



Stratford College

Co-educational Secondary School

Code of Behaviour and Discipline

Preamble

The *Code of Behaviour and Discipline* of Stratford College is an important document. Being part of a group demands such qualities as self-discipline, mutual courtesy and respect by each member of this school community: staff, parents and students. A close observation of the code, which is based on best practice, aims to provide the most conducive and safe learning environment for every student, something to which each is entitled. Appeals to bend the code by individual students or parents are unhelpful to the smooth running of the school.

Stratford College's *Code of Behaviour and Discipline* is a conventional and traditional code. Once accepted there is an obligation on all to support the *Code* and its spirit wholeheartedly. Moreover, any action or behaviour that brings the College into disrepute will result in immediate suspension and/or exclusion. Please read this document carefully and discuss it with your son/daughter before agreeing to its standards. Parents and students are reminded that students should always represent Stratford College with pride whether in or outside the school and not bring the school into disrepute.

All members of our school community are reminded about the importance of respecting individual right to privacy. It is not permitted to record and/or circulate any private information without consent. Any attempt to libel or slander an individual member of the school community will be dealt with by this code.

From time to time, and **only by authorisation of the Principal**, photographs and/or film may be taken of your son/daughter which may be used for official school publications i.e. school prospectus, newsletter, website or school activities.

Please note that surveillance cameras (CCTV) are used as part of securing the school property and individual belongings. However, the school does not accept responsibility for loss or damage to personal property.

Principal: Ms. Patricia Gordon Deputy Principal: Ms. Siobhan Reynolds

Role of Parents/Guardians

1. Parents/Guardians are expected to support their children by taking an active interest in their progress and to support the *Code of Behaviour and Discipline* of Stratford College.
2. If there is any topic/issue that Parents/Guardians wish to discuss they are advised to make contact with the relevant Class Tutor. Similarly, Class Tutors, in co-operation with the Dean of Discipline, may request meetings with Parent/Guardian to discuss a student's progress. The structure of the school day and the demands of the timetable do not permit impromptu meetings between teachers and parents.

Role of Staff

1. If a student breaches the terms of *The Code of Behaviour*, the matter will be dealt with, initially, by the appropriate staff member. This may involve a reprimand, a punishment exercise, withdrawal of privileges, giving of a demerit. Depending on the gravity, the matter may be referred to the Class Tutor and possibly to the Dean of Discipline.
2. The Class Tutor is responsible for monitoring the overall conduct and dress code of students and the collation of merits and demerits.
3. In some cases, a Discipline Committee may be convened by the Principal. This will consist of the Dean of Discipline and appropriate staff members and will investigate serious breaches of discipline as determined by the Principal.
4. Parents will be notified by relevant staff of detention and, in the case of suspension, will be met with by the Dean of Discipline.
5. All staff should acknowledge positive behaviour by students through verbal praise, positive notes in their journals etc.

Role of Students

All students are expected to respect the ethos of Stratford College. The highest possible standard of conduct inside and outside the school is expected.

Failure to co-operate with staff may result in referral to the school's Discipline Committee and/or suspension. Parents will be notified of any such action.

The Board of Management of Stratford College reserves the right to exclude a student from the school if s/he consistently fails to co-operate with the school's *Code of Behaviour and Discipline* and its spirit.

Close boy/girl relationships in school may inhibit school learning for them and for their classmates.

When students are being accepted or chosen for a school tour, previous behaviour may be taken into consideration.

When moving inside the school building students should always walk and keep to the left of the corridors.

Merit

Stratford College promotes and acknowledges academic progress, good behaviour and a positive contribution to school life.

The school achieves this through the following systems:

- Annual Awards Ceremony
- Monthly Assembly
- School Newsletter, Notice Boards
- Delegation of duties to senior students elected as Prefects and members of the Student Council.

The purpose of the merit system is to recognise and reward all those pupils who seldom get into trouble and who make our job as teachers pleasant.

A merit may be awarded for the following:-

1. Outstanding work
2. Outstanding progress
3. Helpfulness, beyond the call of duty
4. No lates – every half term
5. No misdemeanours – every half term
6. Classroom tidiness – every half term

Class Tutors will acknowledge merits in mid-year and end of year school reports.



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Demerit

A student will incur a demerit when s/he behaves in a manner that is counterproductive to his/her own education and/or to the learning environment of other students. Teachers must be allowed to teach and students to learn.

