

CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SCHOOL POLICY ON PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING



Carrickfergus Grammar School policy on:	PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING
Date implemented:	January 2020
Review date / led by:	September 2023/Principal
Consulted:	Board of Governors, Staff, Pastoral Team, Parents, Pupils
Allied School Policies: Anti-Bullying, Special Educational Needs, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Attendance, Drugs Policy.	

PHILOSOPHY

The discipline philosophy of this school is based upon a positive, proactive attitude at the heart of which lies the best interests, dignity and rights of the individual young person set within the context of the wider school community.

“Behaviour in school is inseparable from academic achievement, safety, welfare and well-being, and all other aspects of learning. It is key to all other aims, and therefore crucial”

Tom Bennett, Independent review of behaviour in schools.

AIMS

The discipline policy thus –

- (i) attempts to encourage a well-ordered, positive, responsible and productive attitude in students
- (ii) is designed to project good behaviour as the expected norm in the school
- (iii) aims to foster an independent process of positive decision-making in our students which will be to the benefit of each member of our school community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, the Principal, and the Senior Teacher for Pastoral Care in particular to ensure that there prevails in the school the harmonious, positive and purposeful atmosphere which is essential to successful teaching and learning.
- (b) It is the responsibility of the School Leadership Team and the Senior Teacher for Pastoral Care in particular to guide, support, and offer training opportunities for all members of staff so that a positive atmosphere and work ethic prevails in each classroom in the school.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the Senior Teacher for Pastoral Care to communicate the school’s disciplinary structure to parents and students.

- (d) Responsibility for enacting the agreed procedures and structures of the school’s disciplinary measures lies with each member of teaching staff. If a difficulty arises this should be discussed in the first instance with the appropriate Head of Year, who may enlist the support of the Class Tutor if appropriate.
- (e) Heads of Year may refer a situation to the Senior Teacher for Pastoral Care and/or the school’s Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Efforts will then be made to identify and rectify the causes of the discipline problem.
- (f) All members of staff in the school are responsible for encouraging good behaviour in the corridors, public areas and playgrounds, and, as far as possible, in the journeys to and from school. A Code of Conduct for school trips is in the student planner and as ambassadors for the school students are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour during school outings.
- (g) Prefects and all senior students are expected to show an example to younger students, and to assist staff in every way by encouraging good behaviour throughout the school.
- (h) It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal in charge of Induction to ensure that new and temporary members of staff are briefed on the disciplinary structure of the school.

ETHOS

The discipline enacted in this school is based upon an agreed charter of **Rights and Responsibilities** to which students and staff have contributed and to which they have agreed to subscribe. This charter of Rights and Responsibilities epitomises the ethos of this school. (See Appendix A)

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

The standards of behaviour expected derive from the charter of **Rights and Responsibilities** and are displayed around the school under the heading “**Fair for One is Fair for All**”. (See Appendix B).

CLASSROOM RULES

The following rules apply in each classroom. Other additional rules may apply as appropriate in other areas of the school – e.g. in classrooms where practical work takes place:

1. Come to class on time, and with everything you need for the lesson.
2. Enter the room quietly, and prepare for the lesson immediately.
3. Always cooperate respectfully with staff and students.
4. During the lesson.....

Do

Raise your hand before speaking.
 Make your best effort.
 Listen attentively.
 Ask relevant questions.
 Follow instructions promptly.

Don't

Interrupt others.
 Lose concentration.
 Distract yourself, your teacher, or your classmates.
 Stray from the topic.
 Waste time.

5. At the end of the lesson ensure that you have noted your homework. Tidied your work area, and then leave the room quietly on your teacher’s instruction.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Recognising Achievement and Positive Behaviour

The school values the positive contribution that its students make, both in terms of individual achievement and in ways which enhance the life of the school community as a whole. It aims to motivate its students and create an appropriate environment for effective learning and teaching and every opportunity should be taken to recognise effort, attainment and positive behaviour.

Instant recognition is achieved with supportive gestures and comments in class and through more formal opportunities such as:

- Supportive comments noted on written work and displays of work;
- Recognition of achievement by the Head of Year;
- Departmental merit cards or stickers;
- Recognition in reports and report books;
- Recognition in Year Assemblies;
- Recognition in School Assemblies;
- Election to posts of responsibility;
- Prizes and awards for academic, music and sporting excellence are presented at Prize Night;
- Invitations to meet with Senior Leadership to recognise achievement;
- End of year certificates and school reports;
- Publication of achievement on the school website, newsletter and in the local press.

The school has introduced a new system for positive reinforcement for pupils in Years 8-12. This is also a result of feedback received from pupils and parents in questionnaires.

The 'Positive Note' system allows school staff from time to time to acknowledge genuinely the work ethic, manners, endeavours and contributions of our pupils – if they are of a very good standard. As a school, we recognise that many of our pupils are working to very good standards.

A member of school staff may on occasion give a pupil a Positive Note which is a small piece of card entitled 'Positive Note' with the name of the member of staff on it and the school logo. It is small enough to fit in blazer pockets. The member of staff will explain to the pupil why they are receiving it.

