



Discipline Policy

This policy was devised in consultation with the education partners at Grennan College. It was ratified by the Board of Management of the College at its meeting on 9th May 2005 and was adopted by County Kilkenny Vocational Education Committee at its monthly meeting in July 2005.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. Board Of Management

The college is managed by a Board of Management on behalf of the Committee, and in accordance with the Education Act, 1998.

1.1. Discipline Policy

The members of the educational partnership (such as parents, teachers, students and the education welfare officer) were actively involved in both the creation and development of this Discipline Policy.

1.2. Code Of Behaviour

The Policy contains a Code of Behaviour. A Code of Behaviour is necessary in order to protect and maintain the educative environment of the college.

The Code of Behaviour is based on the following key principles:

- Good relationships and co-operation between and among all the educational partners.
- Personal responsibility
- Equality and fair treatment of all

The Board of Management has ensured that the Code of Behaviour specifies:

- The standard of behaviour to be observed by the students.
- The measures to be taken when the student fails and refuses to observe the standard.
- The procedure that must be followed before a student is suspended and /or expelled.
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.
- The procedures to be followed relating to notification of a student's absence from the college.

1.3. Data Protection and The Committee

The Board of Management as data controller for its schools, affirms that data stored on computers in relation to students and parents, is governed by the Data Protection Act 1988, and that information on file should be used only for the purposes for which it was intended.

1.4. Board of Management and the Quality of College Discipline Policy.

The Board of Management shall ensure that an evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the process, strategy, and policy regarding behaviour is carried out regularly.

2. Parents

The Board of Management affirms the statutory right of parents, through their representatives, to be consulted, regarding the drafting and evaluation of the Code of Behaviour in all schools under the control of the Committee.

Enrolment of Pupils under 18 years.

The Board of Management affirms that on the enrolment of a student who has not reached the age of 18 years, the parent and student must be given a copy of the College's Code of Behaviour and must sign a declaration that the Code is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with the Code. The Principal may refuse to register a student whose parent refuses to sign a declaration that the code of behaviour is acceptable and that the parent will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance by the student with the code.

Enrolment of Pupils aged 18 years.

The Board of Management affirms that students who have reached the age of 18 years shall be subject to the rights and responsibilities as outlined above.

Active Parental Support of College Staff

The Board of Management affirms that parents have a responsibility to actively support the staff of the schools under its control in the fair application of the Code of Behaviour.

Active Parental Involvement in the College

The Board of Management affirms that parents who have enrolled students in its school shall be encouraged to involve themselves in positive participation in school

life in order to facilitate the development of mutually beneficial links between school and home.

3. The Principal

The Principal's overall Responsibility for Discipline.

The Board of Management affirms that the overall responsibility for discipline within the College rests with the Principal subject to the authority of the Board of Management and the Committee.

The Principal and the operation of the Code of Behaviour.

The Board of Management requires that the Principal shall ensure that the Code of Behaviour is administered in a fair and consistent manner.

The Principal encouraging Responsibility and Commitment

The Board of Management affirms that the Principal shall encourage a sense of collective responsibility among staff and a sense of commitment to the College among staff, students and parents.

The Principal providing Guidance, Leadership and Support.

The Board of Management require that the Principal shall provide guidance, leadership and support to staff, students, and parents in the application of the Code of Behaviour and in disciplinary matters in general.

The Principal delegating Duties regarding Behaviour

The Board of Management affirms that the Principal may at his or her discretion delegate duties regarding behaviour to other professionals working in the College.

4. The Teaching Staff

Teachers Responsibilities in relation to Student Behaviour.

The Board of Management affirms that the staff of the College shall be responsible for dealing with the behaviour of students within the college and on college related activities and that they shall respond appropriately to any instance of unacceptable behaviour.

