

2020 / 2021

Code of Positive Behaviour



St. Michael's College
Listowel, Co. Kerry

Reviewed	Ratified by the Board of Management	Review Date
11 th January 2021	15 th January 2021	12 th November 2021

SECTION 1

1.1 STATEMENT ON SCHOOL ETHOS

St. Michael's College is a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of Bishop Ray Browne. "Catholic Ethos", in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school, means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which aims at promoting:-

- (i) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects
- (ii) a living relationship with God and with other people
- (iii) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus
- (iv) the formation of the students in the Catholic faith
- (v) a religious education in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with Section 15(2)(b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of St. Michael's College shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic, and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

St. Michael's College aims to engage our Christian mission of education and formation by:-

- Fostering the academic, moral, spiritual, social, and cultural education of our students in a safe and caring environment, and in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Developing the emotional and physical well-being of our students.
- Ensuring the highest standards of teaching and learning, to enable each student to reach his full potential.

- Encouraging positive and restorative interaction between students, staff, parents/guardians, management, and the wider community.

1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In accordance with section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, responsibility for this Positive Code of Behaviour rests with the Board of Management. The Board has prepared the policy in consultation with the Principal, the Deputy Principal, the teachers, the parents/guardians of students registered at the school (through the Parents/guardians' Council), the Student Voice Team and the Education Welfare Officer.

In accordance with section 23.2 of the Education (Welfare) Act, this code will specify the standard of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school, the measures that may be taken when a student fails to observe those standards, the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school, the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student and the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

A positive partnership between all members of the school community is essential to the operation of the code and the full support of parents/guardians is required in upholding the code. In accordance with Section 23.4 of the Education (Welfare) Act and Section 9 of the School's Admissions Policy, parents/guardians, or guardians of students and/or students who have reached majority must accept the Behaviour Code as a condition of enrolment in the school. The appropriate form must be signed and returned to the school authorities as a condition of acceptance in the school.

1.3 THE SCOPE FOR THIS CODE

This Positive Code of Behaviour applies to students of the school at the following times:

- 1.1 During school time, including before and after class and at break-times
- 1.2 While wearing the school uniform
- 1.3 While representing the school
- 1.4 While traveling to or from school using school transport
- 1.5 While on school trips, tours or exchanges
- 1.6 While supporting school teams or activities

SECTION 2

2.1 PHILOSOPHY OF THE CODE

St. Michael's College fosters an ethos centred on positive relationships and seeks the development of the potential of each member of the school community. We believe that good behaviour is rooted in respect for oneself and for others and in the recognition of the dignity of each individual.

This code gives priority to the promotion of good behaviour, affirming that behaviour and thereby creating and sustaining the environment for effective learning and teaching. We hold the highest expectations of all members of our school community in line with the College's vision. This code outlines these expectations. Teaching a recognition of responsibilities in relation to behaviour in class and while in school is at the heart of the mission. Central also is the knowledge that students' behaviour can change. The code seeks to outline goals, motivation, and incentives to support each student in managing his behaviour.

This code also clearly outlines our response to behaviour which undermines the positive climate of our College. The code seeks to involve students, teachers and parents/guardians in the process of managing behaviour which hinders the promotion of positive learning and teaching. As such, intervention involving discipline and consequences are designed primarily to promote self-discipline in the student. All members of our community have a right to be safe and to be respected. This Code of Positive Behaviour is our policy supporting these key rights and provides an outline of the strategies and sanctions which serve to protect them.

2.2 GOALS FOR THIS CODE

- To encourage each student to develop a respect for self, parents/guardians/guardians, peers, teachers, the community in general and respect for school property.
- To promote standards of behaviour, which model those life skills necessary for adulthood such as: respect, punctuality, co-operation, application and pride in their work.

- To enable each student to acquire and develop a set of moral values promoting at all times responsibility for his own behaviour and honesty while in the school.
- To promote the fair, consistent and equal treatment of all students irrespective of age, class, race etc.
- To ensure that the student, his parent/guardian are both fully informed and agree at the outset about the code of discipline on admission to the school and updated as required on any changes and/or review of the code.

SECTION 3

3.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our school acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour and a role in dealing with and minimizing negative behaviour.

