



# St Kevin's College

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An Edmund Rice School

## Code of Behaviour (Reviewed June 2024)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Parents (who are the primary educators of their children) and a supportive home environment play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce good behaviour in schools. This in turn helps to mature students for adult life by fostering in them self-discipline, self-esteem, respect for others and their property and allegiance to their communities.
- 1.2 It is in the best interests of management, teachers, parents, guardians and students to have an effective and fair behaviour and disciplinary code which will allow everyone to work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- 1.3 The Code of Behaviour in St Kevin's College should be considered in the context of the college being a community in which mutual respect, co-operation and natural justice are valued and nurtured.
- 1.4 This Code of Behaviour is based on the National Educational Welfare Board's 2008 guidelines and it reflects the Catholic ethos of our college, in accordance with the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter.

### 2. AIMS OF THE CODE

We aim to implement a Code of Behaviour which:

- 2.1 Is fair, reasonable, effective and consistent.
- 2.2 Creates a positive environment where an education is provided to students in a safe and structured setting.
- 2.3 Recognises, rewards and encourages the positive efforts and achievements of students.
- 2.4 Outlines clear sanctions for any behaviour which disrupts the teaching and learning process.
- 2.5 Promotes a caring environment within which high standards of co-operation, behaviour and discipline are fostered and maintained.

### 3. STATEMENT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- 3.1 To facilitate the implementation of this code, parents/guardians are expected to take a positive interest in all aspects of school life:
  - a) by fully accepting the rules set out in this code.
  - b) by taking an active interest in their child's progress through school, attending parent/teacher meetings, checking study and homework, and keeping in close contact with the college management. It is important that all parent(s)/guardian(s) check the school journal at least weekly in order to see progress and behavior patterns.
- 3.2 The Board of Management and staff within the college:

- a) will ensure that the Code of Behaviour is interpreted and administered in a fair and just manner.
  - b) will ensure that fair procedures for the administration of the behaviour and disciplinary process are available and monitored.
- 3.3 Parents/guardians are required to understand that authority within the classroom rests with the teacher in charge of the classroom.

#### **4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS**

Students are required to:

- 4.1 Behave in a responsible manner both to themselves and to others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other students, management, teachers and staff at all times.
- 4.2 Respect the person of the individual at all times.
- 4.3 Respect the property of the individual and/or the school college at all times and to make every effort to keep the college and the surrounding environs clean and tidy.
- 4.4 Respect the local community and our neighbours who reside in the immediate vicinity of the college.
- 4.5 Ensure that, by their behavior they do not bring the college into disrepute. St. Kevin's College shall deal with any such matter in accordance with this Code of Behaviour.

#### **5 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

- 5.1 Students are required to attend school at all times during the college's academic year. The normal school hours are:
  - 8.42am - 3.35pm (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday)
  - 8.42am - 1.05pm (Wednesday)
  - 8.42am - 2.55pm (Friday)
- 5.2 If a student is absent for any reason, a note from the parent/guardian indicating the dates and cause of his absence must always be brought to the Form Teacher or recorded on the school app on the students return to school. This note is then passed onto the college's attendance officer who may contact home to clarify the absence.
- 5.3 In some cases, a text may be sent home to indicate an absence from school.
- 5.4 In the case of persistent absenteeism, parents may be contacted by the college for an update.
- 5.5 If and when a student is absent from the college for an accumulated 20 school days during the year under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 the college is obliged to inform an educational welfare officer. Where the college has concerns regarding the attendance of a student who has not been absent for a cumulative total of the said 20 days, it may also inform the educational welfare officer of these concerns.
- 5.6 Students are required to be on time for school each day. If a student comes late he will receive a detention on the same day (up to 15 minutes duration). Parents will be notified by text and/or phone of this detention. Persistent latecomers may receive a further sanction.
- 5.7 Students are encouraged to have a good attendance record in St Kevin's College , and each year the school recognises exceptional attendance in award ceremonies.

#### **6 BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS**

- 6.1 Students are required to understand that authority within the classroom rests with the teacher in charge of the classroom.
- 6.2 Students are required to respect that authority and follow instructions given by their teachers and other members of staff.
- 6.3 Students are required to respect the right of other students to learn and avoid disrupting the work of the classroom. They are also expected to contribute to the creation of a working and learning environment.
- 6.4 Students are required to enter and leave their classrooms in an orderly manner.
- 6.5 Students are required to show courtesy and respect towards other students and staff.

