



St. Benildus College

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR



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RATIONALE

The principles underpinning this policy have been approved by the Board of Management and are in accordance with “Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools”, published by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in May 2008 and reflects, insofar as they are applicable to St. Benildus College, the good practices and guiding principles as set out in the NEWB document.

VISION

Bearing the school mission statement in mind, the Code of Behaviour in St. Benildus College aims to have a code of behaviour that is underpinned by respect and kindness and enables staff and students to work together in harmony. The Code aims to ensure students reach their full potential. The emphasis is on personal responsibility, and it is the aim of this Code that we, as a school community, create an environment that is pleasant and harmonious to ensure that teaching and learning can be maximised with excellent discipline structures that focus on positivity rather than negativity.

This policy operates alongside all of our existing policies and should be read concurrently with our school’s Acceptable User Policy (AUP), Social Media Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Data Protection Policy and Child Protection Policy.

INTRODUCTION

This Code of Behaviour is the result of a co-operative effort by the school community of St. Benildus College; the students, parents/guardians and teachers. On the understanding that good order and discipline are necessary life skills and important foundations for learning, it is the aim of the Code to affirm these and support the principles of respect and tolerance that have been, and are the cornerstone of, the characteristic spirit of St. Benildus.

St. Benildus College is a La Sallian School, and in keeping with the philosophy and vision of St. John Baptiste de La Salle, is a Christian community that has, as its aims, the spiritual formation, academic preparation and cultural development of its pupils.

St. Benildus College aims to create an environment which recognises and respects the dignity of each individual and which fosters attitudes of tolerance, concern for justice and of social responsibility.

The key to successful understanding of the Code is respect:

- Respect for Self
- Respect for others
- Respect for Property
- Respect for the Environment.

The Code of Behaviour aims to:

- Enable students to develop their talents to the full by providing a balanced, challenging curriculum which fosters intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical growth.
- Guarantee justice and fairness to all members of the school community and protect staff, students and school property.
- Foster an atmosphere which promotes self-esteem, kindness, honesty, justice and respect for others.
- Create a safe, healthy learning environment that nurtures self-discipline and encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Promote co-operation, respect, kindness and commitment within St. Benildus College so that all are unified as partners in learning for life.
- Advise students that they are expected to play a full part in school life and activities and affirm and reward good behaviour.

Students of St. Benildus College are expected to observe the Code of Behaviour at all times while on school property, while travelling to or from school and while attending any school activity including school trips, sporting and cultural events. While wearing the college uniform, students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with standards set by St. Benildus College.

It is intended that the Code will allow all staff and students to work to their full potential, secure in the knowledge that each member of the school community is valued and treated with kindness and respect. If procedures, rewards and sanctions are clear then standards are more attainable.

The Role of Parents/Guardians

The support and cooperation of parents and guardians are essential to the effective operation of the Code of Behaviour. Offers of places in the school are conditional on acceptance of the Code of Behaviour by the parents/guardians of an applicant. In accordance with Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, if the parent/guardian does not accept the Code of Behaviour and does not agree to support the school's efforts to ensure compliance with the Code, the school will not enrol the applicant as a student in the school. The Code is updated annually, and parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with the Code each year. The Code is available on our website.

It is policy to keep parents/guardians informed before problems escalate. Parents/guardians are invited to keep in touch with the Yearhead regarding all aspects of the student's progress in school. Parents/Guardians wishing to consult with members of staff should do so by means of a pre-arranged appointment at a mutually convenient time.

1. POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

St. Benildus College recognises that this Code of Behaviour is not and should not be merely a list of rules and sanctions. It encourages a commitment to follow and contribute creatively to kindness, group enterprise, teamwork, respect and caring. It is the policy of St. Benildus College to reward positive contributions made to school life, to recognise and reinforce good standards of behaviour and effort.

- Teachers praise effort and positive behaviour as part of their teaching strategy.
- Recognition and praise for individual and group achievements during interaction with students.
- Acknowledgement and praise for individual and group achievements via PA announcements.
- Commendations on VShare
- Highlighting the positive at year group assemblies.
- Display of students' work in public areas around the school.
- Highlighting the positive at parent/guardian meetings.
- Election/appointment to leadership roles including Student Representative Council, TY Peer Mentors, Sport Mentors, Prefects, etc.
- Recognition of individual or group achievements in St. Benildus College Yearbook, the school website and school app.
- Annual awards events are designed to recognise and reward both achievement and effort in all areas of school life.

