



# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

St. Anne's Community College

*A Code to Promote Positive Behaviour*

## Introduction

The purpose of this code is to promote positive behaviour and respect for all members of the school community. This will only be achieved when the whole school community works together. At St. Anne's, we seek to develop the full potential of every student in an orderly, caring environment where quality teaching and learning takes place. The key to this is the strong spirit of collaboration between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Board of Management, Staff, Students, Parents and the wider community.

Our code is grounded in the core values of LCETB namely-

- We are multidenominational, co-educational and student centred.
- We provide excellence in education, promote inclusivity and cater for diversity.

## Aims

- To ensure that all students have an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe, respectful and harmonious environment which places their well-being at its core.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way which ensures the health, safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To promote standards of positive behaviour which will prepare our students for the expectations of adult life and which centre on the principles of respect, honesty, punctuality, consideration, kindness, cooperation and application.
- To encourage students to take responsibility for their own behaviour and through the practice of restorative justice, learn how their behaviour affects themselves and others.
- To garner the support and cooperation of students and parents in the implementation of the Code of Positive Behaviour.

**Please note - Attendance at St. Anne's Community College means you agree to abide by all our policies and procedures.**

## Scope

This Code of Positive Behaviour applies to all students in all of the following situations -

- During the school day.
- While on the school grounds.
- In any situation where the student is the responsibility of the school, e.g. school tours, sports, educational outings and school events etc.
- While in uniform.
- Where a student causes damage to the reputation of the school or the school community or creates a situation in which other students or staff are put at risk.

Please note - Students are expected to respect the privacy and property of staff both in and outside of school.

## Promoting Positive Behaviour in our School

Key features of a positive approach include:

- Building positive relationships and creating a good rapport in our school community.

- An emphasis on positive rather than negative statements.
- Teaching young people the social skills they need to be confident and successful.
- Consistent use of praise and positive reinforcement.
- Celebrating our young people's achievements.
- Redirecting young people towards positive outcomes rather than dwelling on or highlighting mistakes.

## School Rules and Expectations

Rules provide a clear framework for responsible and positive behaviour.

### We expect:

#### 1. That you come to school every day and arrive on time.

This means:

- That you attend every day unless absolutely unavoidable and remain in school for the full day.
- That **you are in school at least five minutes before first class** and are punctual for all your classes throughout the day.
- If you are late, you must sign in at reception upon arrival.
- Absences must be explained by a note from your parent or guardian on the day you return to school.
- If, for essential reasons, you need to leave school during the school day, you must sign out at reception, presenting an explanatory note.

Because:

- Time missed is hard to make up.
- Punctuality is a sign of respect and cooperation to your teachers and peers.
- Being on time/present helps you to manage your day/week and feel prepared to learn.
- Legally, the school must keep a record of all absences and report these as required.

### We expect:

#### 2. That you come to school in full uniform, clean and tidy.

This means:

- You wear the school uniform as outlined by school management.
- You try your best to be neat and tidy.
- That piercings are confined to small studs (earlobes) for boys and girls.
- You have appropriate gear for PE class/sporting activities.

Because:

- Attending St. Anne's implies that you and your parents/guardians accept that the school uniform must be worn as outlined by the school.
- Our uniform represents being part of our school community.
- We should take pride in our uniform and take responsibility for maintaining the image of the school by wearing it well.

### We expect:

### **3. That you come to school prepared to learn.**

This means:

- That you have your correct books, completed homework and materials for every class.
- That you have your PE gear and any special equipment you need for the day.
- Expensive items and items of personal and/or sentimental value should be left at home.
- That you only go to your locker in the morning, at official break times and after school.
- That you respect your journal and have it with you in all classes.

Because:

- If you have everything you need for class, you will be able to fully participate and learn.
- You may waste time (for yourself, your peers and your teacher) if you are not ready for class.
- Learning to organise yourself is a skill that you will use throughout your life.
- The journal is a place for you to record homework, plan, set goals and is a means of communication between school and home.

**We expect:**

### **4. That you have a positive attitude to learning and cooperate fully with your teachers**

This means:

- That you listen your teachers and to each other as appropriate.
- That you will not disrupt the learning and teaching in class.
- That you will participate fully in class.
- That you will take responsibility for your learning and always try your best.
- That you bring your journal to every class, record your homework for each subject and get it signed by a parent/guardian each week.
- That you do your homework and assignments on time.
- That you do not eat in class and only drink water if given permission by the teacher.