- Students - The school expects that students will adhere to the school's Positive Code of Behaviour at all times.
- Parents/guardians - The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians in the development and operation of the Positive Code of Behaviour and expects them to support the code and encourage the students to uphold it.
- Teachers - The school acknowledges the role of teacher in the development and operation of the Positive Code of Behaviour. The school recognizes that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management. This pivotal role forms a core element of this code. Teachers have been assigned to each class with special responsibility for implementing this code. Class Tutors, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Principal and Principal all have roles to play in upholding this code (refer to Pastoral Care Policy for outline of roles).
- Other staff - The school acknowledges the contribution of ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful operation of our Positive Code of Behaviour. In particular, they have a responsibility to report incidents of misbehaviour and examples of positive behaviour they witness.
- Board of Management - The Board of Management is the decision-making body of the school. The school acknowledges its role in the development and operation of our Positive Code of Behaviour. All policies are developed under the authority of the Board of Management and must be approved by its members before becoming official school policy.

Section 4

GENERAL CONDUCT - SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

4.1 Students can expect other students to:

- 4.1.1 Respect others beliefs, customs, opinions and tastes. No student should feel unhappy or uncomfortable because of these differences.
- 4.1.2 Allow them to work to the best of their ability. No student should be teased, isolated, belittled or called names because of their desire to achieve to the maximum of their potential or for any reason whatsoever.
- 4.1.3 Be pleasant, friendly, and supportive. No student should feel threatened, insulted, tormented or be physically harmed.
- 4.1.4 Be sympathetic towards the feelings of others. No student should feel that they are ignored or ridiculed, or that their feelings are not important.
- 4.1.5 Treat others fairly and as individuals. No student should be picked on because of their looks, gender, colour, sexual orientation, accent, religious beliefs, family back-ground or ability.
- 4.1.6 Treat everyone's property with respect. No student should have their possessions stolen or damaged in any way.

4.2 Class Rules

- Every student should be in class on time and leave the classroom only with permission.
- Every student should have his journal and required books/equipment.
- Every student should co-operate with teachers by paying attention, by looking, listening and following instructions.
- Every student should attempt to do all his work well, on time and allow others do theirs.
- Every student should raise his hand for attention or help and wait quietly.

4.3 General School Rules

- Every student must stay on the premises unless otherwise permitted to leave
- Every student should move around the school as directed
- Every student should show respect for all school property and the property of others

- Every student should support each other. Be helpful and stop any bullying/abuse/fighting by telling any member of staff and/ or parents/guardians.
- Every student should be courteous.
- Every student should keep the school clear of litter and use litter bins.
- The school is a smoke free, alcohol free and drug free zone.
- Every student should confine eating and drinking to break times in designated areas.
- Chewing gum is prohibited within all areas of the school.

4.4 Student/Teacher Relationships

- Students are expected to show co-operation, good manners and respect to all members of staff as well as to each other.
- Insulting behaviour to members of staff, by word or action or insubordination will not be tolerated and may lead to suspension of the offending student(s).
- Physical intimidation and verbal abuse of students or teachers by other students will not be tolerated.
- Comments of a sexual nature are deemed most inappropriate and may be classed as sexual harassment. Students should refrain from making such comments directly or indirectly to other students or staff.

4.5 School Uniform

- Students are required to wear the full school uniform each school day.
- All students must wear complete school uniform at school, while travelling to and from school, at school events and at games.
- If for any reason a student is not wearing complete school uniform, a letter from the parent stating the reason should be handed to the Year Head.
- The wearing of hoodies is prohibited.

4.6 School Journal

- Students must carry their official school journal at all times.
- All homework must be recorded in the journal.
- Parents/guardians are expected to inspect and sign their son's journal each Friday.

4.7 Mobile Phones

- During school hours, students are allowed use their device for learning related activities only.
- Students will comply with teachers' requests regarding use of devices during school hours, and classes.
- Parents/guardians are advised that all urgent communication for students should be directed through the School Office (068 21049).