Student Supports

The first priority of the management and staff of St. Benildus College is to ensure that all students are happy, content and fulfilled during their time at our school. There is a comprehensive support system of personnel and structures to assist all students who may be experiencing difficulties inside and outside of school. These include:

- Mentors (Teacher, Academic, LGBTQ+ and TY Mentors)
- Class Tutors
- Class Teachers
- Learning Support/Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Teachers
- AEN Team
- Guidance Counsellor
- Psychotherapist
- Yearheads
- Student Support Team
- Senior Leadership Team

2. REGULAR ATTENDANCE

In line with the attendance strategy of St. Benildus College, students are expected to attend as per school calendar. Full attendance helps students to achieve academic goals and to benefit from all the schools activities and services.

Parents/Guardians should send absence/late/early leaving notes through the school app.

Attendance of all students will be monitored through VS Ware roll calls. Texts will be sent to parents

- to alert them to their son's absence. Spot checks will also be carried out on all classes on a regular basis.

Students in Junior Cycle are not permitted to leave the College grounds during break times.

Any student who needs to leave school early must have permission from their parent/guardian through a note on the school app and sign out through the office. Leaving school without permission is a serious breach of school rules.

3. PUNCTUALITY

Daily attendance is essential to meet the high academic standards of St. Benildus College. Students are expected to be on time for school and for each class. Coming late to class disrupts teaching and learning. Students are expected to be in school at 8.15 a.m. to start at 8.25 a.m. Texts will be sent to parents to alert them to their son's lateness and/or absence. An evening detention is the first sanction for late coming. Persistent late coming may incur further sanctions.

All students who are late **must** sign in at the office. Failure to sign in when arriving late for school is a breach of school rules and will result in a sanction.

Persistent lateness to any class during the school day may result in a sanction.

The school is bound by law to record a student's attendance record and inform the Education Welfare Board if a pupil has been suspended for more than six days or if a pupil has been absent for 20 days.

4. WORK ETHIC

Students are expected to be prepared for, and to work in, each class. They should have all necessary textbooks and class materials as indicated by their teachers. Students should only have the books for the relevant classes on their desk. Students should complete classwork and homework on time and be prepared and present for all tests and examinations. A good work ethic enables the student to contribute to the class and to be successful. They are important for success in endeavours after secondary school. The college provides each student with a student diary at the beginning of the year. Students are expected to keep it in their possession and treat it with care and respect. The diary functions as a vital link between home and college. Teachers may use the diary to communicate information such as test results and in-class behaviour to parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should sign the diary on a weekly basis. Spot checks will be carried out on a regular basis. Students should note that their diary is not private and should not contain personal or sensitive information. Diaries should not be defaced in any way. Forging parents'/guardians signatures in the diary will be treated as a serious breach of school rules.

5. ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to submit work which is original and represents their own efforts. Students will derive maximum benefit from school and education by making an honest effort to achieve the course objectives. Plagiarism, including the use of AI without referencing, is a serious offence at all levels of academia. It is unacceptable and may be subject to sanction. Please refer to our Acceptable User Policy (AUP) and Social Media Policy for further information.

6. PERSONAL SAFETY

In the application of this Code of Behaviour, it is necessary to recognise the need to balance the interests of the individual student with the overall safety and general welfare of all students and the rest of the school community. This Code recognises the right to learn in a safe environment of all students in St. Benildus College.

Students are expected to show respect for the personal safety of themselves and others at all times. Students are not permitted to engage in unruly behaviour of any description including horse play, fighting, running through public areas, or engaging in conduct potentially harmful to themselves or others. Videoing, recording or taking photographs of another person (staff or student) without their knowledge is an invasion of privacy and any student doing so may face suspension. Posting or liking an offensive message, image or statement on a social network site or public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and / or repeated by other people will be regarded as a

serious breach of the Code of Behaviour. Any student involved in such as incident in any capacity whether as instigator, recorder or promoter, or has any engagement with the content, will be subject to a sanction.

