

# Student Code of Conduct

**Notre Dame** is inspired by the Christian tradition is to be a community based on faith, hope and love; developing each individual intellectually, emotionally and spiritually to achieve their full potential. To achieve this we will:

- Provide a welcoming, supportive community where everyone is valued.
- Provide a high quality, meaningful education which encourages the development of the whole person, inspired by the Notre Dame tradition.
- Promote a caring environment, rooted in the virtues of service, kindness, gratitude and respect.
- Work together for the benefit of each person as well as the wider community.
- Recognise, celebrate and treasure, without exception, the unique gifts and dignity of each person, ensuring equality and fairness for all, as found in the teaching and example of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

## 1. Aims

### 1.1 Aims for the Community:

This policy aims to:

- provide a safe, positive and professional learning environment;
- promote a culture in which all students are able to learn to the best of their ability;
- maintain a calm, harmonious environment, based on mutual respect and courtesy;
- to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment underpinned by the principle that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated;
- provide a clear framework so that staff, students and parents/carers understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and standards;

By signing of the Learning Agreement during enrolment, all students are deemed to have accepted this Student Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its contents.

### 1.2 Aims for the Individual

The policy aims to ensure that the rights are met of all members of the College community. Equality and Diversity are an integral part of College life, respected by both staff and students. Action will be taken in order to ensure that students have equality of opportunity regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

### 1.3 Each student should:

- follow the Classroom Code of Conduct which is outlined in each classroom;
- take responsibility for their own behaviour and its consequences;
- be aware of how their behaviour affects others, so that they can become responsible members of the College and wider community;
- feel safe, free from bullying, valued and respected;
- be taken seriously, be supported and kept safe when making a report of abuse;
- aspire to succeed through praise and encouragement;
- wear a College lanyard/ID whilst on premises to promote safety;
- show respect to their peers, teachers and themselves by arriving to lessons on time and striving for 100% attendance.

## **2. Scope of the Policy**

The Policy applies to all students:

- i) on College premises and the immediate environment;
- ii) whilst under supervision on off-site visits, including residential trips and sporting events;
- iii) representing the College, for example whilst on work experience/placements.

## **3. Promoting Good Behaviour**

**We promote good behaviour within the College community by:**

- i) use of a Classroom Code of Conduct that sets out the College's expectations on behaviour for 'every student, every teacher and every lesson';
- ii) focussing on the positive aspects of students' behaviour through a culture of praise and reward; acknowledgment of good behaviour by Stella Maris Leadership Award commendations for virtue
- iii) communicating to students what we mean by acceptable behaviour, including through assemblies and tutorials;
- iv) applying commonly agreed expectations, rules, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly so that students are given clear messages without contradiction;
- v) providing further support to help those students who struggle to understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour;
- vi) ensuring that staff model good behaviour, with a focus on the development of mutual respect, understanding and courtesy at the heart of all interaction with students.

## **4. Sanctions**

Sanctions are used to modify the behaviour of those students not meeting our expectations. Sanctions used are reasonable and proportionate; taking into account the individual needs of the student, and the needs of the wider College community.

If a student does not respond to low level sanctions further sanctions including meeting with parents/carers and possible removal from courses may take place.

### **4.1 Banned Items and Confiscation**

All members of staff have the power to confiscate items from students if they see an item that is:

- i) a banned item, for example: alcohol/illegal substances; a weapon (or anything that could be used as such);
- ii) a threat to others;
- iii) a health or safety hazard;
- iv) inappropriate material, for example extremist, discriminatory or pornographic

If the item confiscated is of monetary value, it must be held securely.

The College reserves the right to dispose of any item that it would be illegal for a student to have. Whilst every precaution is taken to ensure that confiscated items are kept safely, the College does not take responsibility for their loss or damage and reserves the right to keep any item.

## 4.2 Powers to Search Students

The College has the authority to search students, with and without their consent, for any item which is banned by the College. The power to search **with consent** has been delegated by the Principal to all members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the Head of Students and Achievement/Senior Tutors. Only members of SLT and The Head of Students may search students or their possessions **without consent**, where they suspect the student has weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs or stolen items.

Anyone searching a student, with or without consent, must have another member of staff present as a witness.

## 5 Exclusions

The Principal, or their delegate, may use fixed term or permanent exclusion in response to incidents of a serious nature.

A list of incidents leading to possible fixed term or permanent exclusion can be found in Criteria for Exclusion (see below 5.1.1. and 5.2.1.). This list is not exhaustive.

When deciding upon exclusion, the Principal (or their delegate) will take account of any special educational needs or disability that might affect the decision, and any relevant cultural or religious issues. An investigation will take place, a record kept of actions taken and an exclusion decision made. This decision will be supervised by two members of SLT.

If an investigation is begun, the College will speak to all parties involved and may take written statements.

If appropriate to the situation, a student may be sent home whilst investigations are carried out. In this instance parents/carers will be informed.

### 5.1 Fixed Term Exclusion

If a fixed term exclusion is issued, parents/carers will be informed and the student will be given access to work whilst not on College premises. There will be a re-admission meeting with a member of SLT or the Student Support team.