4.8 Attendance

- Regular attendance is required from all students unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances
- We recommend that family holidays take place outside the school term
- Absence from school/class, without permission, shall be considered a serious offence
- The school reserves the right to investigate all unauthorised absences
- Students are expected to be in class for 9.00a.m. and attend until the completion of the school day
- On Friday school finishes at 1.10pm. Break times are at 11.00 - 11.10am and 1.10 – 1.40pm.
- It is a statutory obligation that where a student is absent from school during part of a school day or for more than a school day, the guardian/parent of such a student notify the school through the Office by phone (06821049) or on the COMPASS app., in writing, for the reasons of the student's absence. (Education and Welfare Act.2000)
- On the day the student returns to school, after an absence, a note of explanation must be recorded on the COMPASS app.

4.9 Punctuality

- Punctuality is essential at all times. Students who arrive late to school are required to report to the school office immediately and swipe their Identity Card in the COMPASS kiosk.
- Students should organise necessary books and equipment first thing in the morning, at break and at lunchtime for subsequent classes.

4.10 Participation in class activities

- A student who is unable to participate in a particular class activity, on an ongoing basis, for medical reasons, must present a doctor's certificate to the relevant teacher
- A student who is unable to participate in a class activity requires a written explanation, in the student journal, signed by a parent/guardian for the teacher of that class or on the COMPASS app. The student must, nevertheless, present himself for that class unless other arrangements are made for him by the teacher.

4.11 Leaving the School Premises

- Junior school students (1st, 2nd and 3rd year) may only leave the school premises at Lunchtime on presentation of a letter to the Principal or Deputy Principal from their parents/guardians/guardians, giving them permission to do so.
- In the event of accident/illness, the parent/guardian or nearest contact will be informed by the school authorities, so that arrangements can be made to collect the student.
- We recommend that medical/dental appointments be made outside of school hours.
- Notification to this effect must be submitted on COMPASS by the parent/guardian. Students will be signed out at the COMPASS kiosk at the main office.

4.12 Health and Safety

In compliance with the Health Safety and Welfare at Work Act 1989 and the Equal status Act 2000, the Board of Management and staff at St. Michael's College are committed to the creation of a safe and secure environment for everyone who uses or works in our school.

- We expect our students to behave in a manner that reflects well on themselves and on the school. Rough, unruly or boisterous behaviour – e.g. running, pushing, throwing of objects, shouting, bullying, fighting – is strictly forbidden.
- Because of the obvious risk of serious injury, cycling within the school grounds is strictly forbidden.
- Parents/guardians/ Guardians should drop off students at school gate.
- Students should not drive their cars during the school day.
- Students should not park their cars on school grounds.

- Students must protect the school environment from litter, graffiti etc. so that the school will be a pleasant place for all.
- Classroom cleanliness and tidiness is every student's responsibility.
- Smoking and vaping is forbidden on the school grounds during the school day.
- The possession or consumption of Alcoholic drink is forbidden.
- The possession/use/distribution of prohibited substances (not prescribed for medical conditions) is prohibited. (See Substance Use Policy).
- Students must familiarise themselves with Fire Regulations and must never interfere with Safety Equipment/alarms.
- Students must be especially mindful of the dangers of mistreating chemicals and specialist equipment.
- Students must adhere to the Schools Internet Acceptable Use Policy (available on the school website).
- Harassment and Sexual Harassment are prohibited.
- Students are advised that they bring all personal items of property into school at their own risk. Other items should be left in the student's locker and each student is advised to purchase a lock for their lockers.
- The school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to a pupil's property. Schoolbooks and copies, uniform and sports gear should be clearly labelled.
- Students must respect school property and must make restitution for the damage or defacing of either school property or the property of another student.
- CCTV cameras will be in operation at all times throughout the school.

Note: It should be understood that it is impossible to anticipate every single misdemeanour/unsafe action in any given context. The various types of misconduct mentioned are intended to be indicative only and not intended as exhaustive definitions of each category.

4.13 Preventative Measures

In keeping with the school ethos, every effort is made to provide a secure and caring environment for all. Students are welcome to discuss issues of concern to them with members of the Class Tutors, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal and Principal.

4.14 Interventions

The Student Support Team (SST) structure facilitates early intervention, and therefore has a fundamental role in preventing unacceptable behaviour. The Year Head will attempt to find an underlying cause of consistent poor behaviour by any student in their group. This will be in the form of a once off interview with the student, which will have the following objectives – Restorative Practice:

4.14.1 The student choosing to improve their behaviour.

4.14.2 Establishing the need of further intervention /referrals to external agencies.

4.14.3 The SST is available to all teachers. When using this system the teacher must first meet with the relevant Year Head to provide a background for the situation. This system will operate parallel to this policy and the Antibullying policy.