Teachers are responsible for discipline in the classroom

The Board of Management affirms that the teachers in the College are responsible in the first instance for discipline in the classroom and that they should:

- Employ stimulating / effective methods of teaching
- Have positive expectations of students
- Demand honest effort and high standards in terms of work and behaviour
- Seek to create a attractive classroom environment
- Have positive regard for all students

Teachers taking cognisance of their students.

The Board of Management affirms that all teachers should take cognisance of the students' social, environmental and cultural context.

Teachers right to teach and carry out their duties

The Board of Management affirms that all teachers serving in the College have the right to teach and to carry out their professional duties unhindered, and in an atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning.

5. Students

Students right to learn

The Board of Management affirms that all students attending the College have the right to learn unhindered in an atmosphere that is positive and conducive to learning and teaching.

Students responsibilities to the school.

The Board of Management affirms that all students attending the College have a responsibility to make a positive contribution to the life of the school in terms of work, behaviour and relationships.

6. Support Structures

Provision of Pastoral Care structures and their purpose.

The Board of Management affirms that Pastoral Care structures, which will ensure a caring and positive approach to the diverse needs of students, should be put in place in the College and subject to the functions of the Minister pursuant to Section 7 (1) of the Education Act, 1998.

Referring students for counselling and/or Psychological Assessment.

The Board of Management affirms that the College shall, where appropriate, in consultation with parents, make every reasonable effort to have students who display worrying behaviour patterns referred for counselling and / or psychological assessment without delay, and subject to the functions of the Minister pursuant to Section 7 (1) of the Education Act, 1998.

7. Strategies For Dealing With Misbehaviour

Maintaining records of pupils' behaviour and misbehaviour.

The Board of Management affirms that written records should be maintained by the College, with regard to student behaviour and misbehaviour.

Informing Parents about their children

The Board of Management affirms that Parents should be kept informed of instances of misbehaviour on the part of their children and that their co-operation in finding a resolution should be sought as early as possible.

Rewarding good behaviour and excellence.

The Board of Management affirms that praise, encouragement and reward should be used in the College as mechanisms for the formation of good behaviour and academic excellence.

Provision of Home-School liaison

The Board of Management affirms the desirability that the College should have a home-school liaison officer subject to the functions of the Minister pursuant to Section 7 (1) of the Education Act, 1998.

Strategies To Be Used To Promote Good Behaviour

The Board of Management affirms that the following strategies may be used to promote good behaviour:

- a. Communication with parents.
- b. The rewarding of students regarding positive behaviour.
- c. Early identification of ‘at risk’ students regarding behaviour.
- d. Establishment of close links with the home of ‘at risk’ students.
- e. Fostering, promoting and establishing contacts by the college with other schools and bodies engaged in youth work.
- f. The development of programmes of activities, designed to encourage positive behaviour and personal responsibility in students.

- g. The development of whole school structures in a positive and pro-active attempt to deal with the issues of attendance and behaviour.
- h. Regular evaluation of the College's operation as it relates to attendance and behaviour issues, with a view to encouraging an atmosphere of positive behaviour in the college.
- i. The fostering of college and community awareness of the possible adverse affects on behaviour of the following:
 - Participation by students in employment
 - Entertainment/social activity
 - The abuse of alcohol/drugs
- j. Reasoning with the student.
- k. Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- l. Temporary separation from peers, friends, and others.
- m. Loss of privileges.
- n. Restitution.
- o. Detention during breaks or outside of college hours.
- p. Prescribed additional work. Lines are not recommended.
- q. Suspension on a temporary basis.
- r. Expulsion.
- s. Any other strategy that may be of relevance to the needs or circumstances of the college.

Behaviour is dependent on good example.

The Board of Management affirms that good behaviour in the College is dependant on the good example of all, parents, staff and students.

Sanctions

The Board of Management accepts that there is a need for sanctions with regard to non-compliance with the Code of Behaviour on the part of students in the College, in order to register disapproval and to inculcate values of responsibility and positive behaviour among students.

