout the school year. The survey provides very useful feedback to the Year Head on the emotional/social progress of the student.

Our students' chances of success and happiness in life, here and hereafter, depends considerably upon their ability to make responsible choices. To assist in fostering maturity in our pupils, a whole school approach to behaviour management has been developed by the partners in our school community — The behavioural support teachers, guidance counsellors, teachers, parents and pupils themselves — all of whom make a commitment to support the school's Code of Behaviour.

The Code of Behaviour is circulated to the parents of incoming first year pupils and reinforced to each year group, at different times during the school year. This is generally done by the Year Head/Class Tutor. Great efforts are made to ensure that the Code of Behaviour is fair, just and consistent. Pupils are given a clear understanding of what is expected of them. This is reinforced consistently at assemblies for the various year groups. Our aim is to help pupils mature into responsible, caring people and to make them aware that their behaviour has an impact on themselves and others wherever they go. The impact of positive behaviour and its positive influence on others in the community is something that we strive to encourage and embed in our school. Through our curriculum and our co-curricular activities, our students learn the following:

- Behaviour for learning skills.
- Social and emotional skills.
- Academic literacy, learning and study skills.
- Positive health and wellbeing skills.

The Code of Behaviour covers, among other things, the following areas: behaviour in class, behaviour outside class, coming to and from school, attendance, uniform, respect for self, for one another, for parents, for staff and respect for property. It also covers school tours, online activity, educational trips and all school related activities. It also includes lunchtime and journeys to and from school.

The administration of the Code in the school is structured as follows:

- The class or subject teacher is the frontline source of help for students. As a leader of learning and someone with an established relationship of trust, the teacher will have a strong positive influence on the students. The teacher will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies. These may include extra work assigned to the student, short periods of detention or meeting with the student in order to resolve any issues.
- The Year Head and the Year Head Assistant, in conjunction with the Deputy Principal/Principal, are responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour for each year group. Persistent misbehaviours and breaches of our Code will be referred to and dealt with by the Year Head and sometimes directly by the Deputy Principal/Principal. A term of suspension may be warranted where serious breaches of the Code have occurred. In extreme cases of gross misbehaviour, as outlined in this document, the Principal may refer the incident to the Board of Management where permanent exclusion of the student may be considered.
- The Principal is the ultimate authority within the school and is consulted in all cases that might involve serious sanction.

Class Tutor

The Class Tutor in each year group.

- Has a supportive and consultative role in the area of promoting positive behaviour.
- Has responsibility for the Pastoral Care of each member of the class group.
- Ensures that each student feels cared for.
- Develops an awareness of the needs of individual students.
- Motivates the students and builds a sense of class pride.
- Monitors class progress and liaises with subject teachers.
- Rewards excellence of effort and hard work.
- Counsels students and refers them on to Year Head or Guidance Counsellor when necessary.
- Communicates with parents through weekly checks in the student journal.
- Consults regularly with the Year Head.
- Empowers student voice by encouraging students to become involved and active school citizens. The tutor will encourage the work of Class Prefects and also encourage the students in his/her care to participate in the broad range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.

Year Head

The Year Head will normally take charge of the students in their first year and remain as their Year Head throughout their 5 years (Transition Year excepted). Apart from his/her disciplinary role, the Year Head works closely with the Year Head Assistant and Class Tutors to ensure that students are afforded every opportunity to get the best from their time spent in the school. Over the years the Year Head will endeavour to develop a positive relationship with the year group and encourage each student to develop his own unique talents. The Year Head and Assistant are the first recourse available to a teacher should any issues arise with that student. The Year Head may take one of the following steps.

1. Try to ascertain the reasons there might be for a pupil's unacceptable behaviour. Advise the pupil and point out to him the elements of his behaviour that are unacceptable. The Year Head will remind him of the consequences of his actions. The Year Head may refer the student to the school's Care Team or Guidance Team. The Year Head may contact the student's parents / guardians and arrange to meet with them in order to discuss the matter further. Contact may be made with student support services using the appropriate referral procedures as deemed appropriate. NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), CAHMS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), and KYS (Kildare Youth Services) are examples of such support services.
2. Place the student on a Conduct/Progress Report Sheet, a Homework Report sheet or an Attendance Report Sheet. These sheets monitor the student's performance and progress. The aim of the Conduct/Progress Report Sheet is to encourage more responsible and positive behaviour from the student in question. The student ensures that the sheet is signed by the teacher at the end of class and by parent/guardian every day.

The Year Head

- Pays careful attention to every aspect of the year group, which contributes to the learning environment.
- Supports the Year Head Assistant and Class Tutor in the execution of their pastoral duties.
- Organises and arranges assemblies with the Year Head Assistant and Class Tutors.
- Takes action in consultation with others.
- Monitors and reviews progress of the year group on a regular basis.
- Helps to build on the positive spirit in the school.
- Acknowledges and rewards achievement.
- Consults with the Principal/Deputy Principal on matters of serious concern.
- Ensures that all school procedures and systems operate effectively in the year group.

