

# St. Mary's College Dundalk



## Code of Behaviour

Approved by Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009

## **Mission Statement**

*St Mary's College is a Catholic secondary school under the patronage of the Marist Fathers. The primary aim of the school, through its spiritual and humanistic endeavours, is to promote and develop a sense of community where those entrusted to its care can be brought to the fullness of their human potential in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel. The school, through its academic, pastoral and spiritual undertakings strives to provide for the holistic development and welfare of each of the students in its care.*

## **Student Supports**

The first priority of the management and staff of St. Mary's College is that all students are happy and fulfilled during their time with us. There is a comprehensive support system, of personnel and structures, to assist all students who may be experiencing difficulties in either their personal or educational life.

- Class Teacher
- Resource Teacher
- Learning Support/Special Needs Department
- Guidance Counselling
- School Completion Programme Coordinator
- Special Needs Coordinator
- School Chaplains
- Rainbows (Bereavement Programme)
- External Counsellor (by appointment)
- School Psychologist (by appointment)
- Student Peer Support (Buddy System)
- Form Teacher
- Year Head
- Deputy-Principal
- Principal

## **Code of Behaviour**

St. Mary's College is a Catholic secondary school in the tradition of the Marist Fathers. Our primary aim is to work together as staff and students to realize our full potential in a healthy, safe, stimulating and friendly environment where the atmosphere is one of mutual respect, cooperation and challenge.

As a school community we are proud of our school, its traditions, heritage and the standards it sets for us all. In order to achieve our aims, continue our traditions and maintain our standards a commitment by all members of the school community to accepted and established behaviour is essential. The Code of Behaviour provides guidelines and boundaries to facilitate this commitment.

Specifically the Code will strive to:

- Guarantee justice and fairness to all
- Set high standards of behaviour
- Allow each student to benefit fully from school
- Develop self-discipline
- Affirm and reward good behaviour
- Protect student, staff and school property
- Organise a large group of people so that the life of the school can operate smoothly to the benefit of all.

It is intended that the Code will allow all staff and students to work to their full potential secure in the knowledge that each member of the school community is valued and treated with respect. If procedures, rewards and sanctions are clear then standards are more attainable by all.

The key to successful understanding of the Code is respect:

Respect Yourself  
Respect Other People  
Respect Property  
Respect the Environment  
Respect God

The Code of Behaviour covers the following areas:

1. System of Rewards
2. Attendance / Punctuality
3. Uniform/Appearance
4. In the Classroom
5. General
6. Lunchtime and Break-time
7. Outside School
8. Sanctions
9. Procedure for Suspension
10. Expulsion

# 1. System of Rewards

## Rationale

A code of behaviour is not, and should not be, merely a list of rules and sanctions. Rather it should encourage a commitment to follow and contribute creatively to the group enterprise, teamwork, respect and caring. It is the policy of St. Mary's College to reward positive contributions made to school life and to recognize and reinforce good standards of behaviour and effort. We believe that young people respond constructively to praise and encouragement. Consequently we have drawn up a system of rewards designed to promote and reward this good behaviour and effort.

## Rewards

- Teachers praise effort and behaviour as part of teaching strategy.
- Positive comments in Student Journal.
- Telephone calls to parents to mark achievements.
- Recognition and praise for individual and group achievements by staff during interaction with students.
- Acknowledgement and praise for individual and group achievements via PA announcements.
- Highlighting the positive at Year Group Assemblies.
- Display of students' work in public areas around the school.
- Highlighting the positive at Parent-Teacher meetings.
- Certificates of Merit awarded to students for outstanding efforts either in or out of class. Also awarded for improvements in class work, participation, behaviour and good attendance.
- Leadership Certificates awarded to students who show recognizable leadership skills in any area of school life or a special contribution to the community at large.
- Recognition of individual or group achievements in our 'Internal Affairs' Newsletter.
- Student of the Year - those final year students who are deemed to have contributed most to school life during their time in St. Mary's receive nominations for this prestigious award. One of the nominees receives the Student of the Year Award based on his\her overall commitment to school life.
- Transition Year Awards Night recognizes the commitment of students to the spirit and purpose of Transition Year.
- Prize Night is designed to recognize and reward both achievement and effort in all areas of school life.

