



St. Mary's Secondary School

Convent of Mercy, Newport, Co. Tipperary V94 RY18

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Registered Charity Number: 20148379



CEIST
Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust



Code of Behaviour.

A Policy & Procedures Document for:

St. Mary's Secondary School,

Newport,

Co. Tipperary

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Code of Behaviour

St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport, is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of C.E.I ST. (Catholic Schools, An Irish Schools Trust). The School is grant aided by the Department of Education & Skills, and is a co-educational school.

School Management: The Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School is a statutory Board, appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Mission Statement:

St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport operates as a Catholic co-educational Secondary School, to provide teaching and learning of the highest quality for the benefit of the community which it serves.

In pursuing this mission we aim:

- To provide a quality educational experience that caters for the full range of academic aptitude and abilities.
- To foster the intellectual, physical, social, cultural, moral and religious development of our students.
- To enable pupils to achieve their full potential academically.
- To promote the Catholic ethos and faith.
- To cater for the needs of the local community in so far as ethos, resources and facilities permit.

Ethos: As a CEIST school, St. Mary's seeks to promote the five key elements of the CEIST charter.

Promoting Spiritual and Human Development.

Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning.

Showing Respect for Every Person.

Creating Community.

Being Just and Responsible.

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other policies of St. Mary's Secondary School, Newport, but with particular reference to the Anti-Bullying policy, the ICT policy, the Acceptable Usage Policy, the Remote Learning Policy, the Mobile Phone Policy, the Out Of Schools Activities and Educational Tours Policy, the Changing Room Policy, the Substance Abuse Policy, the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and the Child Safeguarding Statement.

This policy, along with all other policies, applies to all students of St. Mary's Secondary School, regardless of whether they have attained 18 years of age or not.

This Code of Behaviour has been prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board.

The guiding principles underpinning this Code of Behaviour are:

- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support amongst students, staff and parents.
- To maintain a safe classroom environment for teachers and students, that is conducive to real learning taking place, and promotes a positive working environment for all of our staff.
- To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To make clear to all students that we have high expectations of good behaviour here at St. Mary's Secondary School.
- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and behaviour.
- To help our young people to grow and mature into responsible, participating citizens.
- To ensure that our school's high expectations for the behaviour of all members of the school community are transparent and understood.
- To promote equality for all members of our school community, and to respect and uphold at all times the principle of fairness.
- To clarify that the educational needs of a student whose behaviour is unacceptable will be balanced with the educational needs of the other students in the school.
- To protect the welfare of all of our students by adhering to our school ethos of a compassionate and just society, inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The spirit of the Code of Behaviour of St. Mary's Secondary School derives from the C.E.I.S.T. Vision and Mission statements. Our vision is the creation of a compassionate and just society, inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Our mission is to provide a holistic education in the Catholic tradition.

Our school's Code of Behaviour should be considered in the context of our school being a community in which mutual respect, co-operation and natural justice are integral features.

Our Code of Behaviour shall have regard for the rights and responsibilities of all of the parties concerned within the school: management, principal, teachers, pupils and their parents or guardians.

The ethos of a school is a major factor in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline. This will involve a strong sense of community within the school, and a spirit of co-operation among management, staff, pupils and parents / guardians.

At its core, school life constitutes the development of relationships founded on the principle of mutual respect. In the event of a breakdown of this respect, the Code of Behaviour will facilitate a process of mediation and restoration of effective relationships.

The effectiveness of this code depends upon Management structures, the corporate responsibility of the Board of Management, of staff, the consent of the pupils and their parents/guardians, and also upon the method of its implementation.

Aims

- To provide an environment that promotes positive models of behaviour for all members of the school community.
- To prepare young people for adult life, by affirming their own contribution to their educational experiences.

Objectives

- To instil in students a respect for themselves, for all school personnel and respect for school property.
- To inculcate in each student a sense of responsibility for his/her behaviour.
- To nurture the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and cultural development of our students.
- To promote religious education and faith formation.
- To encourage a culture of punctuality, co-operation, dedication to tasks and pride in our school.

Core Principles

- We strive to promote an ethos of openness, transparency and accountability, where all members of the school community are treated equally and fairly, and where policies are applied consistently and in an even handed way, while at all times upholding the principles of natural justice.
- The student's welfare and safety must be promoted at all times.

- There must be **respect** and **support** for school personnel in exercising their duty of care.
- Breaches of this Code of Behaviour must be recorded, and reported to the appropriate person, if necessary.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

Here in St. Mary's, we prioritize the promotion of good behaviour. We have high expectations of our students, and are fully aware that the quality of the relationships between teachers and student is a powerful influence on behaviour in our school. Therefore, we take every opportunity possible to foster relationships of trust, while constantly affirming positive behaviour.