The Board of Management affirms that the College should devise a graded system of sanctions suitable to its particular needs and circumstances. Sanctions should be sufficiently flexible to take account of the environmental, social and cultural context of individual students.

The Board of Management affirms that the College should ensure that students are aware of the distinction between minor and more serious misbehaviour and of the sanctions applied consequently.

The Board of Management affirms that the College should ensure that the rules of natural justice apply in the context of dealing with student misbehaviour.

The Board of Management affirms that students who are removed from class in the college, should not be left in an unsupervised situation. Subject teachers are responsible for students in their classes and they have a duty of care to those students that must be adhered to.

The Board of Management affirms that where detention outside of college hours is used as a sanction, that parents should be advised of such detention, in advance, and they should be given precise details of when and where the sanction is to be imposed and for what period. This is without prejudice to the rights of the college authority, the Board of Management or the Committee to take appropriate and/or immediate disciplinary action in the interests of the good management of the college.

Suspension

The Board of Management affirms that students attending the college may be suspended as follows pending investigation and/or discussion with parents:

- a. For serious misbehaviour.
- b. For an unacceptable level of repeated misdemeanours.
- c. For bullying, insulting, aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards others in the college.
- d. For the supply/possession /use of alcohol and or illegal drugs.
- e. For the supply/possession/use of weapons/dangerous materials/substances.
- f. For behaviour that may be a danger to self or others, under the terms of the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989.
- g. For racist behaviour and /or the supply/possession /use of racist material.
- h. For behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act, 2000.
- i. For sexual harassment and/ or the possession of pornographic material.

Pursuant to subsections (a) to (i) above, the Board of Management affirms the right of the principal to suspend a student or students with immediate effect.

The Board of Management affirms that where there are repeated instances of misbehaviour, the parents shall be requested in writing, to attend at the college, or other suitable location, for discussion. If the parents and / or the student do not give an undertaking that the student will behave in an acceptable way in the future, the pupil will be suspended for a period to be determined by the Principal or the Board of Management, as appropriate.

The Board of Management affirms that the parents of students enrolled at the college shall be informed of their right to appeal suspensions to the Board as follows:

- a. Where the period of suspension is for 6 days or more consecutive school days
- b. Where the aggregate number of days on which a student has been suspended in any school year is 20 or more days.

The Board of Management affirms that the Educational Welfare Officer should be informed of suspensions as outlined at (a) and (b) above, as appropriate.

Grounds for removing a suspension

A suspension may be removed on certain grounds, including the following:

- a. The Principal may agree that another sanction be applied after discussion with parents
- b. Successful appeal to the Board of Management
- c. Successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act
- d. new circumstances come to light.

Expulsion

The Board of Management affirms that expulsion should be considered in only the gravest of circumstances and only after every reasonable effort at rehabilitation has failed and every other sanction has been exhausted, except as outlined .

When an act of gross misconduct occurs, expulsion may be necessary to protect the safety and rights of others in the college without recourse to the provisions outlined at (a) to (i) above. The principles of natural justice and

fair procedure outlined hereunder should be followed prior to a student being expelled from the college:

- a. Where expulsion may be the outcome of a breach of the Behaviour Policy of the college, the Principal, Deputy Principal and / or other appropriate person may conduct an investigation into any reported misbehaviour or breach of college rules.
- b. The Board of Management affirms that a student/students may be suspended pro tempore pending a full hearing of the case, provided this does not interfere with the students' statutory rights or with the principles of natural justice and fair procedure.
- c. During any course of investigation, all relevant persons shall be interviewed and notes shall be taken of any such interviews.
- d. The Principal shall write to the parents of the student concerned (or to the student if she/he has reached the age of 18 years) informing them of the allegations and inviting them to the college, or other suitable location for discussion.
- e. The Principal may, at his/her discretion call an emergency meeting of the Board of Management and recommend that the student be suspended pending a full hearing, if this is considered to be in the best interest of the student and/or of others in the college.
- f. The Principal may make a recommendation that the student be expelled and she/he shall then notify, in writing, the parents of the student concerned (or the student if she/he has reached the age of 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, of the recommendation and that this recommendation is subject to the approval of the Board of Management. Copies of notes taken and

statements made in the course of the investigation should be forwarded to the parents and/ or the Educational Welfare Officer. Where there may be a breach of confidentiality a summary of notes taken and statements made shall be forwarded instead.