## **2. Attendance/Punctuality**

### **Rationale**

A direct relationship exists between students' daily school attendance and academic performance, personal development and good work habits.

Daily attendance is essential to meet the school's academic standards.

It is important to respect fellow students and teachers by arriving to class on time.

The school is bound by law to record a student's attendance record and inform The Education Welfare Board if a pupil has been suspended for more than six days or if a pupil has been absent for 20 days, full days or half-days.

### **Rules**

- The school day lasts from 9.00a.m – 3.40p.m. Students should be in the school by 8.55 a.m. for morning class and 1.50 p.m. for afternoon class.
- Any student arriving late for morning or afternoon class must first sign in at the office and get their journal stamped.
- A parent/guardian must complete a note from the journal if
  - a) The student is late for school and has a valid reason
  - b) The student must leave school during the day for a legitimate reason.
  - c) The student has been absent from school the previous day or number of days.
- Parents will be informed if a student is persistently late without a valid reason. Students who accumulate three (3) such lates will be put on a single 30-minute detention after school.
- The student may also be returned to the care of their parents /guardians if he/she is persistently late without a valid reason.
- Students must arrive for class in time during the day.
- All students participating in extra-curricular activities must report for roll call at 9.00a.m and/or at 1.55p.m.
- Students must never leave the school premises without first reporting to the Principal or Deputy Principal or to relevant year head where neither Principal nor Deputy Principal is available. Having been granted permission to leave the student must sign out in the office. Any breach of this rule is a very serious matter. Parents/Guardians are requested not to make routine dental, optical or medical appointments during normal school hours.
- Family holidays, that would necessitate a student's absence from school, must not be arranged outside official school holiday periods.

### **3. Uniform/Appearance**

#### **Rationale**

The school uniform is a definite mark of identity, is economical and removes undue pressure, distraction and competitiveness in the school community. It is important to practise good personal hygiene and wear clean clothing.

#### **St. Mary's Uniform Policy is as follows:**

- Students must be clean and tidy and wear the full, correct uniform coming to school, when at school and when returning from school.
- Full uniform must also be worn on all school related activities unless otherwise instructed.
- All items of uniform should be labeled with student's name.
- Jackets should be placed in lockers/bags when not in use.
- Students who fail to wear full, correct uniform may not be admitted to class or attend school activities on that day.
- From time to time the school may organise a non-uniform day which allows students to dress in their own clothes.

The uniform consists of:

#### **BOYS**

Grey trousers  
Black V-neck College jumper with school crest  
Grey shirt and school tie  
Official College jacket with school crest/name  
Plain black shoes, navy or black socks

#### **GIRLS**

College skirt (as of September 2007 all incoming girls must wear the calf length tartan skirt)  
Black V-neck College jumper with school crest  
White shirt and school tie  
Official College jacket with school crest/name  
Flat plain black shoes, black socks or tights

#### **P.E.**

Pupils must have appropriate sports wear for P.E. class.

## **PRACTICAL CLASSES**

Protective clothing and goggles must be worn as instructed

Except during PE, runners are not permitted. In the event of a certified medical condition black runners must be obtained

NOTE: No other variation of uniform is permitted.

**Pupils must have shirts and ties neatly arranged.  
Boys should be clean-shaven**

### **THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT PERMITTED:**

- All visible body piercing, with the exception of one stud in each ear lobe (Girls only)
- Neck bands/chains
- Large rings
- Sports jackets or t-shirts
- Multi-coloured jackets or scarves
- Boots
- Nail varnish
- Nail art
- Make-up
- Artificial tans
- Fashion accessories e.g. hair decorations or tooth embellishment
- Visible tattoos
- Wearing of symbols, badges or memorabilia that may be considered offensive, discriminatory to others, or in contravention of our Dress Code.
- Slits in trousers/skirts or frayed hems
- Hair should be neat and tidy. Exceptional or extreme hairstyles are not permitted
- Any other items deemed unsuitable

NOTE: The right is reserved to ask students to remove any of the above items at any time.