We believe that progress and development are best advanced in an atmosphere of cooperation and encouragement, and where there is a strong sense of community and common purpose between students, parents/guardians, and staff. In such an atmosphere, students will, in general, be happy, and their welfare safeguarded. The vast majority of students in St. Mary's progress happily and successfully through school life, and in the great majority of cases also, there is a mutual and productive understanding and collaboration between school and home.

Strategies to promote positive behaviour.

St. Mary's Secondary School seeks to promote and affirm good behaviour at all times. Strategies used by teachers to this end may include, among others:

- Giving positive oral feedback about good behaviour to students and their parents/guardians.
- Validating positive behaviour through the use of the school diary for positive entries
- "Praise on a postcard"
- Encouraging a good classroom routine, for example, punctuality, having all the school materials necessary for class, etc.
- Communicating, encouraging and demanding high expectations of all of our students.
- Encouraging positive interaction with all students in our school
- Writing classroom rules in positive language
- The promotion of activities/events/extracurricular activities designed to enhance the quality of the relationship between students and teachers.

St. Mary's Secondary School expects that the parents/guardians of our students support the school, by encouraging good learning behaviour.

Promoting positive behaviour to students with special educational needs.

Class Teachers and specialist personnel endeavour to ensure that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with special educational needs will understand.

The use of rewards systems

It is recognised that rewarding students' positive and co-operative behaviour, as well as academic and sporting performance, has an overall beneficial effect upon individuals, and upon the school community. Such rewards may include:

- The use of praise and reward
- Student of the week in a class group
- Keeping parents/guardians informed of positive behaviour
- Recording positive comments in the students diary
- Postcard/note of commendation sent home
- 10 minutes of Kahoot or similar at the end of a unit/topic.
- Use of the intercom to highlight positive achievements
- Use of one to one opportunities to affirm student's progress
- Annual awards night for Transition Years and 6th Years
- CEIST Spirit of St. Mary's award.

Code of Practice: Core Provisions.

Attendance & Punctuality

- Education is compulsory for children in Ireland from the ages of 6 to 16, or until they have completed three years of post-primary education, whichever occurs later, as outlined in the Education Act 2000.
- The school day in St. Mary's starts at 8.55am each day. Students are expected to be on time each morning.
- Students are required to present to all lessons throughout the day on time.
- If a student is absent, parents/ guardians **must** provide the school with a note of explanation on their child's return to school. This is required by the Department of Education under part 3, section 18 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Uniform & Dress Code

Students should, at all times, wear the full school uniform, and are expected to present to school tidy in dress and appearance. Should students present to school not wearing the school uniform, they are required to bring a note of explanation to their Year Head, signed by their parents/guardians. Notes will not excuse the wearing of boots or pyjamas.

The school uniform consists of:

For Boys:

- Shoes of a dark colour
- Plain navy trousers of Terylene or hopsack quality. No slits are permitted on the trousers legs.
- Plain sky-blue shirt
- Navy school tie with stripe
- Grey V-neck jumper with the school crest

For Girls

- Shoes of a dark colour
- Wine socks
- Plain wine skirt of ankle length **or** Grey trousers with a wine stripe
- Plain sky-blue blouse
- Wine school tie with stripe
- Wine V-neck jumper with School Crest

Transition Year students have the option of wearing the school approved Transition Year Uniform, details of which are available from the Transition Year Coordinator.

The following items are **not** a part of the school uniform;

- Large Earrings, on health and safety grounds. Please note that not more than one small stud earring on each ear lobe is allowed.
- Large or multiple rings, on health and safety grounds.
- Facial piercings, on health and safety grounds
- Boots and runners.
- As directed by the P.E. teachers, students are required to wear the appropriate apparel in all outdoor/indoor activities.
- This list is not exhaustive.

The Classroom

- Students should occupy the places assigned to them by their respective class teachers.
- Students may not enter a classroom, unless authorised by a teacher.
- Students shall have the appropriate materials, as required, for each class.
- Students must have a homework journal, and are required to keep a record of all homework tasks.
- Students are required to complete homework tasks, and within the specified time frame.
- Students shall co-operate fully in the work of the class.