## **7 BEHAVIOUR IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

- 7.1 Students are required to move about the college in an orderly manner whilst adhering to all safety precautions as outlined in our Health & Safety policy.
- 7.2 Except with the express authority of the principal or deputy principal, students shall not remain in the college buildings during small break or lunchtime. Students must leave the college buildings at these times if asked to do so by a teacher.
- 7.3 Students are required to come to and from school with due care for other students, for property, for traffic and pedestrians and to observe the rules of the road at all times.
- 7.4 Students are required to use the bins provided for litter. Littering the college buildings or grounds is forbidden. In addition, any form of graffiti is also forbidden.
- 7.5 Students are required to respect college property. Sanction for breaches of the above will be applied.
- 7.6 Bullying, sexual harassment, vandalism, or any form of disruptive or intimidating behaviour, which undermines the good and orderly running of the college is forbidden.
- 7.7 Smoking, vaping, the possession or use of any nicotine-related products, solvent abuse, substance abuse and the possession or use of controlled drugs are strictly forbidden.
- 7.8 The possession of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine-related products, controlled drugs, lighters or matches is strictly forbidden.
- 7.9 Students may not under any circumstances offer, sell or supply any prescription or non-prescription medications to any person in St. Kevin's College.
- 7.10 Students are expected to adhere to all school rules when involved in all activities off the college premises. This includes trips/tours/extra-curricular activities.

## **8 BEHAVIOUR IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.**

- 8.1 Students are required to have respect for the person and property of others.
- 8.2 Students are required to avoid rough play (both verbal and physical).
- 8.3 Students are not allowed cycle in the college grounds.
- 8.4 Students are only permitted to re-enter college buildings during breaks with a teacher's permission.
- 8.5 Students are required to remain within clearly defined areas of the college grounds.

## **9 HOMEWORK**

- 9.1 Homework, including written exercises, learning and revision is given on a regular basis and students are required to complete it neatly and to the best of their ability.

- 9.2 Students are required to note all homework assigned in their school journal. This should be checked regularly by parents/guardians and signed weekly.
- 9.3 All reasonable efforts must be made by a student to do homework if he misses a class due to partaking in extra-curricular activities.
- 9.4 If for some reason, homework or part of it, cannot be completed, parents /guardians are required to note this in the school journal. Sanctions will apply for failure to have done homework without a reasonable explanation.

## **10 SCHOOL UNIFORM, PERSONAL PROPERTY AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

- 10.1 Students are required to wear the correct uniform coming to and going from school, and may be excluded from class if not wearing a full school uniform. The full college uniform in Junior Cycle consists of grey trousers, a grey shirt, the crested grey college jumper, black leather type shoes, the college tie and the crested college jacket. The full college uniform in Senior Cycle consists of black trousers, a white shirt, the crested college jumper, black leather type shoes, the college tie and the crested college jacket.
- 10.2 All facial piercings, including tongue piercings and ear piercings are forbidden whether covered or not. Students are expected to be neat and tidy at all times and to present themselves in an appropriate manner including a neat and tidy hairstyle. The college authorities are the judges of acceptable standards of appearance.
- 10.3 Shorts, tops, tracksuit and runners are required for Physical Education, which is an integral part of the school curriculum. All students must take part in P.E. unless a medical note is provided which indicates that the student cannot take part in P.E.
- 10.4 When outside the school environment and in school uniform, students are required to uphold, by their manners and behavior, the good reputation and ethos of the college.
- 10.5 Students are at all times responsible for their property, books, bicycles and clothing. Bicycles brought to school must be locked in a secure fashion on the college premises. Students are not allowed to cycle bicycles on the college grounds. St. Kevin's College is not responsible for any articles lost or stolen.
- 10.6 All personal property should be labelled and identified.
- 10.7 If a student brings a mobile phone, a smart watch, earphones/headphones or other electronic devices to school, they must be switched off and out of sight while the student is on the college premises. Such devices will be confiscated if they are used/produced in class or anywhere on the college grounds without a teacher's permission. Such devices may be returned to the student at the end of the school day. The student may be subject to sanction. Any temporary loss or inconvenience experienced by owners of such devices is justified by the protection offered to all as a result of the college not being exposed to the potential dangers associated with them.
- 10.7a Students found using electronic devices inappropriately, for example photographing or recording members of the school community, or publishing same may be subject to sanction up to and including expulsion.
- 10.8 All college property must be respected at all times which includes the lockers, which may be opened and inspected at any time by the college authorities.