Because:

- All students have a right to learn and teachers have a right to teach without disruption.
- You will learn and develop through listening and participating in class.
- Taking ownership of your learning will empower you and help you to grow.
- The journal helps you to organise your homework which helps you to succeed in school.
- Homework builds on the work in class and gives you an opportunity to show what you have learned or may need help with.

**We expect:**

### **5. That you abide by the school's Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices Policy.**

This means:

- That all students and parents accept the school's Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

Please note in particular –

- That you keep your mobile phone switched off and out of sight at all times unless otherwise directed by a teacher.

- That you do not bring any other digital/electronic devices to school unless otherwise directed by a teacher.
- No photographs or recordings, either video or audio, should be made, shared or stored of members of the school community in school or on school activities without express permission of the school. Staff are entitled to their privacy in this regard at all times.

Because:

- The phone at reception is available for use if you need to make an urgent call or contact parents/guardians during school hours.
- Learning and teaching deserves to be free from disruption caused by unapproved use of phones/devices.
- Students deserve a safe environment free from distraction and cyber-bullying.
- Students need their break-times to relax and socialise - misuse of devices can cause isolation, anxiety and invasion of privacy.

**Please note –**

That the production, sharing or storing of inappropriate or explicit photos, videos or audio recordings is unacceptable. In addition to dealing with such matters under the Code of Behaviour, the Gardaí will also be contacted.

**We expect:**

#### **6. That you have respect for the health and safety of yourself and others.**

This means:

- You should not engage in behaviour that could endanger the health and safety of yourself or others in the school community.
- That you do not possess, (on your person, in your locker, bag etc.) use, sell or distribute alcohol, harmful and/or illegal stimulants/drinks/substances/solvents at any time on the school campus or on school-related activities.
- Smoking and vaping are forbidden on the school campus or on any school related activities.
- That you do not bring or facilitate the bringing into the school campus or to any school-related activity, any substance or object likely to cause harm or injury. Objects required for learning e.g. compasses should be used for educational purposes only.
- That you familiarise yourself with and observe the Health and Safety Procedures in general and those in specialist classrooms and all areas of the school campus.

Because:

- The health and safety of all members of the school community is paramount.
- It is illegal to smoke in all public places under the Public Health (Tobacco Acts).
- The possession, use and sale of harmful and/or illegal substances poses a serious Health and Safety concern and Gardaí/Parents/Guardians will be contacted as appropriate.
- Such objects and substances can present a serious threat to the Health and Safety of the school community.
- Everybody in the school community has a role to play in keeping themselves and others safe.

**We expect:**

**7. That you have respect and consideration for other students and that you abide by our school's Anti-Bullying policy.**

This means:

- That you are fair and honest with everyone.
- That you are kind, supportive and helpful.
- That you will have consideration for the rights and feelings of others.
- That you do not pick on, victimise or bully others and that you report any incidents of bullying to a teacher, Year Head or any other member of staff. (Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or psychological aggression conducted by an individual or a group against others. Victimisation is the singling out of a person for cruel or unjust treatment).
- That you do not engage in Cyber-bullying (Cyber-bullying is the use of electronic/digital technology to torment, threaten, harass, humiliate, embarrass or otherwise target another person).
- That you do not make offensive or discriminatory remarks.
- That you do not engage in any form of harassment or sexual harassment of another person.
- That you do not fight or threaten to fight in or out of school. That you do not support fighting in any way e.g. recording, goading, spectating. That you do not provoke or taunt others or encourage them to fight.
- That you respect the property of others and of the school.

Because:

- Mutual respect and support make school a more positive place for everyone.
- You would like to be shown respect and consideration by others.
- Bullying, cyber-bullying, victimisation, discrimination and harassment can cause fear, hurt and misery. We want our school to be a safe space for everyone.
- Aggressive behaviour could cause serious injury or accidents.
- Damaging somebody's property is wrong and unfair.
- Damaging school property shows a lack of respect for the community you are a part of.