- g. The Principal shall notify the parents of the student concerned (or the student if she/he has reached the age of 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, of their right to be heard before the Board of Management and their right to appropriate representation.
- h. A meeting of the Board of Management shall be convened within 10 working days of the notification as outlined at (g) above.

The Board of Management affirms that the procedure outlined hereunder should be followed in the course of a hearing at which it is proposed to expel a student from the college:

- a. The Principal shall present the case on behalf of the college and shall propose expulsion.
- b. The parents of the student concerned (or the student if she/he has reached the age of 18 years) and/or the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, shall be afforded the opportunity to respond. Members of the Board of Management shall have the right to question the principal and/ or the parents of the student concerned (or the student if she/he as reached the age of 18 years) or the Educational Welfare Officer as appropriate. The board may consider the question of allowing representation, if it asked for and reasons are given.

- c. Each side shall be afforded the opportunity to cross-examine each other through the Chair.
- d. Each side shall be afforded the opportunity to sum up, by way of final comment.
- e. The Principal, the parents of a student(s) under the age of 18 years, the student, if she/he has reached the age of 18 years, the Educational Welfare Officer and their representative shall withdraw to enable the Board to make a decision, but shall remain available for clarification, purposes if required.
- f. In the absence of the Principal, the members of the Board shall elect a recording secretary from among their members.
- g. The Board may make the following decisions:
 - To recommend to the VEC that the student(s) be expelled.
 - To suspend for a period to be decided by the Board.
 - To refer the matter back to the Principal for further investigation.
 - To reinstate the student in the college.

The Board of Management affirms that the procedure outlined hereunder should be followed at the conclusion of a hearing before the Board at which it is decided to recommend that the student(s) be expelled or suspended from the college:

- a. Where the Board decides to recommend expulsion or suspension, parents of students who have not yet reached the age of 18 years (and students who have reached 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate, shall be informed in writing by the Principal of the decision of the Board of Management and of their right to appeal this decision to the Committee, under the terms of the

Educational Welfare Act 1998, Section 29. The appeal shall follow the procedures as laid down in Circular Letter M4801. This appeal must be made within 14 calendar days of the decision being handed down.

- b. When the Board of Management is of the opinion that a student should be expelled from the school, it shall notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reason therefor and it shall co-operate, in as far as its practicable, with the Educational Welfare Officer in this regard.
- c. If, having considered the Board of Management decision or an appeal of that decision, the Committee decides to uphold the recommendation of the Board of Management and expels a student, the parents of a student who has not reached the age of 18 years (and students who have reached the age of 18 years) and the Educational Welfare Officer, where appropriate shall be informed of their right to appeal this decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under the terms of the Education Act 1998, Section 29.
- d. A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of 20 school days following the receipt of the notification by the Educational Welfare Officer. This is without prejudice to the right of the Board of Management and of the Committee to take such reasonable measures, as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school and that the safety of students is secured.

Corporal Punishment

- a. The use of corporal punishment is strictly forbidden.

Smoking

- a. Smoking by students is prohibited under the Health (Tobacco) Act 2004. The principal will make all reasonable efforts to enforce the act and thus may impose fines on any student found to be in breach of this rule. A period of suspension may be imposed on repeat offenders.