## **11 ALCOHOL AND OTHER HARMFUL SUBSTANCES**

- 11.1 Alcohol and other harmful substances may not, under any circumstances, be brought into, distributed or consumed on college grounds or during any school outing/event. Please see our Policy on Substance Use & School Tour Policy for further details.
- 11.2 Smoking is prohibited in college buildings and on college grounds as per Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002.
- 11.3 Vaping, e-cigarettes or any other nicotine-related products are prohibited everywhere on the college grounds and in the buildings.

## **12 BULLYING**

- 12.1 Staff and students have a right to an environment free of intimidation of any kind. Serious physical and verbal abuse of staff or students will not be tolerated. Bullying, harassment or sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. All bullying allegations will be investigated fully, and severe sanctions may be placed upon students found to be engaging in same. Please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy for further details.

## **13 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

In establishing the following disciplinary procedures and sanctions, the guidelines of the National Educational Welfare Board's report of May 2008 entitled "Developing a Code of Behaviour - Guidelines for Schools" (May 2008 Guidelines) have been taken into account. However, in the event of a conflict between this Code and those guidelines, this Code will take precedence.

- 13.1 The teacher has primary responsibility for discipline within his or her own classroom. The teacher can give extra work, may detain or may otherwise deal with inadequate work or disruptive behaviour in their classroom.
- 13.2 A teacher may detain a student for up to 15 minutes at the end of the school day without informing the parent/guardian beforehand.
- 13.3 The classroom teacher should handle all day-to-day problems that arise in the classroom.
- 13.4 Each teacher must apply the Code of Behaviour in a fair and just manner.
- 13.5 Sanctions, to be effective, should be known and understood by all. Such sanctions shall normally take the form of detention, extra work or loss of privileges. It also may be necessary to write a note in the journal, on VSware or to make a phone call home to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 13.6 If a student is detained, his parents will be informed by means of the school journal, on VSware or by phone and/or text.
- 13.7 When a classroom teacher is faced with persistent misbehaviour, despite intervention, then the matter maybe referred to the Form Teacher. The Form Teacher shall take note of the incident.
- 13.8 The Form Teacher will take the appropriate action and in the event of a number of further referrals shall pass the issue on to the Year Head who will then contact the parent/guardian. Should the subject teacher wish to see a parent/guardian it must be done with the knowledge of the Form Teacher/ Year Head.
- 13.9 If there is no improvement in the student's behavior the Year Head will contact the parent/guardian again, and inform them that if the misbehavior continues, the matter will be brought to the Deputy Principal's attention. A record shall be kept of the foregoing.
- 13.10 In the event of the Form Teacher or Year Head being one and the same as the teacher, the Deputy Principal shall act in the place of the Form Teacher/Year Head as the case may be.

- 13.11 For serious disciplinary matters, a student may be sent home after consultation with the parents/guardians via telephone by the principal/deputy principal. The student may be questioned about the case matter by the principal/deputy principal in the absence of a parent/guardian. The principal may request the school secretary to make contact with the parents/guardians regarding the matter.
- 13.12 The parent/guardian will be informed of the disciplinary matter and given the opportunity to come to the school to discuss it with the principal/deputy principal.
- 13.13 The parent/guardian may also make a written submission to the principal/deputy principal in respect of the matter.
- 13.14 The student may also provide the principal/deputy principal with his written account of the matter.
- 13.15 The principal will consider the matter and provide a determination in due course. The matter and the determination of the principal will be recorded and kept on file.
- 13.16 The parent/guardian can appeal the decision/determination of the principal/deputy principal to the Board of Management.
- 13.17 The services of the guidance counsellor and our home school liaison officer will be offered to the student in cases deemed appropriate by the college authorities.

#### **14 DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

- 14.1 To ensure the smooth and orderly running of St. Kevin's College it is acknowledged and accepted that there is a need for sanctions to deal with and register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour on the part of students. In the event of any student behaving in an unacceptable fashion, breaching this Code of Behaviour or gravely misconducting himself within the college, he may be subject to sanctions to include those set out below. The particular sanction used will depend on the nature and gravity of the misbehaviour. A decision on expulsion from the school is reserved to the Board of Management.