General

- Each student is responsible for his/her own personal property. The school provides a locker, at a nominal rent, to facilitate the safekeeping of school materials and personal property.
- The school cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property.
- During lesson time, students may not enter the toilet areas, without written permission from a teacher.
- Students who wish to leave school during the school day may only do so when they have provided a note of explanation to the school. On collection of the student from school, parents/guardians are required to sign the student out at the reception area.
- Deportment of students in circulation areas shall be orderly at all times.
- The unruly gathering of students in this school, and while on school business, is prohibited under our code of behaviour, on health and safety grounds.
- During lesson changeover, students are expected to immediately make their way to their next class. Loitering or congregating of students between lessons will not be tolerated. Persistent unexplained absence from lessons, lateness to lessons and time wasting in various areas of the school site, such as the toilets, may require parental involvement, and is considered a breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- In order to ensure a well maintained school environment, students are required to positively support the ancillary staff.
- The use of mobile phones and all digital devices by students is for educational purposes only, and under the strict supervision of a teacher. Please refer to our mobile phone policy for further details.
- The use of digital devices or any other recording or audio equipment is not allowed during class, or during supervised study. Again, please refer to the Mobile Phone Policy for further details.
- The possession, consumption or distribution of any illegal substances in school is forbidden by law, and is considered a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- The possession, consumption or distribution of alcohol in school is forbidden, and is considered a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- Smoking in the school buildings and on the school grounds is prohibited by law, and is considered a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- Vaping in the school buildings, and on the school grounds, is strictly prohibited by the Board of Management, and is also considered a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- The chewing of gum is not permitted anywhere on the school premises.
- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to peers, teachers, ancillary staff and visitors.
- **Students may not leave the grounds of St. Mary's during the school day. However, during the exceptional circumstances of the Covid 19 pandemic, there are exceptions. Please refer to the amendment to the Code of Behaviour (September, 2021).**

Lunch & Break Periods

- Students shall consume food and beverages in designated areas only.
- All students are required to remain on school premises at all times during lunch and break periods.

Out of School Activities

Educational outings of any nature, other than in the event of an emergency, require the signing of a standard consent form by a parent/guardian. The rules of this Code of Behaviour will apply at all times during any activities out of school. Examples include, among others, school tours, games and extra-curricular activities and attendance at events organised by the school. Please refer to the Out of School Activities and Educational Tours Policy.

Applying sanctions in response to behaviour that takes place outside school

The standards and rules contained in the Code of Behaviour apply in any situation where the student, although outside the school, is still the responsibility of the school. Should a student engage in serious misbehaviour outside school designated activity/timetable, the code of behaviour applies if a clear connection or link can be made with the school, and/or if the incident has a demonstrable impact upon the school and its reputation. School management reserves the right to investigate and impose appropriate sanctions where there is significant evidence of student misbehaviour outside of school.

Health and Safety

- The health and safety of all who attend St. Mary's Secondary School is of paramount concern to the Board of Management. Any incident which raises concerns for the health and safety of students, of teachers or of ancillary staff shall be immediately investigated, reported, recorded and appropriate action shall be taken.
- On health and safety grounds, it is essential that a student's whereabouts be known during school hours. Consequently, truanting from school and missing classes are considered breaches of this Code of Behaviour, due to the serious health and safety risks involved. Under no circumstances shall a student leave school without a signed note from parents, and permission from the school.
- Students are encouraged to work with staff in a spirit of co-operation, in order to maintain the cleanliness of our school, on the grounds of health and safety. Littering is therefore a breach of this Code of Behaviour, as it may impact negatively on our health and safety standards. Students may be asked to help out from time to time, and are expected to assist the staff in a helpful, co-operative manner.
- A student should not, intentionally or recklessly, interfere with, misuse or damage anything that might endanger the safety, health and welfare of any other person i.e. misuse of fire alarms, fire extinguishers, deliberate damage to toilet facilities etc.

Theft & Vandalism.

- Students are expected to be responsible for, and take care of, their own property.
- The school provides lockers, but is not responsible for any loss or damage to property.
- Students are encouraged not to bring valuable items to school.
- A student must not take, without permission, any school property or the property of others.
- **Theft is regarded as a serious breach of school rules. The school management reserves the right to inform the relevant authorities.**
- Students are expected to respect the property of the school, and the property of fellow students and staff. Students shall not intentionally or recklessly damage any school property, either within the school building, or on its grounds.
- Wilful vandalism is regarded as a serious offence and the school management reserves the right to inform the relevant authorities.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression verbal, physical or psychological conducted by an individual or group, against others, with intent to cause hurt. (Department of Education)

The Board of Management of St. Mary's Secondary School recognises the very serious nature of bullying, and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils. The Board is therefore fully committed to our key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour, as outlined in our Anti-Bullying Policy

Types of behaviour deemed to be inappropriate can be;

- Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability etc.
- Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language.
- Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise.
- Physical abuse or threats including that of a sexual nature.
- Aggressive or obscene language.
- Offensive joke; whether spoken, or by e-mail, text messaging, social networking sites etc.
- Victimisation including very personal remarks.
- Exclusion and isolation.
- Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or locker.
- Threats, including demands for money.
- An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on an individual's reputation.
- Cyber bullying which could include abusive text messages, e-mails, videos, photos or messages posted on various social networking websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TicToc etc.
- This list is not exhaustive.