Sanctions

The college accepts that there is a need for sanctions to deal with non compliance with the College Code of Behaviour. Among the sanctions which may be imposed are:

- i) Additional written work may be given (Lines are to be discouraged)
- ii) Lunchtime detention.
- iii) After school detention.
- iv) Cleaning duties (anti litter).
- v) Exclusion from class for a set period of time.
- vi) Withdrawal of privileges e.g. student may be barred from travelling on school trips/outings or from representing the college in inter-schools games and activities.
- vii) “On report” sheets, i.e.
 - (a) Yellow sheet, to be presented by the student to each teacher throughout the day for comment and to be signed by the student’s parent/guardian each night. The yellow sheet should be returned by the student to the Deputy Principal at the end of the week.
 - (a) Red sheet. If, having been on a yellow sheet, the student continues to be in breach of school rules (s)he will be placed on a Red Sheet. Same procedure applies as in the case of yellow sheet.
- viii) Suspension.

Failure to improve performance and/or behaviour as a result of “on report” sheets will result in student facing a period of suspension. Thereafter, further incidences of misbehaviour will result in gradually increasing lengths of suspension
- ix) In cases of severe or repeated breaches of the Code of Behaviour the Principal may recommend that the Board of Management consider initiating the process of expulsion.

Grennan College Thomastown

Code Of Behaviour (Rules and Regulations)

In order to facilitate the smooth running of the college, to provide an environment conducive to teaching and learning and to ensure the safety and welfare of the whole college community, students are expected to abide by the following regulations.

General Behaviour

Students should behave in a polite respectful manner at all times while at the college or while engaged in college related activities.

- Bad or abusive language must never be used
- Smoking, Chewing gum and Tippex are strictly forbidden.
- No alcohol, solvents or illegal substances.
- No objects or substances of an inappropriate nature may be brought into school.
- Bullying will not be tolerated
- Students must not loiter in college toilets
- Students are expected to have a sense of pride in the college and to maintain it litter free.
- A student may not leave the college without the permission of the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Students may go to their lockers at specified times only.
- Schoolbooks, workbooks, copies and diary should be covered and kept neat, tidy and free from graffiti, drawings, pictures etc.

Courtesy and Respect

All students are expected to

- show respect and courtesy to their teachers, other college staff and each other.
- comply with the instructions of teachers and college ancillary staff.
- respect the property of the college, the teachers and their fellow students
- obey the Health and Safety regulations, particularly in the practical subjects i.e. Science, Home Economics, Metalwork, Engineering, Materials Technology, Construction and P.E.

Attendance and Punctuality.

All students

- should attend school every day unless totally unavoidable
- should be in time for each class throughout the school day
- should be fully equipped for class, that is, have all necessary books, copies, student diary, pens, instruments etc
- must remain in class during classtime except where, in exceptional circumstances, they are given permission to leave by the teacher.
- All requests to be absent from college and /or class must be accompanied by a **signed letter** from student's parent/guardian.
- In the interest of the student's safety and welfare only those students who actually go home for lunch will be allowed leave the college grounds between 12.20 and 1.20 pm. Parents/guardians are urged to discourage their son/daughter from requesting permission to go to the local shop at this time.

Student Absences

In the event of a student being absent from school the parents/guardians should inform the principal in writing of the absence and the reason for such absence. Record of absence forms are printed at the back of the student's school diary for this purpose.

Class and Homework

All students are expected to

- Pay attention in class and not disrupt the work in progress
- Do homework, both written and oral, each night for all subjects
- Keep an account each day in the student diary of homework given
- Keep the student diary in a neat and tidy condition and have it signed each week by parents/guardians and class teacher.

College Uniform

- Full college uniform should be worn at all times while attending college or on college related activities (full details of required uniform are issued to parents/guardians)
- Uniform should be clean, neat and tidy.

Jewellery

Only the following items of jewellery may be worn

- A watch
- One ring
- One pair of stud earrings
- **No facial jewellery may be worn.**
- Cosmetic make-up is not allowed

Mobile Phones

- Mobile phones may only be in a student's possession during lunchtime i.e. between 12.20pm and 1.20 pm
- At all other times they should be kept securely locked in student's locker.
- The college cannot accept responsibility for loss of, or damage to, mobile phones at any time.
- In cases of emergency students will be allowed use the college phone to contact parents/guardians.
- **Mobile phones with photographic capability are strictly forbidden and under no circumstances should such a phone be brought to the college.**

This Code may be adapted at short notice to meet unforeseen developments

I have read the above rules and regulations, I understand them and I agree to make all reasonable efforts to comply with them.