7. BULLYING AND RESPECT FOR SELF AND OTHERS

Respect and kindness are at the core of the ethos of St. Benildus College and all members of the school community have the right to be treated with dignity and courtesy. St. Benildus College seeks to affirm the worth and dignity of all members of the school community and are committed to creating an environment free from intimidation, oppression and abuse. Each member of the school community is expected to treat others as they would like to be treated. Students should not engage in any activity that could be interpreted by others as harassment, intimidation or bullying.

In line with The Equal Status Acts (2000-2008) which prohibits discrimination and harassment on nine grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community discriminatory behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in St. Benildus College

Bullying can have short and long term effects on the physical and mental well-being of pupils, on their engagement with school, on self-confidence and on the ability to pursue ambitions and interests.

Harassment, which is any unwelcome behaviour (including physical intimidation, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, any identity based bullying including LGBTQ+ phobic behaviour and racism) that interferes with the well-being of any member of our school community, will not be tolerated. The school anti-bullying policy forms part of this Code of Behaviour.

8. STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

St. Benildus College is an inclusive school and some of our students have additional educational needs. Students with additional educational needs may not be able to predict consequences as easily as their peers and so may be vulnerable. The Code of Behaviour applies to them, but they will be helped to understand and observe the Code. In the event of a serious breach of discipline involving a student with additional educational needs, their needs will be considered before any decisions are made or sanctions imposed.

9. RESPECT FOR STAFF AUTHORITY

A positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships and this ethos is promoted in St. Benildus College. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion and sense of community within the school.

Students are expected to be respectful, truthful and mannerly to all staff and visitors to St. Benildus College. Staff includes teachers, SNAs, office staff, caretakers, bus drivers and all auxiliary staff.

Disrespect and defiance to any member of staff, permanent or substitute, will be viewed as a very serious breach of discipline. It may warrant immediate withdrawal from class and may include suspension and interview with parents/guardians.

10. RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

Students are expected to treat all school property, staff property and personal property with care and respect. A school in good repair is a safe place and conducive to learning. Specific rules and regulations governing school equipment in specialist areas such as Science laboratories, Woodwork, Technical Drawing, Art, computer rooms, the school Library, as well as all sports facilities, must be adhered to.

Students are encouraged to take pride in the school and its environment. The throwing of litter is prohibited, and graffiti will not be tolerated. Chewing gum is forbidden all around the school.

Pupils found defacing or damaging school property may be required to pay for the costs incurred by the school and their parents/ guardians will be contacted.

The stealing of books, clothing or any personal goods is a serious matter and will be subject to disciplinary procedures up to and including expulsion. Theft is a crime and if the school authorities consider it appropriate it may be reported to the Gardaí.

In the interest of the general body of the school community, it may be necessary at times to search a student's locker or property during the investigation of a particular issue – for example, theft or substance abuse. Students are entitled to the same personal rights, right of privacy and defence of human dignity as anyone else. Accordingly, a search of the schoolbag, locker or personal property of a particular student may be undertaken if:

- The Principal, Deputy Principals or Year Heads, determine that there is sufficient evidence to suggest the student may be responsible for a serious breach of school rules.
- Another person of authority (e.g., member of staff) is present.

The school also reserves the right to confiscate a student's phone where it is necessary to prevent the distribution of inappropriate images or content.

11. SMOKING AND VAPING

Smoking is forbidden by law (The Tobacco Regulations 1995 and Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002) throughout all buildings and on school property including all sports facilities. The use and/or possession of nicotine products, vaping products and e-cigarettes is also strictly forbidden. In addition, trading cigarettes/tobacco/nicotine products/vaping equipment or e-cigarettes is not permitted. These rules also apply in the vicinity of St. Benildus College or wherever boys are together as a recognisable St. Benildus group. It is our hope that students will respect their own health and the health of others and not smoke/vape at all.

12. ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

St. Benildus College views with deep concern the culture and abuse of alcohol among people of all ages, including the young, in Ireland. This section of the policy is drawn up in line with the following current legislation:

- The Education Act with its emphasis on the social and personal development of the students including healthy living.
- The National Drugs Strategy 2017-2025
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1977 and 1984
- Tobacco Regulations 1995 and Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002

Students are not permitted in any circumstances to come to school under the influence of or in possession of alcohol or prohibited drugs. The school authorities may, with parental consent, test for substance abuse while students are under the care of the College. Students, who use, possess or traffic in alcohol or prohibited drugs, while under the care of the school, will be immediately suspended and may be permanently excluded from St. Benildus College.