## 4. In the Classroom

### Rationale

- Good order, courtesy and respect for all.
- Safe and pleasant environment for all.
- Positive climate conducive to learning.

**Legal accountability – to protect the rights of the teacher to teach and the rights of every student to learn so that they may attain their full potential.**

### Rules

- Students are always required to enter the classroom quietly in an orderly manner and on time
- Students should sit in their allotted seat unless requested by a teacher to change.
- Correct uniform must always be worn in class. Non-uniform garments such as coats, scarves and hats must not be worn in the classroom.
- Students should take out books and materials for class without having to be told.
- Students should produce homework on time or present a legitimate excuse at the beginning of class.
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities is not an acceptable excuse for not doing homework. It is the student's responsibility to catch up on work missed in class and/or homework given in their absence.
- Students should participate positively in the work of the class and co-operate fully with the teacher's instructions.
- Students should have a school journal in class, well maintained with no graffiti.
- If late, a student should produce a journal duly stamped in the office.
- A sick student must notify the class teacher before absenting themselves from class. No student may absent themselves from class in the guise of accompanying a sick student without the specific permission of the class teacher.
- Any unauthorised absence from class will be regarded as mitching and will be dealt with accordingly.
- If a student feels that he/she has been misunderstood he/she should wait until the end of class and politely request the opportunity to discuss the matter.
- Disrespect and defiance to any member of staff, permanent or substitute, will be viewed as a very serious breach of discipline. It warrants immediate withdrawal from class and may include suspension and interview with parent(s) or guardians
- Any attempt to intimidate a teacher physically, verbally or by any other means will be viewed as a most serious breach of discipline.
- Students should never poke fun at or ridicule any student in their class or any student entering their classroom on a message.
- Students may not leave the classroom without the teacher's permission.

- Students may not ask to leave the classroom except for illness or some other emergency.
- Drinking, eating and/or chewing gum is prohibited in the class.
- Breaking, damaging or defacing classroom furniture is unacceptable. Students will have to bear the cost of replacement and/or repair.
- Students must obey the specific rules and regulations governing specialist areas such as Science Laboratories, Audio-visual, Technical Graphics, Art, Computer rooms, Home Economics rooms as well as the Gym and playing fields.
- Students must obey fire drill code during fire drills and/or fire evacuation.

## 5. General

### Rationale

St. Mary's College school community consists of almost seven hundred individuals. The rules outlined below are intended to create a healthy, safe, orderly and enjoyable environment for all. It is only with the co-operation of everyone that the resources of the school can be used to maximum benefit.

### Personal Belongings

- Students are responsible for their own belongings and must label clearly each item of personal property.
- Students should keep anything of value in skirt/trousers pocket.
- Money or valuables should never be left in coat pockets in the cloakroom or in schoolbags.
- Students should not touch other students belongings without permission. Never take anything that does not belong to you – this is stealing. Never hide another person's bag or belongings.
- Jackets must be kept in lockers when not in use.
- Students are prohibited from interfering with teachers' belongings either in the classroom or outside.
- Students are not permitted to be in the vicinity of teachers' or visitors' cars.
- Students found interfering with cars or other personal property may face suspension.

### Respect

- Students must show due respect to all adults in, or visiting, the **College**, including teaching and ancillary staff.
- Students should always stand back to allow adults priority.
- If a student is being bullied or is aware of other students who are being bullied he/she should bring the matter immediately to the attention of his/her Form Teacher, Year Head, the Principal or the Deputy Principal.

### Health and Safety

- Students must not run on corridors or on passages around the College and must not push or jostle other students.
- Students should avoid loud and unruly behaviour and follow the one-way system when required.
- Students must not leave bags in doorways, stairwells or within confined areas.
- Students should take extra care on all stairways.
- Students should promote their own health and that of others.
- Smoking is forbidden in the College and grounds and on any College outing or activity.