We believe that every student has the right to come to our school and learn, free from threat or intimidation.

Fighting is not tolerated here at St. Mary's Secondary School. Physical aggression and violence of any kind is considered to be a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. If you believe that your son/daughter is the victim of bullying, please do not hesitate to contact the school, and it will be investigated thoroughly. Please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy for further details.

Stages in Implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

Teacher in the classroom.

- Shall deal with the inappropriate behaviour of any individual student.
- The teacher may liaise with parents.
- May refer unresolved matters to the Year Head, the Deputy Principal or the Principal, depending on the situation, and/or the seriousness of the issue.

Year Head:

- The Class Teacher shall refer more serious incidents of misconduct to the Year Head.
- The Year Head shall investigate the incident and record his/her findings.
- The Year Head may liaise with parents.
- Detention may be invoked by the Year Head.
- A Year Head may place a student on report.

The Deputy Principal.

- will liaise with the parents/guardians.
- May place students on report, or invoke detention.
- In the event of a situation not being resolved satisfactorily, the Deputy Principal shall refer the matter to the Principal.

The Principal.

- will exercise, on behalf of the Board of Management, the right to suspend a student
- will communicate with the parents/guardians.

The Board of Management.

- The Board may, as a last resort, expel a student from the school.

The order of the above stages may be altered, depending on the situation at the time, and/or the seriousness of the incident.

Rules and Sanctions

Attendance & Punctuality.

- The school day begins at 8.55 AM
- If a student is late he/she **must** report to the administration office and sign the late register.
- Parents/guardians **must** provide a written explanation for every absence, on the day of the students return.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will communicate in writing with parents/guardians where there is persistent lateness or absenteeism.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will inform the National Education Welfare Board, Túsla, as obliged by legislation, when a pupil has exceeded 20 school days absent in one school year. ⁶
- Students wishing to leave the school for medical or other appointments **must** present a note written by the parents/guardians. When leaving the school, students must sign a register at reception.

Uniform.

Students shall at all times wear the school uniform in its entirety, and are expected to present to school tidy in dress and appearance. Should students present to school not wearing the school uniform, they are required to bring a note of explanation to their Year Head, signed by their parents/guardians. Persistent failure to wear the school uniform properly will require parental involvement.

The following items are **not** a part of the school uniform, and are not acceptable.

- Large Earrings.
- Large or multiple rings.
- Facial piercings.
- Runners and boots.
- Jackets.
- Pyjamas
- Scarves
- Leggings
- Facial piercings are not a part of our school uniform. If students present to school with a facial piercing, they will be required to remove it on health and safety grounds.
- This list is not exhaustive.

A specific style of jacket is permitted during the Covid Pandemic. (letter to parents, 5th November, 2021). Please refer to Year Head for further details.

P.E. & Sports.

- It is mandatory to wear appropriate apparel for P.E. classes, and for training and competition.
- In the interest of safety, jewellery may not be worn.

Practicals/ Demonstrations

- It is mandatory to wear protective clothing, if required by the teacher.
- In the interest of safety, teachers may request students to remove jewellery.

Homework

- Details of our policy on homework are set out in our policy document on homework.
- Students who fail to submit homework may be required to present a note signed by the parent/guardian, to the teacher, validating the excuse.

Admissions

- All details of how students gain admission to our school are contained in our admissions policy. The school, in accordance with our mission statement, seeks to promote equality and fairness in its admissions policy. The Board of Management of the school reserves the right to refuse or withdraw an application, in exceptional circumstances, and/or if the health and safety of the school environment as a whole is compromised by the admission of a particular student.

Mobile Phones, & recording/audio equipment.

Under no circumstances shall a student use their phone as a recording device in school, unless explicitly requested by his/her teacher to do so for educational purposes. Recording footage in school is considered a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour, and will be dealt with accordingly. If students are found to be using a mobile phone in school, without permission, they are in breach of this Code of Behaviour. As a consequence, the phone shall be confiscated and shall be returned to the student at the discretion of the Principal. Smart glasses are not permitted in the school. Please refer to our mobile phone policy for further information.