Positive Notes don't accrue towards any reward. Rather, when a pupil receives a Positive Note from a teacher, it will be genuine recognition from the teacher that their very good efforts are noted. When that happens, we want our pupils to take encouragement from it and value it.

School encourages pupils to show Positive Notes to parents / guardians. School also endeavours to make parents aware when a pupil gets a Positive Note through the ParentApp system. We hope that this may help to prompt discussion at home about pupils' positive efforts, achievements and successes.

Every opportunity should be taken to praise students who have previously been associated with negative behaviour, or who have been less likely to meet standards, so that it is not always the same students who receive praise and rewards. Striking the right balance between recognising students with consistently good behaviour and those achieving substantial improvement in their behaviour is important.

Positions of Responsibility

Students can hold positions of responsibility in school which recognise positive behaviour, their personal skills and talents and positive contributions to school life. They are not simply a reward but bring with it an expectation that the student will rise to the challenge that the position of responsibility brings.

Managing behaviour

High standards of behaviour prevail in the school due to the joint efforts of parents, students and teachers. We are committed to an atmosphere of positive, supportive and purposeful discipline. We work on the basis that taking time with students to discuss the route to improvement is just as important, if not even more so. Attached is a copy of our charter of *Rights and Responsibilities*, our *Standards of Behaviour* and our *Classroom Rules*. These were drawn up by students and teachers working together.

Inevitably, however, there are times when sanctions must be used. In this regard, a demerit system is used.

Subject (S) Demerits:

- | | | |
|--|---|---------|
| • S - No homework | - | Demerit |
| • S - Incomplete / Unacceptable homework | - | Demerit |
| • S - Unacceptable classroom behaviour | - | Demerit |
| • S - No books / equipment / PE kit | - | Demerit |
| • S - Late to class | - | Demerit |
| • S - Eating, including chewing gum | - | Demerit |

Other (O) Demerits

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------|
| • O - No homework diary | - | Demerit |
| • O - Uniform Infringement | - | Demerit |
| • O - Make up / Varnish / Jewellery | - | Demerit |
| • O - Unacceptable behaviour around school | | Demerit |
| • O - Bad Language Overheard | - | up to 3 Demerits |
| • O - Late to school | - | Demerit |

Accrual of Demerits

5	Lunch-Time Detention	Admin runs report and uses colour coding to highlight pupils reaching 5 points and issues DT.
10	After-School Detention	Admin runs report and uses colour coding to highlight pupils reaching 10 points and issues DT. Check that colour-coding matches for 10 points and DT to ensure it was set.
15+	Phone Call Home	Admin notes pupils reaching 15 points and e-mails Head of Year to ring home. Head of Year checks spreadsheet or Behaviour Management (BM) for demerits to date to inform the call and notes on BM that the phone call has been made.
25	Friday 1 hour	Admin issues DT and e-mails Head of Year and Head of Pastoral Care to inform.
35	Friday 2 hour and meeting with parents	Admin issues DT and informs Head of Year and Head of Pastoral Care who arrange interview with parents. They note on Behaviour Management that meeting has happened.
45	Daily Report Card or After-School Provision	Admin informs Head of Year and Head Pastoral Care who arrange relevant provision.
55	Wednesday Evening Detention	Admin informs Head of Pastoral, Head of Year and Principal. Head of Pastoral Care issues DT.
65	Saturday Morning Detention	Admin informs Head of Pastoral, Head of Year and Principal. Principal issues DT.
75	Internal Suspension	Admin informs Head of Pastoral Care and Principal who arrange internal suspension and note on Behaviour Management.
85	Formal Suspension	Admin informs Head of Year, Head of Pastoral Care and Principal. Principal issues formal suspension.

- Students are responsible for bringing their own stationery to all classes. This includes calculators etc. A demerit will be awarded if students forget equipment / leave material in lockers;
- If a student brings a dangerous item onto school property, or gets involved in physical violence, a formal suspension will occur immediately;
- If a student presents as a physical risk to others, a formal suspension will occur;
- If a child swears at an adult in school, a formal suspension will occur.
- Formal detentions will continue to be set as and when appropriate for misdemeanours.

Parents will be given at least 24 hours' notice of an after-school detention and work will set to be completed during this time.

In instances whereby a student accrues three demerits within a day, school reserves the right to consider an internal suspension.

If a student accrues 10 'Unacceptable Classroom Behaviours' in a term, a formal suspension may occur.

In instances of a persistent nature a Home-School Contract may be used as a means of ensuring that students understand the standards of daily work and behaviour which they are expected to meet. The Contract will set out clearly targets for improvement and will be signed by parents, pastoral staff and the student. This is sometimes accompanied by a Daily Report Book which is presented to each teacher throughout the school day and reviewed at 3.30pm by a designated member of staff. This system is operated in a largely positive manner and seeks to affirm students in good study and behavioural habits by acknowledgement and praise. It must also be presented to and signed by a parent for whom it also affords the opportunity to monitor closely their child's progress on a period by period basis. By mutual agreement with parents unsatisfactory progress on a given day may require the student to remain in school under supervision to 4.30pm to ensure that essential work is completed. On occasion a student may also be removed from class as a sanction if behaviour is warranted to merit this step. This is a step just short of suspension and will be used to give students an opportunity to reflect upon their actions and attitudes.