4.14.4 Student referral to the Year Head will be recorded on COMPASS.

4.15 Rewards – Promoting positive behaviour

In our school the following methods are used to reward students for good behaviour:

4.15.1 Verbal praise to student either in class or privately.

4.15.2 Positive comment to Year Head on COMPASS.

4.15.3 Communication with parents/guardians/ guardians on COMPASS, phone-call, parent-teacher meetings.

4.15.4 Display of students' work.

4.15.4 Student of the Year Awards, Year Head Student of the Month Award, and Gold Card Achievements.

4.15.1 School structures which support positive behaviour:

Referral to the SST - Where it is requested by parents/guardians/guardians, teachers or students themselves, and deemed appropriate and necessary to students, the Guidance Counsellor, SST and Year Head system offer support. The structures and procedures around this support are outlined in the school's Pastoral Care Policy.

4.15.2 Mentoring programmes - The school operates various mentoring programmes (peer mentoring and Student Connect Mentoring Programme), supporting student academic, emotional or behavioural needs as identified.

4.15.3 Restorative Practices

In accordance with the anti-bullying policy, where the SST deem it appropriate, they will utilise Restorative Practices to help students who engage in hurtful and/or offensive behaviour take responsibility for their actions, understand the consequences of their behaviour and restore a positive relationship with those affected by their actions. Mediation between students, acknowledging what has happened, what harm has been done and what can be done to put it right, apologising and finally agreeing a way forward is at the heart of this practice.

4.16 Ladder of Referral

4.16.1 Sanction1 - Warning by Subject Teachers and Class Tutor.

4.16.2 Sanction 2 - The incident will be recorded on COMPASS, and in the official teacher's journal. The Year Head will be informed. A Red and Amber system applies here. (Red – detention; Amber – warning by Year Head).

4.16.3 Sanction 3 – Evening Detention.

Detention will take place on Monday from 4pm to 6pm. Teachers referring students for detention will record detention on COMPASS. Refer to specific rules and regulations for detention - copy available on request (from the school office).

The parents/guardians/guardians of students, who fail to attend for detention without prior explanation or arrangement, will be contacted by the school authorities to discuss this offence for which suspension will be imposed.

On the occasion that a student has been put on detention three times within the same academic year the fourth detention will incur an automatic sanction of suspension.

4.16.4 Sanction 4 - Report to Deputy Principal.

In the event of no worthwhile improvement the matter is reported to the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal will request the parents/guardians/guardians to attend a meeting to discuss the matter. The parents/guardians/guardians will be informed at this meeting of the sanctions

used to date and that if there is no improvement in the conduct of the student the next sanction will be suspension. Records and outcomes of the meeting will be maintained by the Deputy Principal.

The matter will also be addressed by the SST.

4.16.5 Sanction 5 - Suspension.

The purpose of suspending a student from school is to provide the student with time for reflection, to emphasise the seriousness of specific misbehaviours and to give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour.

If the Deputy principal is informed that the conduct of the student has not improved, he will inform the Principal. The Principal will examine all the steps taken to date to improve the student's behaviour and all the sanctions that have been put in place. The Board of Management has delegated authority to the Principal to suspend a student for a period up to and including three days if he is satisfied that all procedures have been carried out according to the Code of Positive Behaviour. Suspension for a further period may be imposed depending on the circumstances and in accordance with Department of Education Regulations and the Board. Suspension is a serious sanction and will be reported to the Board of Management at its next meeting and to the National Educational Welfare Board. The parents/guardians/guardians will be informed by letter before the start date of suspension.

Incidences requiring suspension may involve:

- A threat to the safety of others
- Serious disruption of teaching and learning and the orderly atmosphere of the school
- Deliberate damage to property
- Misuse of technology
- Substance abuse
- Persistent breaches of the Code of Behaviour which have not been rectified by the normal school interventions.
- Truancy

6.14.7 Sanction 7 - Expulsion.

This will be resorted to only as the last resort, after every effort at rehabilitation has failed, and in most extreme cases of discipline. Only the Board of Management may finally decide to expel a student. The expulsion is reported to the Department of Education & Science and the National Educational Welfare Board.