Disciplinary Procedures

1. The subject teacher, Class Tutor, Dean of Discipline and/or the Principal in that order, may deal with a breach of The Code of Behaviour.
2. The Principal and/or a Discipline Committee convened by the Principal, consisting of the Dean of Discipline and appropriate staff members, will investigate a serious breach of *The Code of Behaviour*.
3. Detention will be awarded on receipt of three demerits.
4. Detention is held at regular intervals for a maximum duration of two hours. Written notice of detention will be posted, telephoned or texted to students and parents; the timing is at the discretion of the school staff and may not be altered. A student who fails to attend detention, exceptional circumstances excluded, will be automatically suspended for one day. In the event of the date of detention, awarded for minor mis, clashing with a school organised event, the date will be re-arranged.
5. Two detentions due to misbehaviour followed by a third incidence warranting detention will result in an in-house suspension i.e. exclusion from class for one day. Two further detentions due to misbehaviour, followed by a third incidence of misbehaviour warranting detention will result in a one-day suspension from school. Detentions are held outside normal school hours and are for one hour for less serious breaches and two hours for more serious ones.

Sanctions are as follows:

1. Verbal correction
2. Notes in school journal
3. Referral to Class Tutor
4. Referral to Dean of Discipline
5. Telephone contact with parents
6. Formal meeting with parents
7. Detention
8. In-house suspension
9. Suspension
10. Expulsion

Serious disciplinary issues will be referred to the Principal/Board of Management with a recommendation for suspension and/or exclusion.

Property

1. Stratford College encourages a policy of environmental friendliness. As such students must not litter in classrooms or in the school grounds. Students are expected to comply with all requests from teachers in relation to keeping their surroundings clean and tidy.
2. Mobile phones are only permitted during class time at the discretion of the teacher (as per our Acceptable User Policy). Otherwise phones should be turned off and left in their locker. These devices should not be used by students at break time or lunch times and should be kept in lockers. If a phone rings during class or a student is found with it on during lunch or break time, the following will apply:
 - a. First Offence: it will be confiscated for the day. It will be left at the office and it can be collected at end of day.
 - b. Second Offence: It will be left in the office for the day and a parent must collect it.
 - c. Third Offence: A three day confiscation will ensue, and a parent must collect it on the completion of the third day. Parents/guardians are advised that all urgent communication for students should be directed through the school secretary.
3. Students should be discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash into the school and are advised that they bring all personal items of property into school at their own risk. Other items should be left in the student's locker and it is mandatory to purchase a lock for their lockers.
4. The College accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to a pupil's property. Schoolbooks and copies, uniform and sports gear should be clearly labelled.
5. Students must respect school property and must make restitution for the damage or defacing of either school property or the property of another student.
6. Chewing gum is forbidden in all areas of the school.
7. It is strictly forbidden for a student to take photos in school without a teacher's knowledge. This applies to when the teacher is on school property, while in school uniform and on occasions when the student can be connected to the school.

Green Code

“Encourage to clean, Always think Green”

Health & Safety

1. Pupils should take the utmost care when on the school premises and have regard to their own safety and the safety of others. Pupils should show respect and courtesy to each other and to the members of staff at all times.
2. In keeping with our anti-bullying policy, all forms of bullying are totally unacceptable. They should be reported immediately to the relevant Form Teacher, staff member or Senior Prefect *cf. Anti-Bullying Policy*.
3. The drinking of alcohol, the smoking of tobacco and the possession of or involvement in illegal drugs is totally forbidden and may result in suspension and possible expulsion from the college *cf. Substance Abuse Policy*.
4. Students, when moving around the school, should walk and not run. All cyclists should dismount at the school gates. From thereon they should push their bicycles or motorcycles to the bicycle racks.
5. All students should observe the *Student Computer User Policy* which is available on our school website or from the Principal following written request.

Online privacy and code of behaviour

Circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with school activities including but not limited to material in relation to staff and students where such circulation undermines, humiliates or causes damage to another person is considered a serious breach of school discipline and may result in disciplinary action. As part of such disciplinary action the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a student or students where it considers the actions to warrant such sanctions.'



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School & Homework

1. Each pupil is expected to complete all homework to the best of his/her ability and on time.
2. Copybooks should be kept in good condition and written exercises should be completed neatly.
3. When in class pupils should work to the best of their ability, listening carefully and attentively and participate actively by asking questions etc.
4. A letter should explain any absences from class by students from parents/guardians in advance when possible. Pupils should make every effort to catch up on material missed as a result of these absences. It is the student's responsibility to approach the teacher for help in this area.

A copy of our school policy on Homework and Assessment is available on the school website or from the Principal following a written request.

