

# CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## SCHOOL POLICY ON PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING



<b>Carrickfergus Grammar School policy on:</b>	<b>PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING</b>
<b>Date implemented:</b>	September 2018
<b>Review date / led by:</b>	September 2019/Principal
<b>Consulted:</b>	Board of Governors, Staff, Pastoral Team, Parents, Pupils
<b>Allied School Policies:</b> 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 pupils
- (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 pupils 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 pupils.

- (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 Coordinator. 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 pupil planner and as ambassadors for the school pupils are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour during school outings.
- (g) Prefects and all senior pupils are expected to show an example to younger pupils, 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 pupils 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 pupils.
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

We are very proud of the high standards of behaviour which prevail in the school due to the joint efforts of parents, pupils, and teachers. We are committed to an atmosphere of positive, supportive and purposeful discipline which I hope you sense when you visit school as a parent. Although the information set out below is focused on sanctions we work on the basis that taking time with pupils 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 pupils and teachers working together and we are grateful for your ongoing support in applying them.

Inevitably, however, there are times when sanctions must be used. Please be aware of the following standard four steps:

1. A first minor misdemeanour or piece of unsatisfactory/missing work will be given a warning.
2. A second will trigger a departmental response which may include a subject detention, meeting with the teacher or extra work.
3. A third will mean a Lunchtime Detention. Parents/Guardians will be informed of this detention.
4. If the issue is still not resolved a Formal Detention will be given. Parents will be informed via email, accompanied by a text alert, and a detention letter will be sent home with the pupil. Formal Detentions are issued with at least 24 hours' notice and take place on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 3.30-4.30pm. A Friday 2 Detention from 2.25 – 3.25, or 2.25 – 4.25, is issued for pupils who are persistently late to school.

We try hard to be as fair and supportive as possible, and whilst we aim to apply the above procedures consistently the system is a structure rather than a straitjacket, so there is always room for flexibility depending on the nature of the incident. For example, a Formal Detention may well be issued as an initial response to a misdemeanour if this is judged appropriate.

Certain situations or misdemeanours may result in the application of other sanctions:

- Friday 2 Detention will require that a pupil remains in school for up to two hours (to 4.30pm) after other pupils are released at 2.25pm. This happens every other Friday for the purposes of staff development;
- Wednesday Evening Detention will require that a pupil attends school in uniform on a Wednesday evening from 7.00pm – 9.00pm. This takes place under supervised study conditions in the Grainger Centre;
- Study Day Detention will require that a pupil attends school in uniform on a day when other pupils do not attend e.g. a Staff Training Day, or a day of school holidays;
- Internal Suspension involves a pupil being temporarily withdrawn from timetabled classes for separate supervision. This may also involve isolation from peers over Break and/or Lunchtime.

In all of the above cases parents will be given at least 24 hours' notice of the detention and work set to be completed during it will be profitable for the pupil's progress.

In instances of a persistent nature a Home-School Contract may be used as a means of ensuring that pupils 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 pupil. 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 pupils 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 pupil to remain in school under supervision to 4.30pm to ensure that essential work is completed.

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 pupils 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 pupil that what he/she has done is unacceptable;
2. To deter the pupil from repeating that behaviour;
3. To signal to other pupils 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 pupil's behaviour and not to stigmatize the person. Deal with the pupil 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 pupil 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 must 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 pupil to learn from their mistake and to recognise how they can improve their behaviour.
- Make the pupil aware of the next step if the behaviour does not improve.

### **Encouraging pupils to take responsibility**

Where possible, an attempt should be made to discuss the consequences of negative behaviour and encourage the pupil to take responsibility for and ownership of their actions. Attempting to link the concept of sanctions to the concept of choice, helps pupils see the connection between their choice of behaviour and its impact on themselves and others. Pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils;
- Ensuring that the school's expectations are adhered to;
- Maintaining good order and discipline among their pupils;
- Providing a positive, disciplined and supportive learning environment;
- Safeguarding the health and safety of their pupils, 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.

## **RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

The school values the positive contribution that its pupils 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. To this end, a merit system is employed to recognise, encourage and validate the positive contributions made by pupils to the school community and the curriculum.

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
- Merit points
- 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 Management to recognise achievement
- End of year certificates and school reports
- Publication of achievement on the school website, newsletter and in the local press.

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.

### **Merit Points**

Where students show a level of commitment to their work or positive behaviour above the expected level, teachers can award merit points. Each department has indicated to pupils how they can earn merits within each subject area, and merits are also awarded for contribution to school life. Merits points are awarded for:

Academic achievement

Excellent effort

Outstanding work

Notable improvement (Effort/Behaviour)

Notable improvement (Attainment)

Excellent attendance

Contribution to a school event

Extra-Curricular Involvement

Musical success

Sporting success

Help/thoughtfulness towards another

Holding posts of responsibility

Courtesy/Manners/Conduct – the CGS Way!

Where pupils accumulate a higher than average number of merit points they are awarded Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates with their end of year report.

### **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.

## **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 pupils;
- (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 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 adopts the NIABF definition of bullying: “The repeated use of power by one or more people intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others” 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 pupils, 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 pupil 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.