Theft and damage to property

- In the event of theft, the incident shall be investigated and where warranted, the Code of Behaviour will be invoked.
- In the event of deliberate damage to school property and/or student's property, the offending party may be requested to make good the replacement costs.
- Deliberate damage to school property and deliberate acts of vandalism are considered serious breaches of this Code of Behaviour.

Detention

- Detention may be invoked by the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Detentions shall take place after school on Friday afternoons between 1.30pm and 2.30pm

Bullying

Students are not expected to tolerate bullying or to suffer in silence. In St. Mary's Secondary School, we encourage students to come forward and disclose problems in an environment in which they feel safe and have confidence. Early intervention is important, if behaviour is to be changed. Please refer to our Anti-Bullying policy for further details

Report Cards and Behaviour Contracts

- May be used as pre and post suspension interventions.
- The Report Card shall be signed by the parents/guardians each evening.
- The student shall report to the Year Head/Deputy Principal each morning whilst on report card.
- It shall be reviewed by the Year Head/Deputy Principal after a period of five days.
- Behaviour Contracts shall be agreed between student, parent and Deputy Principal as a means of improving and monitoring behaviour. Serious breaches of behaviour contracts may result in suspension.

Suspension

- The decision to suspend will be invoked when;
 - A student is in persistent breach of the Code of Behaviour.
 - A student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
 - A student's continued presence in our school constitutes a threat to health and safety.
 - A student is responsible for serious damage to property.
 - Other interventions have been unsuccessful, for example, a student failing a report card.
 - A student is found to be in serious breach of the Code of Behaviour, eg. Smoking, Vaping, illegal drugs/alcohol related incidents, fighting, refusing to sit detention, defiance, vandalism, truancy, theft etc.
 - This list is not exhaustive.
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed of the grounds for suspension.
- Documented evidence will be presented.
- Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal a suspension to the Board of Management and will be given an opportunity to do so.
- Parents/Guardians shall be advised of the procedures for such an appeal.
- During the period of suspension, the student retains their place in the school.
- A full reinstatement meeting involving the student, his/her parents/guardians, and the Deputy Principal is required prior to the removal of a suspension and the student's return to school. This may involve both parental and student agreement to a behaviour

contract with specific targets and expectations regarding conduct and effort while in school.

Expulsion from the school.

- Expulsion shall be the final resort of the Board of Management.
- The decision to expel is only taken on serious grounds such as:
 - The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others.
 - The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to health and safety.
 - A student is responsible for serious damage to property.
 - Supplying alcohol and/or illegal drugs to other students in the school.
 - Sexual assault.
 - Physical threats and/or violence towards other students or staff.

Parents/Guardians will be invited to address the Board prior to any decision being taken to expel a student.

Appeals Procedures

- Parents/guardians retain the right to appeal to the Trustees of the school and/or the Secretary General of the Department of Education.⁷
- Parents/guardians of students over 18 or the student themselves, retain the right to appeal a suspension or an expulsion to the Secretary General of the Department of Education⁸
- Parents/guardians shall be advised that they retain the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education.

Communication with the School

If you have any concerns whatsoever about behavioural matters, please don't hesitate to contact the class teacher, if appropriate, the relevant Year Head, or the Deputy Principal.

Timetable for Review

The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed as the need arises, and/or every three years. The next review is scheduled to take place in 2025.

Policy review team: Mr. D O'Callaghan, Ms. E Mullally, Ms. F. McGauley, Ms K. Clohessy, Ms. N. Meagher, Mr. C. Nolan, Mr. D. Kennedy.

Relevant dates for this policy:

Policy reviewed and amended by team: August 2021 – December 2021

Consultation with Principal: 21st January, 2022, 11th February, 2022

Consultation with and feedback from staff regarding the promotion of positive behaviour: 27TH January – 4th February

Consultation with Senior Management Team: 15th February, 2022

Consultation with Parents Council: 18th February, 2022

Consultation with Student Council: 1st March, 2022

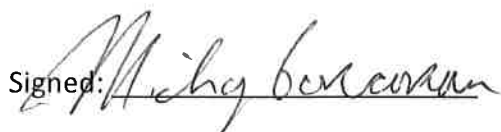
Consultation with Staff: 18th February, and staff meeting of 3rd March, 2022

Draft amended Policy presented to Board of Management: 15th June, 2022

Code of Behaviour Policy ratified by Board of Management: 15th June, 2022

Amended and ratified by Board of Management: 30th November, 2022

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management

Date:

30/11/2022

Signed:



Principal, St. Mary's Secondary School

30/11/2022

Date: _____