

Acceptable Use Policy

Code of Behaviour

In devising this Code, consideration has been given to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. The aim is to provide a framework for reasonable and responsible behaviour by all concerned, staff, parents and students alike in keeping with our stated beliefs in our Mission Statement.

We place greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results. The rules are kept to the minimum and framed in a positive manner. Overall responsibility for discipline within school rests with the Principal subject to the authority of the VEC.

The Code of Behaviour was developed in consultation with the partners and will be reviewed at regular intervals.

The Code of Behaviour is divided into two parts. It begins with a series of Statements of Expectation which identifies the behaviours expected and the reasons for them. This is followed by our Discipline procedure, Sanctions and Awards.

Statements of Expectation:

1. We will behave in an orderly and civil manner to each other and be courteous to all visitors to the school.
2. We will have a good work ethic, attend punctually and participate fully in all educational, cultural and sporting activities to the best of our ability.
3. We will respect and protect our own property, school property and the general environment of the school and community.

RULES

In the classroom:

We will line up quietly before class and enter the class in an orderly manner.

We will have all books, copies etc for each class.

We will have our homework completed, on time and neatly presented.

We will not disturb the class with unnecessary noise or activity.

We will participate in class discussions and answer questions civilly.

We will not cause any damage to the fixtures and fittings.

On the corridor and around the grounds:

We will walk, not run, to avoid accidents. We will be especially careful of cars entering or leaving the school car park and grounds.

Games will be played in the grassy areas or the courts.

We will not loiter at the front of the school premises or in the car park at break times or before or after school.

In general:

We will come to school on time and in full uniform.

We will not leave school without permission.

We will not smoke, or chew gum on the premises or when in uniform.

REWARDS:

1. Additional responsibility.
2. Positive comment in journal.
3. Student of the Year awards:

Academic Award.

Awarded to the students, (boy and girl) who achieved the best results in their last examination.

Achievement Award.

This is awarded to the students (boy and girl) who have shown a significant commitment to some aspect of life, whether in study, sport or extra-curricular activity. (Nominated by Year group)

Attendance Award.

Awarded to the students with 100% attendance record in each Class.

Sports Person of the Year.

This is awarded to the students (boy and girl) who are considered to be the best sportspersons in each year group (Nominated by Year group).

Teachers may issue awards and rewards during the course of the school year for specific activities.

SANCTIONS

Each teacher is responsible for general discipline within his/her class while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. Teachers will take appropriate measures to deal with, and keep records of serious breaches of the rules:

- Reasoning
- Reprimand
- Additional work
- Confiscation, where relevant.
- Standing for short periods of time at the back of the class

- Separation from peers (including removal to another class by prior arrangement)
- Note in the journal for parent (4 negative notes in a week will result in a Friday detention)
- Lunchtime Detention
- After School Detention
- Referral to Year Head **(plus written report for the file)**
- Referral to Deputy or Principal (in cases of gross misbehaviour such as defiance of teachers authority, assault etc.)

For gross breaches of discipline, a Major incident report must be written by the teacher and given to the Year Head. (See Appendix)

Year Heads have overall responsibility for pastoral care and Discipline for their respective year group. They will interview students who are reported to them and give verbal warnings. They will also interview and warn those who are persistently breaking rules. If there is no improvement they may:

- Meet the student at the beginning or end of each day to check the progress
- Place student "On Report".
- Contact parents for informal discussion of students' behaviour.
- Place student "On Detention" or "morning/lunch-time detention".
- Refer to Guidance Counsellor
- Refer to Deputy and/or Principal.
- Seek class teacher reports prior to arranging to meet parents formally with Deputy or Principal to discuss the situation and seek their support.
- Refer to appropriate outside agencies following consultation with Deputy and/or Principal.
- Refer to Principal/ Deputy Principal for suspension/expulsion

DETENTION

- Detention at lunchtime is a sanction that may be used by teachers or Year Heads. It is supervised by the teacher setting the detention. Students who go home for lunch may have their detention deferred to the next day to facilitate bringing in lunch.
- School detention (Friday 1.15 pm to 3.15 pm) is a sanction used for serious and/or repeated breaches of discipline (e.g. 4 negative comments). It is supervised by a teacher/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal. Written

notice, recorded in Journal, will be given in advance and must be signed by Parent/Guardian.