#### 5.1.1 Criteria for Fixed Term Exclusion

A Fixed Term Exclusion may be appropriate for:

- a. persistent failure to comply with College expectations, despite the use of other sanctions;
- b. gambling on site;
- c. hate related incidents;
- d. sexual violence and/or sexual harassment;
- e. fraud or theft;
- f. vandalism to College property;
- g. being on site or in College with unauthorised persons;
- h. in possession of a drug/substance or being in an intoxicated state on site;
- i. threatening behaviour towards a member of staff or their family and/or their property;
- j. false and/or malicious accusations against staff and/or students;

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- k. persistent bullying, including cyber bullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying;
- l. misusing images/videos of another student or member of staff;
- m. misusing social media;
- n. behaviour which brings the College into disrepute;
- o. being in possession of a weapon on site;
- p. deliberate activation of the College fire alarm;
- q. defiance of a member of staff;
- r. assault even in cases of self-defence or retaliation;
- s. involvement in serious criminal proceedings or other police involvement.

### 5.2 Permanent Exclusion

If a permanent exclusion is issued, parents/carers will be notified in writing and the student/parent/carer will be informed of their right to appeal. The reasons for the permanent exclusion will be clearly stated.

**In certain circumstances, e.g. arson, trafficking of drugs, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, theft, carrying a weapon or assault causing injury, the police may be contacted.**

Instances of permanent exclusion will be reported to the Principal and to the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Corporation.

#### 5.2.1 Criteria for Permanent exclusion

Permanent exclusion may be appropriate for all points in 5.1.1 and:

- a. supply or trafficking of a drug/substance/alcohol;
- b. arson;
- c. assault causing injury;
- d. sexual violence and/or sexual harassment
- e. repeated and persistent misbehaviour, as detailed in the criteria for fixed term exclusion;
- f. Intimidating or posing a threat to another student or member of staff.
- g. assault (actual or threatened) on a member of staff or their family; persistent nuisance or damage to their property;
- h. behaving in a way that could damage the name of the College within the community

### 5.3 Safeguards

The permanent exclusion of a student is a last resort and the College will take all reasonable steps to avoid such exclusion.

Permanent exclusion can follow from one incident if this is sufficiently serious or an accumulation of several less serious issues.

### 5.4 Appeals against Exclusion

An appeal must be made in writing setting out the grounds on which it is made and addressed to the Principal. This must be lodged within five working days of date of permanent exclusion.

An appeal hearing under normal circumstances will take place within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

## **5.5 Exclusion and Re-instatement Appeals**

On an appeal by a student or parent, the Principal/Appeal Panel will afford the appellant an opportunity of an appeal hearing to make either written and/or oral representations.

The decision of the Principal/Appeal Panel is final and will be conveyed in writing to the appellant within ten working days following representations.

## **5.6 Statements of Decision**

A statement of decision to reinstate should include, the matters considered and the reasons why the Principal/Appeal Panel has decided that the student should be reinstated.

A statement of decision ***not*** to reinstate should include, the conduct complained of, the disciplinary rules which apply and the reasons why Principal/Appeal Panel has decided that the permanent exclusion was considered the proper measure to take.

## **5.7 Rights of Representation**

**5.7.1** Parents and students will be encouraged to attend the appeal hearing to present their case and will be advised:

- a. that they may elect not to attend but rely on written representations;
- b. that if they do not attend, the appeal will have to be decided on whatever information is available.

**5.7.2** The student will normally be allowed to be accompanied by a parent/ carer or other suitable person unless there are good reasons to the contrary. If the student intends to be accompanied by someone other than a parent/ carer, the student must inform the Principal at least two working days before the appeal hearing.

## **6. Additional Roles and Responsibilities:**

### **6.1 Parents/carers have the responsibility to:**

- i) inform College about any issues that may affect a student's behaviour;
- ii) support the College in any reasonable action it takes to improve a student's behaviour;
- iii) attend any meetings reasonably requested by the College;
- iv) treat members of staff with the respect and courtesy expected of all members of our community;
- v) model calm behaviour towards a young person within meetings held in College.

### **6.2 Governors have the responsibility to:**

- i) ensure that College policies/procedures are fair and consistent;
- ii) deal with complaints and appeals in line with the College complaints procedures;
- iii) ensure that there is no discrimination in the implementation of any disciplinary action.

Behaviour goes beyond 'rules' at Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College and we pride ourselves on being a caring community where we are active in our support for each other. We are mindful of how our behaviour impacts on others be that staff, students or visitors.

**7.0 ADDENDUM – remote lessons**

- 7.1 General rules and expectations: all students are expected to follow the general rules for acceptable behaviour when using ICT as in the ICT acceptable use Policy and the Classroom Code of Conduct.
- 7.2 Students should arrive on time for each session and remain engaged throughout the whole session.
- 7.3 Students must be dressed appropriately at all times.
- 7.4 Students must never send or accept invites to join Teams from anyone other than a teacher/tutor or member of staff from Notre Dame. Please note this could be a criminal offence under The Computer Misuse Act.
- 7.5 Students should ensure face to face communication is only between teachers and students. Any parent/carer to teacher communication should be in the usual manner.
- 7.6 Students should behave in a respectful, polite and courteous manner at all times. The use of any profanity and offensive comments - written, drawn, displayed or spoken - during a meeting is unacceptable and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 7.7 Students should not upload, share or forward material that could be considered offensive, inappropriate or illegal. If they do, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 7.8 Students should not share any personal information with anybody online.
- 7.9 You MUST NOT record each other's online interactions or take any screen shots. If the lesson is to be recorded, this will be done by the teacher.
- 7.10 If teachers, tutors or staff at Notre Dame use live 1-2-1 sessions with students, they will be recorded for safeguarding purposes.

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Head of Students