Habitual alcohol or prohibited drug use is incompatible with general well-being and academic success. Possession and trafficking in illegal drugs are against the law. The Substance Abuse Policy forms part of this Code of Behaviour.

13. USE OF COMPUTER FACILITIES

As outlined in the Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) of St. Benildus College students are expected to use computers and computer networks solely for the purposes of education and academic research.

Students can only use the school Wi-Fi when using ICT in school under teachers' supervision.

Students must not tamper with or reconfigure any computer hardware or software without permission of a teacher.

The College has a responsibility to parents/guardians and to the community to ensure that computers and computer networks are used to further the aims of education and that students do not misuse electronic mail or have access to internet sites that violate any aspect of this Code of Behaviour.

Students should not use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the purpose of bullying, insulting or defaming a fellow student, a teacher or any other member of staff associated with the College and/or bringing the college into disrepute in any fashion. The AUP Policy forms part of this Code of Behaviour.

14. LUNCHTIME

- **The College Code of Behaviour applies fully at break and lunch time.**
- All Junior students must remain on the College campus during the lunch break (1st Years 12:10 -12:50; 2nd & 3rd Years 12:50 – 1:30)
- Students are not allowed unsupervised access to any part of the College.
- The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and TY corridors are out of bounds during lunch break for students, except when teachers request otherwise.
- Students are not permitted to venture into the trees/undergrowth on the College grounds under any circumstances.
- There are many extra-curricular activities organised at lunch time and students are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities. The use of the gym and all-weather pitch at lunch time is governed by health and safety considerations. Numbers using these facilities will be restricted for these reasons. Appropriate footwear/gear must be worn. Rough or dangerous play will result in permission to use these facilities being rescinded.
- Senior students are permitted to leave the school grounds to visit the three specified local shops that are in the immediate vicinity of the College. It is made clear to students that only these three shops can be visited.
- Senior students are not permitted to loiter or gather in groups in the various laneways in the vicinity of the school.
- Students should respect the local community and should not litter the area.

- All students are expected to be back in their classrooms 5 minutes before the end of the break so that they can adequately prepare for their afternoon classes.
- If a student has an unplanned afternoon absence the school office should be alerted by phone to that fact on the afternoon in question and the student's parent/guardian must furnish a note to the Yearhead via the app.
- Students must queue in an orderly fashion at the canteen. When the students have eaten their lunch all waste and litter should be put in the nearest bin.
- Breaches of these rules may result in sanctions being applied.

The College encourages healthy eating as part of our Wellbeing programme. The following foodstuffs/drinks are prohibited for student consumption: chewing/bubble gum, minerals or fizzy drinks high in caffeine/sugar, so-called 'energy drinks' (Red Bull, Boost, Monster drinks etc.). Such items are subject to confiscation. The interpretation of school management as to what constitutes contraband foodstuffs/drinks is final.

15. OUTSIDE SCHOOL

When outside the school on trips or outings or in any situation where students are recognisable as being members of St. Benildus College, they are expected at all times to maintain high standards of consideration for others and, through their conduct and good manners, maintain the good name of St. Benildus College. They must comply with all specific and all reasonable requirements laid down by those in charge as well as complying with any other rules or regulations set down by the venue being visited. The Board of Management stresses that any behaviour by a student of St. Benildus College which takes place off the school premises, on a trip or tour, or outside the school day but which impacts in a serious and negative way on other members of the school community is covered by the Code of Behaviour and comes within the remit of the Board. Such behaviours include:

- Verbal attacks on or attempts to intimidate any member of the school community
- Theft, damage to or interference with the property of any member of the school community.
- Intimidation or bullying of another student which impacts on the well-being of the student. This includes the use of mobile phones and network sites for this purpose.
- Involvement in the use, handling distribution or sale of illegal materials.
- Involvement in any illegal activity.