**We expect:**

**8. That you have respect, consideration and good manners in your dealings with Teachers and all School Staff. This also applies to visitors, local residents, local business owners and members of the local community.**

This means:

- That you cooperate fully in class and follow any instructions given by the teacher/guest speaker.
- That you show courtesy, consideration and good manners in your behaviour and your language.
- That you are not aggressive in your behaviour or language.
- You behave appropriately whilst on and off campus, having due regard for the property of others.

Because:

- Mutual respect and cooperation make school a more positive place for everyone to learn and work.
- Positive behaviour can allow for positive relationships to be built in our school community and in our local community.
- Aggressive behaviour or language has no place and will not be accepted in our school community.

**We expect:**

## **9. That you respect our school environment.**

This means:

- That you do your bit to keep the school clean and free of litter.
- That you place your litter in the appropriate bins.
- That you do not use chewing gum in school .
- That you use your locker/storage racks to neatly store your belongings and use an appropriate lock on your locker. Please note – Lockers remain the property of the school and may be subject to inspection.
- That you do not damage or graffiti any school property.
- That you do not return to the school campus or remain on the school grounds after school hours without explicit permission.

Because:

- Everyone benefits from working in a safe, clean and pleasant environment
- We are all responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of our school
- We all have a responsibility to sort our litter and recycle correctly to help the environment
- Books and bags can cause a trip hazard and belongings can go missing if they are not stored correctly
- The school campus is private property

**Please note the rules/expectations outlined are not exhaustive and the fact that a particular matter may not be specified in the code will not exonerate a student from responsibility or accountability should there be an infringement of another person's rights.**

**All rules apply to all students including those who are over 18 years of age.**

## **Promoting Good Behaviour**

Promoting good behaviour is the main goal of this code. Rewards can motivate positive change and promote good behaviour.

**Positive Behaviour will be acknowledged and rewarded in a variety of ways, such as:**

- Verbal praise, inside or outside the classroom.
- A smile, nod, thumbs up.
- Explaining why a compliment was given, "Well done, you have waited your turn to speak".
- Positive feedback on written work, digital work or in the student journal.
- Additional commendation on student school report.
- Communication with home or other relevant staff, commending the student.
- Display of students' work.
- Class competitions and prizes.
- Class celebrations or outings.
- Public recognition in assemblies.
- Announcements celebrating students' achievements over the school intercom.
- Public congratulations of students' achievements on the school's website and social media sites and newsletters.
- Certificates of achievement.

- Celebrations for achievements in extra-curricular endeavours.
- Student Awards Ceremony.

This list is not exhaustive.

### **Problem- Solving Approach to Inappropriate Behaviour**

Our school takes a problem-solving approach to inappropriate behaviour where the school is responsive to the behaviour and works collaboratively and restoratively towards a positive, fair outcome for all.

We aim to help students change their behaviour by working with parents, Pastoral Care team, Additional Educational Needs (AEN) team, Year Heads amongst others. While sanctions may be imposed, we believe in a two-pronged approach where support and sanctions go hand in hand. While our Code of Behaviour is underpinned by the principles of equity and fairness, there is a recognition that each student and situation is unique and this may be factored in when deciding an appropriate sanction and/or support.

### **Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour**

To be effective, the response should be part of a plan to change the behaviour. Sanctions should be used effectively and proportionately with appropriate interventions and supports. Changing behaviour works best when students and parent/guardians of St. Anne's accept and understand that there are consequences for unacceptable behaviour and that students must take responsibility for their own behaviour.

### **Responses to Inappropriate Behaviour**

- Reason with the student.
- Explain clearly what we need the student to do.
- Students will be reminded of the class or school rule.
- Explain to the student how the behaviour impacts on others.
- Verbal warning(s).
- Request student to move to a different seat on a temporary or permanent basis.
- Speak to student one-to-one after class. Student may be asked to work out a solution with their teacher to put things right.
- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Doing a useful task.
- Withdrawal from class.
- Note in journal.
- Referral to Year Head.
- Referral to Deputy Principal/Principal.
- Report Cards.
- Apology – written or verbal.
- Contract of behaviour.
- Contact parents/guardians.
- Payment for, or replacement of damaged or stolen property.
- Restriction to a designated area during break times.
- Detention.
- Suspension.
- Recommend expulsion to the Board of Management.