Sanctions can include:

- Reasoning with the student.
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
- Loss of any privileges (eg. extra-curricular activities etc.)
- Note in journal/VWare
- Prescribing additional written work or homework.
- Phone call home to parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Referral to Form Teacher/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal.
- Temporary physical separation from the classroom.
- Detention before school, lunchtime or after school.
- Putting students on student support cards.
- Detention on Friday afternoons (up to 2 hours duration).
- Development of an improvement plan.
- Referral to guidance counsellor.
- Referral to behaviour support.
- Internal Suspension
- Suspension.
- Referral to St John's Education centre.

- Expulsion.

This list is not exhaustive.

- 14.2 The college will advise the student and the parents/guardians of the nature of the complaint, the action the college proposes to take and the parent/guardians and student will be given the opportunity to respond. Parents/guardians may seek clarification from the relevant person regarding the implications of any of the above sanctions.
- 14.3 It is the responsibility of the college and the Board of Management to ensure that this Code of Behaviour is applied in a manner which is consistent and fair to all students. The college will maintain contact with the parents/guardians through school journals, VSware, letters, meetings, phone calls, etc.
- 14.4 A decision of the principal to suspend may be appealed to the Board of Management. The reader is referred to the various policies included in this Code of Behaviour and in particular the Suspension Policy/Expulsion Policy.
- 14.5 In the context of imposing sanctions, the teacher, the Form Teacher, the Year Head, the Deputy Principal, the Principal and the Board of Management shall ensure that fair procedures shall be followed including the right to be heard and the right to impartiality.
- 14.6 Where a student and/or parent/guardian will not cooperate with a sanction that has been applied in accordance with this Code of Behavior, a higher level of sanction may be incurred.

## **15 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

- 15.1 We aim to promote a positive experience for all students and will reward good and positive behaviour. This will be evident in the classroom on a regular basis and will be reinforced in our award ceremonies which are held multiple times a year.
- 15.2 Our reward system consists of the following:
  - Positive reinforcement and praise throughout the college.
  - Trips and treats are organised.
  - Privileges may be granted to students.
  - Award ceremonies to recognise excellence, effort and dedication.
  - Comments and praise communicated to parents.
  - School Tour.
  - Extra-curricular activities.

This list is not exhaustive.

## **16 SUSPENSION POLICY**

- 16.1 Only the Principal and/or the Board of Management may suspend a student after prior consultation with the parent(s)/guardian(s). If the principal suspends a student the principal shall inform the Board of Management at its next meeting. The principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the college at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of students, staff or any other person in the college. The principal may also consider an immediate suspension where the continued presence of the student concerned would represent a threat to effective teaching and learning taking place in the classroom.

- 16.2 Suspensions applied by the Principal may be appealed to the college Board of Management.
- 16.3 The Board of Management shall consider suspension during a State Examination in circumstances inter alia where there is:
  - (a) a threat to good order in the conduct of the examination.
  - (b) a threat to the safety of other students and exam personnel.
  - (c) a threat to the right of other students to do their examination in a calm atmosphere.
- 16.4 In any case of suspension, the parent/guardian shall be informed in writing of the suspension, setting out the reasons for the suspension, the period of the suspension and the conditions, if any, on which the student may return to the college. The Principal and/or Deputy Principal and/or the Year Head will be available to discuss the suspension with the parents/guardian of the student.
- 16.5 A suspension shall be for a limited period and shall take into account the student's previous record.
- 16.6 The Principal may decide that a longer period of suspension is warranted in the light of the student's behaviour and may suspend him pending a meeting of the Board of Management.
- 16.7 A made by the Board of Management may be appealed under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. Where the Board of Management applies a suspension the Principal shall notify the parent/guardian in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm the period of suspension, the dates on which the suspension shall begin and end, the reasons for the suspension, any study program to be followed, the arrangements for returning to school and the right of appeal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended.
- 16.8 A suspension may be removed by the Board of Management or following an appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended.
- 16.9 A period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parent/guardian and the college shall help the student to reintegrate and shall support the student make a fresh start notwithstanding the record of his behavior and any sanction imposed.