Use of the Conduct Report Sheet

It is important to note that the Conduct Report Sheet is a short term measure aimed at helping the student improve his behaviour. The Conduct Report Sheet should focus on the positive contributions of the student while at the same time highlighting instances of behaviour that is unacceptable in the Patrician Secondary School. It is envisaged that a student will be placed on a conduct report sheet for a maximum of two weeks. After the two weeks, the process is reviewed by the Year Head and Assistant Year head in conjunction with the Student.

The Conduct Report Sheet is intended to:

- Monitor the pupil's performance and progress over a defined period of time and to give him a chance to reflect on and improve his behaviour.
- Afford parents the opportunity to contribute to remedial action.
- Afford the teacher the opportunity to see how the student is performing in other classes.
- Promote student responsibility.

Sanctions

Our Code of Behaviour helps our students to experience the value of being positive, responsible, participating members of our school community. Once a student has been referred to a Year Head, the Year head will allot penalty points, as per our Code of Behaviour. This Penalty Points system is used to signal various levels of unacceptable behaviour. Students incur penalty points for breaches of our Code of Behaviour. As previously mentioned, every effort is made to ensure that positive interventions are made as early as possible in order to re-focus the student towards more positive, responsible behaviour. Individual teachers will only report a student to the Year Head after they have taken steps to improve the student's behaviour. These steps, which in most cases prove to be very effective, include notes in the student's journal or contact with the student's parent/guardian, meeting the student to discuss the issue, assigning extra work or a short period of detention.

If a student reaches 20 points, both he and his parents/guardians are advised that any further breaches of the Code may result in suspension. It is important to note that penalty points can be reduced with positive behaviour. As outlined below, minor breaches of the Code incur 4 penalty points. More serious breaches incur 10- 20 points, depending on the nature of the transgression.

Reporting Procedure

All disciplinary issues are reported to the Year Head **in writing**.

Student on Points

Once a pupil reaches 10 penalty points the Year Head must inform the parents, in writing. Once a student reaches 20 points, he may face suspension. Parents will be informed of this, in writing. Parents/Guardians will be asked to meet with the Year Head and Principal/Deputy Principal.

Once a term of suspension is given, this will be conveyed in a letter home. It is normal for a couple of days to elapse between the decision to suspend and the start of the suspension. At times, an immediate suspension may be deemed more appropriate by the Principal or it may suit the Parents/Guardians.

Detention

In order to further discourage unacceptable behaviour, a detention system is in operation in the school. Detention, organised by the Deputy Principal, takes place every Thursday morning from 8:15am-8:50am. A student is referred to the Year Head by a teacher and the Year Head assigns the detention, in consultation with the Deputy Principal.

Saturday morning detention takes place from 9am-11am/12pm. Saturday morning detention can only be assigned by the Principal/Deputy Principal, in consultation with the Year Head/Assistant Year Head. Saturday morning detention has been introduced as a further step on the ladder of intervention, in an effort to lessen the need for suspensions.

Category A: 4 Penalty Points

Examples (this list is not exhaustive):

- Interfering with learning and teaching by; turning around, distracting others, talking out of turn, not focusing on the task.
- Forgetting books and equipment.
- Throwing objects.
- Bringing inappropriate items to class or being in possession of such items.
- Defacing student journal.
- Unacceptable effort at homework/classwork.

Normally, a teacher will report such incidents only after he/she has made a reasonable effort, using his/her classroom management skills or personal sanctions to resolve the issue. The teacher may also contact the parents/guardians through the student journal or a letter home and will liaise with the Year Head. The Category A behaviours become more serious when they have a cumulative impact on the learning and teaching process, interfering with the learning of other students.

Upon receipt of such a Category A complaint, the Year Head may assign 4 penalty points. The Year Head may or may not put a student on a report sheet at this stage.

Category B: 10 Penalty Points

Examples (this list is not exhaustive):

- Any incident of serious disruptive behaviour.
- Absent from class without permission.
- Belligerent arguing with the teacher.
- Mocking the work of the teacher.
- Mocking the work/effort of other pupils.

- Losing Journal when on report.
- Aggressive behaviour/attitude towards another member of the school community.
- Refusal to carry out a reasonable request from a teacher e.g. Change seats, remove a jacket, hand over a mobile phone or similar device.
- Throwing of any object that could possibly cause injury to another e.g. ruler, pen, piece of wood.
- Inappropriate comments made on social media about/towards another member of the school community.
- Disruption during detention, study or during house exams
- Offensive and abusive language towards another pupil
- Spitting.