Rarely, serious or persistent incidents may result in Official Suspension from school. This is a serious measure which means that our Board of Governors and the Education Authority are informed of the matter. We have a very low suspension rate compared to most other post-Primary Schools, but occasionally we do have to apply this sanction. The ultimate sanction is Expulsion: all efforts will be made to resolve difficulties before this final stage.

Responding to underachievement and negative behaviour

Although the school's emphasis is very firmly on both the recognition of good conduct and a positive attitude to learning, it is important that it also sets out the sanctions it will use when students do not meet the expectations of the school.

Use of disciplinary sanctions must be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances of the case, and teaching staff should apply them consistently and fairly.

Disciplinary sanctions have three main purposes:

1. To impress on the student that what he/she has done is unacceptable;
2. To deter the student from repeating that behaviour;
3. To signal to other students that the behaviour is unacceptable and thereby deter them from doing it.

Advice to Staff

The application of sanctions is more likely to promote positive behaviour if the process is seen as being fair. Teaching staff are advised to:

- Make it clear that a sanction is being applied to deal with the student's behaviour and not to stigmatize the person. Deal with the student directly and not to humiliate or degrade them in front of their peers; however, at times it may be appropriate to challenge behaviour directly when it affects the class as a whole;
- Make the student fully aware of the issue with their behaviour, the expectation they have not met and the behaviour that is now expected. Sanctions should not just be automatic;
- Whole-group sanctions that punish the innocent should not be used;
- Avoid an early escalation towards sanctions, reserving them for more serious or persistent misbehaviour;

- Apply a sanction that is sufficient for the student to learn from their mistake and to recognise how they can improve their behaviour;
- Make the student aware of the next step if the behaviour does not improve.

Encouraging students to take responsibility

Where possible, an attempt should be made to discuss the consequences of negative behaviour and encourage the student to take responsibility for and ownership of their actions. Attempting to link the concept of sanctions to the concept of choice, helps students see the connection between their choice of behaviour and its impact on themselves and others. Students should be aware that a record of poor behaviour may exclude them from future applications for trips and extra-curricular activities. The intention is to encourage and teach students to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

All teaching staff should be firm and fair in their application of discipline within and outside the classroom. It is their responsibility to take positive, affirmative action to ensure that all students abide by the rules and structures in place and meet the school's expectations. It is our aim to have a community in which good behaviour is the expected norm. Such an ethos depends on good relationships, whether involving students or members of staff, which are based on mutual respect, warmth and understanding.

Teaching staff are the first line of responsibility for discipline in their classroom, responsibilities include:

- Promotion of the academic progress and well-being of their individual students;
- Ensuring that the school's expectations are adhered to;
- Maintaining good order and discipline among their students;
- Providing a positive, disciplined and supportive learning environment;
- Safeguarding the health and safety of their students, and dealing with any poor behaviour.

Subject teachers, in liaison with their Head of Department, should deal with homework/equipment and behavioural issues within their subject. Problems should only need to be referred if they cannot be dealt with effectively by standard classroom management techniques or if they persist despite interventions.

EXPECTATIONS FROM PARENTS

The School has a right to expect the co-operation of parents in matters of discipline. We therefore ask–

- (a) that school Standards of Behaviour are adhered to and supported;
- (b) that parents ensure their child attends school regularly and arrives in good time (before 8:45am), with homework done, and suitably equipped for the lessons ahead;
- (c) that actions taken by members of staff are supported as being in the best interest of the students. School reserves the right to escalate sanctions if a parent refuses to comply with an allocated sanction or if a child fails to complete the sanction;
- (d) that any problems which may arise be openly discussed with the Principal, Vice Principal, Senior Teacher or Head of Year. Parents are invited to contact school or make an appointment to come to the school for consultation and discussion at any time.

SUPPORT GIVEN

From time to time the school may call upon the help of various support services which may have contact with parents. For example:

- (a) Education Welfare Officer
- (b) Educational Psychologist
- (c) CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- (d) The school's Counselling Service

Parents are encouraged to discuss such contacts with the school.

PROMOTION OF AN ANTI-BULLYING ETHOS

Carrickfergus Grammar School adopts the ABISA definition of bullying:

(1) "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of —

- (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication*
- (b) any other act, or*
- (c) any combination of those,*

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), "act" includes omission.

The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy in place, which is reviewed annually. The policy describes the School's procedures to ensure bullying behaviour is dealt with promptly and sensitively. [See Anti-Bullying Policy]

CONCLUSION

Good communication between students, staff and parents is often the key ingredient in ensuring positive behaviour. This policy has as its aim the academic, social and personal development of each student in the school community so that they can meet their adult life as confident, well-balanced young people who will contribute to the world around them and find fulfilment in their adult lives.