

The King's Hospital School Code of Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures

This Code of Behaviour has been developed in line with the Ethos and Mission Statement of The King's Hospital, together with the school's Core Values.

It has been developed in line with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board.

It has been agreed by the Board of Governors and the Board of Management after consultation with the Head, the teaching staff, the Parents' Association, the Students' Council and the National Educational Welfare Board.

It applies to all students while at school, while taking part in school related activities or trips and while otherwise under the care and responsibility of the school.

Aims of the Code of Behaviour

The aims of the school's Code of Behaviour include to:

- Enable the school to function in an orderly and harmonious manner.
- Promote and maintain an atmosphere of discipline, respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- Ensure that the management of classroom learning is made as effective as possible by maintaining orderly classroom discipline.
- Encourage students to uphold the honour, dignity, reputation and traditions of the school.

Standards of Behaviour

The following are general guidelines (not an exhaustive list) for the standards of behaviour.

Each student is expected to:

- Show courtesy and consideration to fellow students, teachers, other members of staff and visitors to the school.
- Show respect for school property, the property of fellow students and their own belongings.
- Arrive at class punctually and to be attentive and courteous in the classroom.
- Do their best in both schoolwork and their homework/prep.

School Attendance and Punctuality

All students are expected to attend school unless prevented from attending by illness or other valid reasons. The Board of Management will support the National Educational Welfare Board in implementing the Department of Education and Skill's regulations regarding school attendance, which includes the requirement that all absences be explained. (*Education (Welfare) Act 2000.*)

Where a student is absent, the parents/guardian are required to:

(a) Notify the school.

Where a student is absent from school for more than one day, the parents/guardian are required to notify the school by email to the relevant Houseperson or by telephone on (01) 643 6500.

and

(b) Provide a written explanation.

The school requires a written explanation in respect of any absence from school regardless of the length of the absence. The student must bring a note signed by his/her parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence and indicating the dates on which the student was absent, together with a medical certificate where appropriate. This note should be presented to the relevant Houseperson on the first day back after the absence. An email in similar terms will also be accepted.

Unauthorised absence from school will be regarded as a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.

In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school is obliged to inform the National Educational Welfare Board should a student be absent for 20 days or more in the school year or if they are suspended for six days or more.

The school believes that all students should acquire the habit of punctuality as essential training for adult life. Those who arrive in school after Assembly has begun will be regarded as being late and may receive a disciplinary sanction.

Rewards

The school believes that it is important to acknowledge and reward, in a positive manner, those students who demonstrate a high level of cooperation and good behaviour. In this regard, the importance of praise and encouragement is recognised in the form of merits, weekly assemblies, term reports and annual prizegivings.

Behaviour on Trips and Outings

On trips and outings away from school each student must remember that he/she goes as a representative of the school and must at all times behave in an exemplary manner and must comply without question with all directions given by the person in charge. All of the school rules and policies remain in force while participating in such trips, including the ban on smoking, alcohol and other illegal substances. Each student is expected to uphold the school's Code of Behaviour while on school trips and outings.

Bullying

Bullying in any form, whether physical, verbal or by isolation is unacceptable to the school. Each student is expected to adhere to the school's anti-bullying policy. Bullying will be dealt with in a serious manner and any alleged instances of bullying will be investigated thoroughly and may lead to suspension or expulsion of the student who carries out the bullying.

Role of Parents and Guardians

It is the policy of the school to keep parents/guardians fully informed and involved, from an early stage, in relation to instances of misbehaviour.

Parents/guardians have an important role to play in ensuring that students abide fully with this Code of Behaviour. The assistance and involvement of parents/guardians may help to avoid the need for disciplinary action and other consequences which unacceptable behaviour can cause for the students themselves and/or fellow students, staff members and the general functioning of the school. The successful implementation of this Code of Behaviour depends on students, parents/guardians and staff working together.

Where a parent/guardian or student has a concern or wishes to make a complaint in relation to a behavioural matter, they should feel free to notify a Houseperson, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Headmaster either verbally or in writing.

Disciplinary Procedures

These Disciplinary Procedures are intended only as a statement of the school's policy and the Board of Governors reserves the right to review them from time to time.

Unacceptable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour which, in the opinion of Housepersons/teachers, does not amount to a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour will be the responsibility of the Houseperson/teacher to investigate. Appropriate sanctions, including detention, may be imposed.

Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour

In the interest of fostering a harmonious community life, a high standard of behaviour is required at all times.

In particular the conduct below is strictly forbidden and will be considered a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.

Where there is a serious breach, or alleged serious breach, of the Code of Behaviour as outlined below, whether within the school premises or not, the Headmaster (or a Deputy) will be notified.

- 1. Assault or attack (whether verbal or physical) or aggression towards, harassment of, or interference with any person; disruption of classroom, prep, assembly, chapel, sport or other extra-curricular activities.**
- 2. Possession of any offensive or dangerous weapons or other instruments likely to cause injury to others.**
- 3. Intentional damage or vandalism to school, public or private property; actual or attempted theft of property.**
- 4. Possession, provision, acquisition, use or consumption of tobacco, alcohol, drugs of any kind (not administered in the course of medical treatment) or solvents.**
- 5. Use of the internet, cameras, telephones or any other communication (electronic, manual or otherwise), whether school property, the pupil's own property or any third party's property, to record, copy or transmit material that is illegal, defamatory, obscene, pornographic, hateful or that has the effect of, or is intended to, harass, intimidate or discriminate against any other person.**
- 6. Unauthorised absence from School, leaving the school premises without permission or entry into those areas of the school property 'out of bounds' to all or to categories of students, e.g. boys into girls' rooms/dormitories or vice versa or any inappropriate activity or contact of a sexual nature.**
- 7. Persistent failure to cooperate with staff or to work to the best of the pupil's ability.**
- 8. Disrespect towards the school, its staff, property and traditions or failure to wear its uniform with pride and honour or any behaviour which brings the school into disrepute.**
- 9. The conduct of the student poses a risk to the health and safety of others and themselves.**
- 10. The conduct of the student is discriminatory on the grounds of disability, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.**

Following a preliminary assessment of the facts, the Headmaster may decide that there has been a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour sufficient to merit a disciplinary sanction. In those circumstances, a period of suspension or even expulsion may be imposed in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures set out below.