Category C: 20 Points

Because of their seriousness, most Category C breaches of the Code should be referred by the Year Head to the Principal/Deputy Principal as it may be necessary to make immediate contact with the home and a term of suspension may be warranted. In extreme cases, the matter may be referred to the Board of Management.

Examples (this list is not exhaustive):

- Fighting (See B.O.M. Policy on Fighting).
- Bullying (verbal, physical, cyber etc. (See B.O.M Policy of Bullying).
- Racist or homophobic comments made to a member of the school community.
- Foul language, sexual innuendo directed at a member of staff or deliberately used to cause embarrassment to a member of staff.
- Aggressive attitude/behaviour towards a staff member.
- Abuse directed towards a staff member outside the school (See B.O.M. Policy on violent behaviour).
- Any willful act that could cause injury to another or even to the student himself.
- Defamatory or abusive material posted online about any member of the school community. Any inappropriate use of the internet (See P.E.D. Policy and Acceptable Users Policy).
- Malicious damage to school property, the property of any member of the school community.
- Engaging in vandalism going to or from school.
- Theft.
- Being involved with or in possession of prohibitive/illegal substances on school grounds or on a school related activity (See Substance Abuse Policy).
- Involvement with or in possession of illegal substances outside of school (See Substance Abuse Policy).
- Engaging in behaviour which brings the school into disrepute.
- Vaping / Smoking

In accordance with the Board of Management policies covering many of the above breaches, mandatory suspensions will apply. In certain cases, including persistent disruption of the learning and teaching process, expulsion is a possibility. In other exceptional cases where there may be mitigating circumstances and it is felt that penalty points would be more of a deterrent, a minimum of 20 points will apply to a Category C breach of our Code.

Reducing Points

Points may be reduced, at the Year Head's discretion, one week after the points have been assigned. If the student has kept a clean sheet and has been seen to have made a significant effort to improve his behaviour, then the points will be reduced. If the trend continues for a second week then all points are expunged, provided that the student's behaviour has continued to be positive.

Uniform

1st offense the student is sent to the relevant DP, 2nd offense a phone call is made home to parent/guardian, 3rd offense the DP contacts parent/guardian and the student is sent home to change into correct uniform.

Suspension

The Year Head will deal with breaches of the Code wherever they occur. Some serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour may be reported to the Principal or the Deputy Principal and dealt with directly by him/her. Whenever it is found necessary to impose serious sanctions the Year Head will discuss the matter with the Principal. The Assistant Year Head/Class Tutor may also be consulted. The Board of Management will be informed of all suspensions. Only the Principal can sanction a suspension in consultation with the Deputy Principal and Year Heads.

Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing

- Of the reason for the suspension.
- Of the length of the suspension.
- Of any study programme to be followed.
- That the student will be regarded as being in the care of Parents/Guardians from the end of the school day on which he is suspended.
- Of their right to appeal the suspension to the Board of Management.
- Of arrangements for return to school, including any commitments entered into by the student/parents.

A pupil returning from suspension must meet with the Principal or the Deputy principal before he returns to class. The Board of Management will follow procedures in respect to suspension as outlined in section 11.5 of the NEWB Guidelines (2008) and the Education Welfare Act (2000).

Permanent Exclusion

Only the Board of Management may finally decide to permanently exclude a student. Permanent Exclusion will only be contemplated when it is considered by the Board that the continued attendance of the student at the school would actually be harmful to the education of other pupils, or that the point has been reached where the offending student could not be helped in any way by remaining as a member of the school community. Parents/Guardians of students whose permanent exclusion is being considered will be given the opportunity to attend the Board of Management meeting.

The Board will consider permanent exclusion of the student on the following grounds:

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to learning and teaching.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The Board will only permanently exclude a student when it feels all possible interventions have been exhausted.

In exceptional circumstances the Board may decide to permanently exclude a student for a single breach of the Code.

A serious single breach of the code could be as follows or of the same extent:

- A serious threat of violence against another member of the school community.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students.
- Sexual assault.
- Taking photos/videos of any member of the school community in a dressing room, toilet, bathroom or similar (regardless if the photos and/or videos are shared or not).

The Board of Management will follow procedures in respect to permanent exclusion as outlined in section 12.4 of the NEWB Guidelines (2008) and the Education Welfare Act (2000).

A parent/guardian, or a student over eighteen years, may appeal a decision to permanently exclude to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

The Code of Behaviour is regularly reviewed following consultation with students, parents and staff. The Code of Behaviour was reviewed and updated during the school year 2023/24 involving consultation with students, teachers, parents and Board of Management. The review was guided by the NEWB Guidelines: Developing a Code of Behaviour.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 24/8/23

Signed (Proposed): Udy Burke

Signed (Seconded): Garry Dunne

Signed (Principal): Pat McNamee

Signed (Chairperson): Pat O'Leary