- Alcoholic drink and drugs are banned and any breach will be viewed as extremely serious.
- **Note:** Parents are requested to drop and collect students outside the school grounds in the interest of safety.
- Students should note:
  - ◆ Chewing gum is forbidden all around the College.
  - ◆ The throwing of flour, eggs, water or any such material is not allowed under any circumstances.
  - ◆ Possession of fireworks, laser guns, stink bombs or any similar goods is viewed as a serious breach of College rules.
  - ◆ School management is not in favour of the growing trend of students driving cars or motorbikes to school. We encourage students to use the public transport available.
  - ◆ Students are prohibited from parking cars or motorbikes on the College premises due to the limited parking available.
- Any student who is known to be involved supplying or procuring drugs either on the College premises or otherwise will be dealt with in accordance with the school's substance abuse policy.
- Students are not permitted to use roller skates, skate boards, 'heelies' (runners with wheels) while on the College grounds.

### **College Environment**

- Students should take pride in the College and its environment.
- All areas of the College should be kept clean and beautiful.
- Students should use the appropriate bins provided for general waste, paper, plastic bottles etc. Do not litter or damage the College in any way.
- Graffiti will not be tolerated.
- Pupils found defacing or damaging College property will be required to pay for the costs incurred by the College and their parents/guardians will be contacted.
- If a student breaks or damages any part of the College property, even by accident, they should own up to it immediately; this is an admirable trait of character.

### **Around the College**

- Students should show patience, courtesy and care to all who use the roads and footpaths.
- They should also be particularly careful and well behaved on school buses especially when getting on and off.
- Outside school hours students should continue to show courtesy and respect to parents and family, to teachers at all times, to civic and church authorities and to all members of the community.

## **Mobile Phones**

- Mobile phones may not be used on College premises.
- Mobile phones will be confiscated and returned after 2 weeks.
- In case of an emergency, where parents wish to contact a student during school hours, it is acceptable to ring the College office with a message.

## **Technological equipment**

- The use of personal music devices and other electronic devices is only permitted at break times.
- All devices capable of recording voice/sound, devices capable of emitting sound and devices capable of emitting light beams or images must not be used during the school day.
- All hand held game consoles and other such gaming devices are also banned from school life and all school related activities.
- The misuse of any technological equipment will result in said equipment being confiscated.

## **ICT**

- All students must sign the College's ICT (Information Communication Technology) acceptable usage policy.
- Students are permitted to use the school's ICT equipment for educational purposes only.
- Students must not use ICT equipment to create, convey or generate (i.e. print or any other means) obscene or unsuitable material.
- In accordance with the above acceptable usage policy, students may use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students are not permitted to use the following websites or other sites, which would be deemed inappropriate.
  - ◆ Sites containing inappropriate material.
  - ◆ Social networking sites (e.g. Bebo or my space or similar site)
  - ◆ All personal email sites.
  - ◆ Mobile phone sites.
  - ◆ Texting or image texting sites.
  - ◆ Video sites.
  - ◆ All music sites.
  - ◆ Gambling sites.
- Students who are found to be in breach of the ICT acceptable usage policy may face exclusion from use of ICT equipment or suspension.

## **Lockers**

- All students can avail of locker facilities. Students must provide their own locks and are requested to put all items of value into lockers. The College cannot take responsibility for items of value that are left in public areas of the College. (Including school bags or books)

Students are permitted to go to their lockers at the following times only:

- ◆ Before class begins in the morning
- ◆ At break-time
- ◆ At lunchtime
- ◆ At the end of the school day

## **Other**

- Inappropriate physical contact between students is unacceptable during the course of the school day or school related activities.
- Deliberately communicating in another language to the exclusion of others or for abusive reasons is unacceptable and will be dealt with by school management. Similarly, non-verbal communication using signals or gestures, which are intended to be abusive or rude, is unacceptable and will incur sanctions.

## **6. Lunchtime and Break-time**

- Broughton Street and College Court are out of bounds for all our students. Students should not loiter in the St. Mary's Road/Chapel St area at any time.
- Queue in an orderly fashion at the shop/canteen.
- School bags should not be left in areas where they are likely to cause an obstruction.
- Loud or unruly behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Students should return to class when the first bell rings. They should be outside the relevant classroom before the second bell rings.
- Students who have a legitimate reason for not returning in the afternoon must bring in a note outlining the reason; get it signed by the principal deputy-principal or year head and sign out at the office before leaving the school premises.