## **17 EXPULSION POLICY**

- 17.1 Expulsion shall be resorted to only in the most extreme cases of misbehaviour and indiscipline, after every effort at intervention has failed and every other appropriate sanction has been exhausted. A student is expelled from the college only when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him from the college having complied with the provisions of this policy and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. The authority to expel a student lies with the Board of Management. The Board of Management shall only expel a student in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.
- 17.2 A proposal to expel a student shall only be taken on serious grounds and may be considered inter alia if:-
  - (a) the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others and/or to the teaching process;
  - (b) the student is uncontrollable and is not amenable to any form of college authority;
  - (c) the student's continued presence in the college constitutes a real and significant threat to safety in the college or the safety of others therein;
  - (d) the student's conduct is a source of bad example and is having an adverse affect and influence on other students in the college;

- (e) the student's misbehaviour towards a member of staff or employee of the school is of a very serious nature;
- (f) the student is responsible for serious damage to property which may include college property;
- (g) the student's behaviour is in contravention of the Health and Safety Acts.

The list above is not exhaustive and factors such as the degree of seriousness of the behaviour, the persistence of the student's behaviour and the failure of other forms of reprimand and intervention to effect a change in the student's behaviour may be taken into account in arriving at an opinion.

- 17.3 The Board of Management may also consider that the student's behavior warrants expulsion notwithstanding the fact that this may be a first offence which may amount to a single breach of this Code.
- 17.4 The college shall follow the appropriate procedures in respect of expulsion as prescribed under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts discloses serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the college shall follow the appropriate procedural steps which may include, without limitation, the following:
  - (a) a detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal;
  - (b) a recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal;
  - (c) consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing;
  - (d) the parent/guardian and the student whose expulsion is being considered shall be given the opportunity to be heard and to present their views either orally or in writing at the hearing or otherwise;
  - (e) having listened to the report presented by the Principal and the representations made by or on behalf of the student, the Board of Management shall consider the matter in the absence of the parent/guardian/student and the principal and shall arrive at a decision in accordance with this code;
  - (f) that decision shall be communicated to the student and his parent/guardian;
  - (g) where the Board of Management forms the opinion that expulsion is warranted, it must allow for a period of twenty school days before reaching a final decision. During this period the college will engage in a statutory facilitation process involving TUSLA, the college and the student/parents/guardians as provided for in section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. At the end of this period the Board of Management will reconvene and consider the outcome of these consultations and the opinion to expel.
- 17.5 Following the procedures in respect of expulsion the Principal and Board of Management may at their respective discretions make reference to paragraph 12.4 (pages 83 to 86 inclusive) of the NEWB 2008 Guidelines.
- 17.6 A parent/guardian or a student over the age of 18 years may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Alternatively, an Appeal may also be brought by the National Education Welfare Board on behalf of a student. The parent/guardian/student are referred to the provisions for mediation pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

We have read the preceding Code of Behaviour, Policy on Bullying, Suspension Policy, Expulsion Policy, Mobile Phone and Drugs Policy and agree to abide by them

Signed: Parent / Guardian      1. \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

**ST. KEVIN'S COLLEGE SCHOOL CHARTER**

The successful education of all students depends on a strong link between the students, their parents/guardians and the college, each one having rights and responsibilities.

**The Student:**

As a student of St. Kevin's College, I agree:

- Treat all students and staff within the school community with respect.
- To obey all college rules.
- To respect all college property and the property of my fellow students.
- To be on time for school and all my classes.
- To attend school regularly.
- To wear my full uniform at all times.
- To bring all books and equipment to class.
- To bring my school journal to all classes.
- To complete all homework and present on time.
- To work to the best of my ability.
- To allow my teachers to teach and my fellow students to learn.

Signed by the student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s) / Guardian(s):**

As a parent of \_\_\_\_\_, I agree:

- To facilitate my son's regular and punctual attendance at school.
- To attend parent/teacher meetings.
- To check my son's journal regularly and to sign any notes from his teachers.
- To ensure my son has completed all his homework.
- To check my son's VSware behaviour reports weekly.
- To support the college, its teachers and its policies.
- To encourage my son to work to the best of his ability.

Signed by Parent(s) / Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

**The School:**

As a school, St. Kevin's College agrees to:

- To provide a high standard of teaching, academic support and personal guidance.
- To make available written reports on a student's progress twice yearly (December and June).
- To hold one parent/teacher meeting per year.
- To assign homework regularly and to mark homework and classwork regularly.
- To offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

- To ensure the college environment is one which is well disciplined, healthy and secure for its students.
- Signed by Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_