6.14.8 In the case of misconduct or breach of school discipline that is very serious, sanctions 6.14.1 – 6.14.5 would not apply. In such circumstances it may be necessary to impose sanctions 7 or 8.

6.14.9 The use of corporal punishment is forbidden.

6.15 Appeals

Parents/guardians and Students, over the age of 18 years, have the right to appeal suspensions or expulsions under Section 29 of the Education Act.

An appeal to the Board of Management

The parent/guardian of a student, or, in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18, the student, may appeal to the Board of Management against a decision of the Principal that the student has committed an offence and /or any decision of the Principal to impose a penalty. The appeal must be in writing, specifying the grounds for the appeal and must be lodged with the Chairperson of the Board of Management within a period of 21 days from the date of the decision being appealed. In determining the appeal, the Board of Management will follow any procedures, which may be prescribed by the Minister for Education and Skills pursuant to Section 28 of the Education Act, 1998 and the current guidelines for Boards in handling any such complaint. Upon receipt of the Notice of Appeal, the B.O.M. shall appoint a subcommittee to deal with the appeal. The sub-committee will notify all of the parties involved of the procedure that is to be followed. The subcommittee shall investigate the matter and shall arrange a meeting between it, the parent/guardian and/or student and the Principal. At this meeting, all parties shall be given a full opportunity to comment on the matters under appeal. In the event that the parent/guardian and /or student do not attend that meeting and fail to provide a reasonable explanation for not doing so, the appeal will proceed in their absence.

After hearing the parties, the sub-committee shall advise the Board of Management of its findings and the Board of Management may make such decisions as considered appropriate including affirming, revoking or amending any decision of the Behaviour Support Team and/or Principal. Notice of the decision will be communicated to the parties involved.

The appeals process through the Department of Education

Pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, there is a statutory right of appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against a decision of the Board of Management or of a person acting on behalf of the Board to permanently exclude a student from the school or to suspend a student from attendance at the school for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days in any one school year. This right of appeal can be exercised by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, by the student.

The school will advise the parent/guardian and/or student of the right of appeal and associated timeframe when notifying them that the relevant sanction has been imposed. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent/guardian or student. As a general rule, appeals will only be considered by an appeals committee under section 29 where the parties are unable to resolve the issue at local level. Accordingly, the appellant and the Board of Management will first consider the matter at local level to determine if an accommodation can be reached. Appeals to the Secretary General must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeals Application form (a copy of which can be obtained from the school or from the Appeals Administration Unit of the Department of Education and Skills) and addressed, by signed letter, or e-mail to the Appeals Administration Unit of the DES. The appellant should at the same time notify the school of the appeals or, alternatively, send a copy of the completed Application Forms to the school.

Section 7: Success Criteria

- 7.1 The code and school rules are implemented in a clear and transparent manner.
- 7.2 There is a climate conducive to teaching and learning in the school
- 7.3 There is minimal disruption to classes.
- 7.4 Positive feedback from parents/guardians, students and teachers.
- 7.5 Good relationships among all the partners in the educational community.

Section 8: Implementation

8.1 As the official Code of Positive Behaviour of St. Michael's College, all registered students of the school will have access to a copy of this policy, and parents/guardians/ guardians will be required to sign an agreement that they will uphold it and that their son will abide by it.

8.2 Through COMPASS, Year Heads and parents/guardians/guardians will be able to monitor student behaviour on a daily and weekly basis.

8.3 Records of incident reports will determine the nature and frequency of incidents and these will be monitored by the Principal and Deputy Principal.

Section 9: Review and Evaluation

9.1 Yearly Review

The code will be reviewed on a yearly basis by school management in conjunction with the SST and the Year Heads. In conducting this review, these teams will seek the views of the Student Voice Team. Cognisance will be taken of the level and pattern of suspensions and detentions enforced and the effectiveness of these measures. Attention will also focus on the positive strategies and their effectiveness.

Ratified by the Board of Management on: _____

Board of Management Chairperson: _____

Board of Management Secretary: _____

Review date: _____