Signed (Student) Date.....

Signed (Parent/Guardian) Date

Discipline Structure

Stage 1 – Subject Teacher

Each subject teacher will record incidences of misconduct, failure to do homework satisfactorily, test results etc **in student's diary and student record book.**

Stage 2 – Class Tutor

Students having three such entries will be required to meet with the class tutor who will

1. speak with student, discuss the situation and encourage him/her to act in a more positive manner.
2. remind student that any further misdemeanour will result in an appearance before college disciplinary committee.
3. arrange to **notify parents in writing** (standard letter) that (s)he has spoken to student as a result of diary entries. (Copy of letter to student's file)

Stage 2 (a)

Repeated failure to present **homework, bring books, copies to class** will result in referral to Deputy Principal who may then contact parents/guardians to discuss the matter with a view to jointly agreeing a strategy to improve the student's application to school work.

Matters of misconduct will be dealt with by referral to Discipline Committee (Stage3)

Stage 3 – College Disciplinary Committee

Any further unfavourable entry in student's diary / record book will result in appearance before College Disciplinary Committee (CDC). Teacher making such entry should record same in filing system. The CDC will

1. speak to the student and make recommendations as to possible sanctions e.g. yellow sheet, red sheet, meeting with parents or other, as deemed appropriate.
2. **notify parents, in writing**, (standard letter) that student has appeared before committee. (Copy of letter to student's file)

Stage 4 – Deputy Principal

Any further report of unsatisfactory behaviour will result in student being met by Deputy Principal.

The Deputy Principal will

1. suitably reprimand student
2. encourage him/her to be more responsible
3. administer appropriate sanction (cf. separate list of possible sanctions)
4. notify parents, in writing, (standard letter) that (s)he has spoken to student. (Copy of letter to student's file)

Stage 5 – Principal

If, having gone through the previous stages the student incurs another unfavourable report (s)he will be spoken to by the Principal. The student at this stage will be deemed to be in serious breach of the college code of behaviour.

Stage 6 – Board of Management

Where a student fails to respond satisfactorily to the above measures, or where a student's behaviour is such that it seriously impacts negatively on the smooth running of the school or where it is threat to the progress, welfare or safety of the school community it may be deemed necessary to refer the student to the Board of Management for consideration of his/her continued attendance at the school.

Any of the above stages can be bypassed due to serious misdemeanour.

Student's Name _____

Class _____

Date _____

Dear

Due to the number of unfavourable comments from teachers in your son's /
daughter's diary I, as Class Tutor, have spoken to him/her today. Please note that any
further unfavourable diary entry will result in him/her being referred to the College
Discipline Committee or the Deputy Principal.

Yours sincerely

Class Tutor

Student's Name _____

Class _____

Date _____

Dear

Your son/daughter has already been spoken to by his/her Class Tutor due to a number of unfavourable diary entries. Unfortunately (s)he is still not performing satisfactorily and as a result of further complaints (s)he appeared today before the College Discipline Committee.

Accordingly the College Discipline Committee has recommended that the following sanctions be imposed.

Yours sincerely

College Discipline Committee

Student's Name _____

Class _____

Date _____

Dear

Your son/daughter has already been spoken to by his/her Class Tutor and has also appeared before the College Discipline Committee.

Due to further reports of his/her unsatisfactory conduct I spoke to him/her today.

As (s)he has failed to respond positively to previous reprimands and punishments the following sanctions will now be imposed.

Please speak to your son/daughter and encourage him/her to improve his/her behaviour and thus avoid any more serious consequences.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M. O Donnell
Deputy Principal