**This list is not exhaustive.**

- As part of our two-pronged approach to help students change behaviour, they may be referred to the Pastoral Care Team, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Learning Support Team or an appropriate external support service.

## **SUSPENSION & EXPULSION**

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. Fair procedures have two essential parts, **the right to be heard** and **the right to impartiality**.

In a school, fair procedures apply to the **investigation** of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and the process of **decision making** as to whether the student did engage in the misbehaviour and what sanction to impose. Both procedures should be free of bias. The principles of fair procedures always apply, but the degree of formality required in implementing fair procedures will depend on the gravity of the alleged misbehaviour, the seriousness of the possible sanction and the context of the particular situation. The level of formality required, for example for a suspension of fewer than three days, would be less than that required in the case of a longer suspension or in circumstances that might lead to an expulsion.

Where allegations of criminal behaviour are made about a student, these will usually be referred to the Gardaí who have responsibility for investigating criminal matters.

## SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as *requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days*.

Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) has the authority to suspend a student. LCETB has devolved this authority under Section 44(1)(a) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, to the Board of Management of the school. The Board of Management has delegated the authority to the Principal to suspend a student from attending school for a period of up to three days. The Board has also authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to guidance concerning such suspensions.

### Grounds for Suspension

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as;

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education or well-being of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Being verbally or physically abusive.
- Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour.
- Repeated less serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

The following factors should be considered before suspending a student;

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- The interventions tried to date.
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response.
- The possible impact of the suspension.

Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the student, give the student time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and may also give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour if appropriate.

## **Suspension Procedure**

Where an assessment of the facts, ascertained with due regard to fair procedures as outlined earlier, confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the following procedure applies.

1. The student and their parents/guardians will be informed about the complaint that gave rise to a potential suspension.
2. The student and their parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to respond.
3. Following a decision to suspend a student, a letter will issue to the parents/ guardians which will include;
  - The period of the suspension with dates
  - The reason(s) for the suspension

This letter may also include information on some of the following as appropriate;

- Right of appeal.
- Requesting a review by the Board of Management.
- A programme of work for the student.

## **Immediate Suspension**

The Principal may consider that an immediate suspension is warranted as the continued presence of the student in the school could cause major disruption to teaching & learning and/or represent a threat to the safety of the student, other students, staff and others. In this case, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension and a formal investigation should follow. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open ended.

## **Appeals**

Section 29(1)(b) of the Education Act 1998 provides that a parent, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of a Board of Management or a person acting on behalf of a Board of Management to suspend a student from attendance at a school for a period or periods totalling not less than 20 school days in a school year. To make an appeal, a Section 29 Appeal Form must be completed and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit within 42 calendar days from the date of the decision of the Board of Management or a person acting on behalf of the Board of Management.

## **Clean Slate/ Return to School**

When any sanction including suspension is completed, a student should be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the school should expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Return to school may include some or all of the following (this list is not exhaustive);

- Parents/guardians may be requested to attend a meeting.
- The student may be required to give a written or verbal apology for the misbehaviour.
- Internal and/or external supports and interventions may be arranged to help the student.

## **EXPULSION**

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Limerick & Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) has the authority to expel a student. LCETB has devolved this authority under Section 44(1)(a) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, to the Board of Management of the school.

### **Grounds for Expulsion**

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as;

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning or wellbeing of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety and well-being of others.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Serious verbal or physical abuse.
- Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour.
- Repeated, less serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference can be, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the code could include;

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.

The following factors should be considered before proposing to expel a student;

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour.
- The context of the behaviour.
- The impact of the behaviour.
- The interventions tried to date.
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response.
- The possible impact of the expulsion.

### **Expulsion Procedure**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts, ascertained with due regard to fair procedures as outlined earlier, confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include;

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.

3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendations and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberation and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Appeals**

Section 29(1)(a) of the Education Act 1998 provides that a parent, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of a Board of Management or a person acting on behalf of a Board of Management to permanently exclude a student from a school. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Child and Family Agency may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision under section 29(1)(a).

To make an appeal, a Section 29 Appeal Form must be completed and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit within 42 calendar days from the date of the decision of the Board of Management or a person acting on behalf of the Board of Management.