The Headmaster may also inform the Gardai if there is concern that the incident may be of a criminal nature.

Suspension

A period of suspension from school will only be imposed where it is considered a proportionate response to the breach of the Code of Behaviour by the student and fair procedures will be followed at all times. A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

- Where an initial assessment of the facts confirms that certain behaviour is of a serious nature the Headmaster will appoint a Deputy Head to investigate the matter.
- The parents/guardian and the student will be informed as soon as possible by telephone and/or in writing of the allegation of misbehaviour and may be invited to a meeting to discuss the behaviour, how it will be investigated and possible sanctions.
- Following the investigation, the Headmaster (or the Deputy not involved in the investigation) may suspend a student for a period of up to three school days. The Chairman of the Board of Management will be informed of this action.
- The parents/guardian and the student will be informed of the reason for the suspension, the period of the suspension and the conditions, if any, on which the student may return to school.
- The Headmaster will usually only suspend a student following an investigation, however, in serious circumstances, a student may be suspended immediately. In the event of immediate suspension, the parents/guardian of the student will be notified and arrangements made for the student to be collected. A formal investigation will immediately follow the suspension in those circumstances.
- The Headmaster may also decide that a longer period of suspension should be considered and may suspend the student pending a meeting of the Board of Management, who may establish a Disciplinary Sub-Committee to carry out an investigation. The parents/guardian and the student will be informed and will be given the opportunity of an oral hearing before the Disciplinary Sub-Committee, and/or of making a written submission, before the Board of Management makes a decision as regards what longer period of suspension, in any, should be imposed.
- A decision of the Headmaster to suspend a student may be appealed, in writing, to the Board of Management within five school days.
- A decision of the Board of Management may be appealed, to the Department of Education.

Where the total number of days a student has been suspended in a school year reaches 20, the parents/guardian (and students who have reached the age of 18) may appeal a decision to suspend a student to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension at regular intervals.

Reintegration following suspension

Where considered appropriate to support a student's return to school following suspension.

Interventions will be considered to support the student to move forward positively, and give specific help to those who find it particularly difficult to live by the code of conduct. Such Interventions to suit individual needs usually involve consultation with school staff, parents/guardians and others as appropriate. Examples of such interventions could include: a member of the Safety Circle, the Guidance team, or Pastoral providing additional guidance in behaviour management; a behavioural plan, a target sheet etc; or specialised support such as having an SNA appointed or involvement of external agencies etc.

Expulsion

Expulsion will only be imposed in serious cases of unacceptable behaviour. Due process and fair procedures will be followed at all times. A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for expulsion.

- Where an initial assessment of the facts confirms that certain behaviour is of a serious nature the Headmaster will appoint a Deputy Head to investigate the matter.
- The parents/guardian and the student will be informed as soon as possible by telephone and/or in writing of the allegation of misbehaviour and may be invited to a meeting to discuss the behaviour, how it will be investigated and possible sanctions.
- Following the investigation, where the Headmaster is of the opinion that expulsion should be considered, he may suspend the student pending a meeting of the Board of Management, who may establish a Disciplinary Sub-Committee to carry out an investigation. The parents/guardian and the student will be given the opportunity of an oral hearing before the Disciplinary Sub-Committee, and/or of making a written submission, before the Board of Management alone decides.
- Where the Board of Management is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the parents/guardian will be informed of that decision.
- The decision of the Board of Management may be appealed to the Department of Education.
- If the decision of the Board of Management is not appealed, the Board of Management will inform the parents/guardian of the decision and that it is notifying the Educational Welfare Board of its proposed decision and the reasons for it.
- An expulsion will not come in effect before the expiry of 20 school days during which time an officer of the Educational Welfare Board is obliged to make all reasonable efforts to convene individual consultations with the Headmaster, the parents/guardian and the student and hold a meeting of those parties who agree to attend.
- The Board of Management may consider it necessary to suspend the student during this period.
- Following this 20 day period, if the Board of Management is still of the view that the student should be expelled, it will formally confirm the decision to the parents/guardian.

The parents/guardian (and students who have reached the age of 18) may appeal a decision to expel a student to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

A student who has been expelled will not be considered for readmission in subsequent years.

The Board of Management reserves the right to seek parental/guardian approval to have a student tested for substance abuse should the need arise.

The requirements of Natural Justice, the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 will always be considered.

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion at regular intervals.

This Code of Behaviour has been ratified by the Board of Governors and the Board of Management in November 2020.

The Code of Behaviour is signed by the student and their parents, on acceptance of their place in The King's Hospital School.

The Code of Behaviour is also printed in the students' school journal, which students receive at the beginning of each new school year.

The Board of Management reserves the right to review and amend this Code of Behaviour from time to time.

**Revised pending a full review 27 04 21
Headmaster**