- Morning Detention is a sanction used by Year Heads/Principal/Deputy to promote attendance and punctuality. Those who are late three times may be placed on morning detention. A written notice will be given to parents.

SUSPENSION

Students may be suspended:

- For challenging the authority of the teacher.
- For physical or verbal assault of another person.
- For coming to school in an altered state due to alcohol or drugs.
- For consuming or possessing alcohol or drugs on the school grounds, school trips etc.
- For leaving school without Year Heads' permission.
- For persistent breaches of school discipline, all other sanctions having been exhausted.

Note:

Under The Education Welfare Act, 2000 students are entitled to the fair procedure prior to suspension. A student should not be suspended until after a full investigation has taken place.

It is the policy of this school to suspend immediately any student who uses foul language to a teacher, physically assaults a teacher or student or vandalises property belonging to students, teachers or the school. The student will be supervised until they can be collected by their parent/guardian. The student remains excluded/suspended until after the investigation and discussion with the parent/guardian.

EXCLUSION/EXPULSION

Where, following the procedures listed above, no improvement in the behaviour of the student has occurred, the Principal, or the Deputy Principal acting on behalf of the Principal, may refer the case to the Board of Management and recommend exclusion/expulsion. The student may be excluded from school pending a meeting of the Board. The Board of Management may invite the student and his/her parents/guardians to a special meeting to discuss the matter.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

In cases of suspension or exclusion, parents/ guardians may appeal, in writing, to the Board of Management /VEC.

Students returning from suspension will be placed "On Report" for a minimum of one week. Students and parents may be asked to sign a good behaviour contract.

Note

It is school policy to:

- Confiscate mobile phones, if found switched on during the class time. They will be returned at the end of the school year.
- Confiscate electronic equipment such as i-pods if used during class time. They will be returned at the end of the school year.
- Fine students found chewing gum, eating/drinking in class, or in possession of cigarettes. (Currently €10)
- Provide students with replacement uniforms, temporarily, if they come to school out of uniform.

Internet Safety: Acceptable Use Policy

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that students will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the school's Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access are considered a school resource and privilege. Therefore, if the school AUP has not adhered to this privilege will be withdrawn and appropriate sanctions – as outlined in the AUP – will be imposed. It is envisaged that school and parent representatives will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This version of the AUP was created on 28th August 2006

By Mr Tom Daly and Mrs Marie Hogan

School's Strategy

St Fergal's College employs a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General

- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor students' Internet usage.
- Students and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety.

- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal floppy disks, memory sticks, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students will never disclose or publicise personal information.
- Downloading by students of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.
- Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Email

- Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or with permission from a teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, and defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet Chat

- Students will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the school.
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised.
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- Face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden.

School Website

- Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or school work on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to the school's website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of students or staff.
- Website using facilities such as guestbooks, noticeboards or weblogs will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details?
- The publication of student work will be coordinated by a teacher.
- Students' work will appear in an educational context on Web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission.
- The school will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips of students focusing on group activities. Content focusing on named individual students under 18 years of age will not be published on the school website without parental permission.
- Personal student information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.
- The school website will avoid publishing the first name and last names of individuals in a photograph.
- The school will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use students' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web.
- Students will continue to own the copyright on any work published.

Personal Devices

Students using their own technology in school, such as leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorized taking of images with a mobile phone camera, still or moving is in direct breach of the school's acceptable use policy.

Legislation

The school will provide information on the following legislation relating to the use of the Internet which teachers, students and parents should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988

Support Structures

The school will inform students and parents of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet.

Sanctions

Misuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion. The school also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities.

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually and amended to reflect changes in legislation.