## **7. Outside School**

The Board of Management stresses that any behaviour by a student of St. Mary's College which takes place off the school premises and outside the school day but which impacts in a serious and negative way on other members of the school community is covered by the Code of Behaviour and comes within the remit of the Board. Such behaviours include:

- Intimidation or bullying of another student likely to cause fear of school for this student.
- Verbal attacks on or attempts to intimidate any member of the management or staff of the school.
- Interference with the property of any member of the management or staff of the school.
- Involvement in the use or sale of illegal substances.

## **8. Sanctions**

### **Rationale**

The school may apply a range of sanctions appropriate to the circumstances and seriousness of each individual case. These are tiered in nature to ensure a just and equitable approach that respects the dignity of all involved and depends on the seriousness of the breach of discipline in question. These include:

- A verbal warning
- A note home to parents in school journal
- A phone call to parents
- Additional appropriate written work
- Rescinding of permission to leave school at lunchtime
- Lunchtime detention
- Evening detention
- Saturday morning detention
- The student may be put on report
- School Community Service.
- Internal suspension
- Removal from school trip or extra-curricular activity
- Suspension
- Expulsion

## **9. Procedure for Suspension.**

The Principal may impose a suspension of up to 5 days. Alternatively, the Principal may refer the matter to the Board of Management who would meet within a reasonable period of time. In such an event the student will remain at home until the Board reaches a decision. The Board's decision will be communicated to the parents/guardians by registered post.

A suspension imposed by the Principal may be appealed to the Board of Management. In this event the suspension stands until the Board makes a decision to revoke it.

Any suspension in excess of 6 days (cumulative) will be notified to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

If a student is suspended for 20 days (cumulative) in the school year his/her parents/guardians may appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

## 10. Expulsion.

The Board of Management may consider the permanent exclusion of a student:

- If the behaviour of the student is preventing teaching and learning from taking place on an ongoing basis.
- If the behaviour of the student is such that other members of the school community are intimidated or threatened by the student's continued presence in the school.
- If the student is involved in a serious one-off offence which breaches the school's Code of Behaviour.

When an expulsion is being considered:

- The Principal will refer the matter to the Board of Management who will consider sanctions up to and including expulsion.
- Parents/Guardians will be notified by registered post that the matter has been referred to the Board and of the sanctions the Board will consider.
- Parents/Guardians will be invited to attend the Board meeting. The student may also attend. It is up to the Principal to arrange the time of the meeting.
- If parents/guardians decline to attend the meeting they will be invited to make a written submission.
- Principal will meet with parents/guardians prior to the Board meeting and explain procedure.
- Principal will inform parents/guardians of his/her intended statement.
- Written version of Principal's statement will be made available to parents/guardians prior to Board meeting.
- Educational Welfare Officer will be notified of the situation.
- A decision by the Board of Management to permanently exclude will be communicated in writing by registered letter to the parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- The National Educational Welfare Board will be notified of the Board's decision to expel.
- The expulsion does not become effective for twenty school days after the NEWB has been notified. The student remains suspended during this time.
- The Principal should, with the agreement of the parents/guardians, assist in sourcing another school for the student.

# Parents/Guardians Agreement



(Please detach and return to the school principal)

**We/I have read the behaviour code of the school and undertake to support it to the best of our/my ability.**

**Signed**

**Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

# School Contacts

<b>Principal:</b>	Mr. Con McGinley
<b>Deputy Principal:</b>	Mr. Gerry Lambe
<b>Guidance Counsellor:</b>	Mr. Tony Butler
<b>Programme Coordinator:</b>	Mr. Tommy Flynn
<b>Chaplains:</b>	Ms. Rosie Reynolds Fr. Jimmy McElroy
<b>School Secretary:</b>	Ms. Patricia Begley
<b>School Phone number:</b>	042 9339977 042 9339984
<b>School Fax number:</b>	042 9328020
<b>School email address:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@maristdundalk.com">info@maristdundalk.com</a>
<b>School Web address:</b>	<a href="http://www.maristdundalk.com">www.maristdundalk.com</a>