Attendance & Punctuality

1. Students are required to attend school regularly. It is the duty of parents to ensure regular attendance. If a pupil is absent, parents are asked to submit a letter of explanation on returning to school. Requests for all absences from school must be made in writing to the Class Tutor.
2. Students, apart from 6th Years and Prefects are not allowed to leave school during school hours without the permission of the Principal / Class Tutor.
3. Punctuality is essential at all times. Students who arrive late to school are required to report to the school office immediately and sign the late-book. Students, who change classrooms, should proceed directly from one classroom to another at class changeover time and should not normally go to their lockers between or during classes. Students should organise necessary books and equipment first thing in the morning, at break and at lunchtime for subsequent classes. Students who are persistently late for class may not be admitted to class.
4. On Fridays school finishes at 1.10pm. Break times are at 11.05- 11.15am and 1.10– 1.45pm. Jewish students are obliged to attend prayers each morning at 8.40 am and to attend Hebrew and/or Jewish Studies. Classes begin at 9.00 am and finish at 3.45pm.



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5. One late warrants one demerit.

A copy of our school policy on Attendance is available on the school website or from the Principal following a written request.

Uniform

Domestic circumstances, except in exceptional circumstances, do not preclude a student from observing the dress code of Stratford College.

1. All students, with the exception of 6th Years, must wear complete school uniform at school, while travelling to and from school, at school functions and at games. Sports uniform should be worn to school on relevant sports days. A complete uniform list is available from the school office. 6th Years should observe an appropriate dress code, which will be determined at the discretion of the staff.
2. If for any reason a student is not wearing complete school uniform, a letter from the parent stating the reason should be handed to the Class Tutor. Students not wearing the full uniform may be sent home and may return when dressed correctly. One breach of uniform code warrants one demerit.
3. Hairstyles should be simple traditional styles, which are at the discretion of the staff. Senior boys should be clean-shaven. Jewellery and make-up must be discreet. Earrings may be worn by girls only and should also be discreet. Skirts should be worn below the knee. Piercings are permitted in other parts of the body. Clear, plastic retainers may be used.

Dietary Restrictions

Students should not bring ham/pork products or shell fish into the school. All formal school events and food provided by the Tuck Shop are kosher.

Procedures for Suspension/Expulsion

General

1. Suspension will usually only occur after the Principal has:

- ensured all discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented.
- ensured all appropriate support personnel (internal and external) have been involved as relevant.
- Ensured that discussion has occurred with the student and parent / guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to suspension.
- ensured that diagnostic assessments have been carried out where appropriate (i.e. NEPS), particularly where unacceptable behaviour is ongoing and consistent.
- (except in cases of very serious misconduct) provided a formal written warning detailing these behaviours, as well as clear expectations of what is required of the student in the future.
- recorded all action taken, and
- copied all correspondence

2. Principal may suspend immediately in some circumstances e.g. violence, threats of violence, illegal drugs etc. for a maximum of 6 days.

3. If a student is suspended for a period of 6 days or more, the Principal must inform the local Educational Welfare Officer.

4. If a student is suspended for a cumulative total of 20 days or more in one school year, the Principal must inform the Education Welfare Officer.

Appeals

A formal appeal system may be initiated for suspensions of 3 days or more. A request for such an appeal should be made in writing and will be considered, in the first place by the Board of Management and Principal. Any such appeal will consider procedural fairness and the right of a student to an impartial judgement (cf. Appendix 1). Appeals may be made to The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science in the event of the cumulative period of suspension being 20 days or more. This must be done in writing within **42** days of notification of suspension cf. Circular M48/01.

Expulsion can only occur after the Principal has:

- ensured all discipline options under the Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
- ensured all appropriate support personnel (internal and external) have been involved as relevant
- ensured all other procedures, referrals, supports have been exhausted
- ensured that discussion has occurred with the student and parent / guardian regarding specific misbehaviour which the school considers unacceptable and which may lead to expulsion
- provided formal verbal and written warnings at appropriate times detailing these behaviours, as well as clear expectations of what was required of the student in the future
- recorded all action taken, and
- copied all correspondence
- informed the parents/guardians of his/her intention to recommend expulsion to the Board of Management
- Invited the parents/guardians to the Board of Management hearing and
- Invited the parents/guardians to make a written submission in advance of the Management Meeting.
- Provided the parents /guardians with a full, written description of the allegations against the student and the case being made at the meeting, together with copies of all documentation, statements etc. supporting that case.
- Made a formal expulsion recommendation to the Board of Management with full supporting documentation.

Expulsion can only occur after the Board of Management has

- Heard the Principal's case against the student (this case should be made in the presence of the parents/guardians)
- Heard the Parents'/guardians' response
- Examined all the documentation
- Considered the student's record in the school
- Taken legal / expert advice
- Ensured the Principal is not present for Board of Management's discussion and decision on the matter.
- Discussed the case in detail
- Considered all procedural matters as previously outlined
- Made a final decision to expel
- Communicated the decision to the parents formally through the Principal
- Informed the Education Welfare officer under Section 24(1) of the Education Welfare Act 2000.



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Approved on behalf of the Board of Management

Mr Cormac Murphy,
Chairperson

Ms Patricia Gordon
Principal

Dated; 30 May 2016