Note: Where a student has engaged in serious misbehaviour outside school, when not under the care or responsibility of the school, a judgement will be made that if there is a clear connection with the school and a demonstrable impact on the school community as outlined above, the Code of Behaviour will apply.

16. UNOFFICIAL SCHOOL EVENTS

Students are not permitted to buy or sell tickets or promote externally organised events, during school time, in the school building or on any part of the school campus or online.

St. Benildus College does not encourage or endorse any events organised under the school name (e.g., Pre –Debs) that does not have the approval of the school authorities.

17. UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE

The St. Benildus College uniform creates a sense of school identity and pride for the boys. In addition, the uniform is economical and removes undue pressure, distraction and competitiveness in the school community.

All students must purchase the full school uniform, including the college jacket. The correct wearing of the school uniform during school hours and going to and from school is a strict requirement. This also applies to school trips and during extra-curricular activities as required. In order to acknowledge the transition from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle and to emphasise the role those senior students play in acting as role models to junior students the uniform for senior students differs from the uniform for junior students.

St. Benildus College Junior Uniform

- Grey College jumper
- Plain grey formal trousers (skinny jeans or tapered trousers are not permitted and trousers must be worn at waist level)
- Plain grey shirt
- College tie
- Black formal shoes (runners/sports shoes/canvas shoes are not permitted)
- Junior College jacket (no other jackets or hoodies are permitted)

Note: 3rd Year students who have outgrown their Junior jacket during the school year are permitted to wear a Senior jacket. **THIS APPLIES TO 3RD YEARS ONLY.**

St. Benildus College Senior Uniform

- Black College jumper
- Plain black formal trousers (skinny jeans or tapered trousers are not permitted and trousers must be worn at waist level)
- Plain white shirt
- College tie
- Black formal shoes (runners/sports shoes/canvas shoes are not permitted)
- Senior College jacket for all senior students - 4th, 5th and 6th Years.
- **TY Students only:** The TY hoodie, a P.E. crested top and school-crested black track pants can only be worn on Wednesdays & Fridays for TY activities and as sanctioned by the TY Coordinator

Physical Education Uniform

- The St. Benildus College P.E. uniform must be worn for P.E. classes and TY students must wear crested P.E. top and crested black track pants.
- The P.E. uniform is available from KC Sports

It is important that students maintain the highest standards of appearance in class, inside the College grounds and when coming to and from the College. **Full uniform must be worn when travelling to or from the College.** This also applies to school trips and extra-curricular activities.

All items of uniform should be labelled with the student's name (ideally on the inside of the item of uniform).

In the event of a Non-Uniform Day, students must wear appropriate clothing. The school reserves the right to determine what is appropriate.

In the case of a foot injury requiring the wearing of runners, students must have a doctor's/specialist note, countersigned by the Principal/Deputy Principals prior to admittance to class.

Hairstyle should be neat, tidy and properly maintained. In the interests of hygiene, and for health and safety reasons, long hair must be tied back. Shaved heads are not permitted. Symbols/designs cut into hair are not allowed, e.g., tracking. Unnatural hair colours are not permitted. Extreme hairstyles will not be permitted.

The wearing of jewellery should be viewed in the context of the College policy of requiring a high standard of appearance at all times. The wearing of earrings and facial jewellery is not permitted.

Makeup and/or nail varnish are not permitted.

Tattoos must not be visible.

Plain black or brown belts can only be worn. No adornments permitted on belts.

Protective clothing and goggles must be worn as instructed in practical classes.

In all cases, the College authorities are the judges of acceptable standards of appearance

18. MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL AUDIO EQUIPMENT

Mobile phones have become a part of everyday life and while we recognize the safety and communication benefits of students having mobile phones, we strongly encourage them not to bring mobile phones to school unless absolutely necessary. It is extremely important that young people learn to use them appropriately. Mobile phones as well as being used to make calls or send texts can take/send pictures, videos, record, e-mail, download from the internet, access social networking sites and also contain games. Some of these uses are not appropriate to schools and therefore the following school rules apply to mobile phones:

- **Phones must be switched off before entering the school grounds.**
- The phone **should remain switched off until the student leaves the school grounds-**unseen, unheard.
- At certain times students may, with a teacher's permission, be allowed to have their mobile phones/devices switched on. This would include under teacher supervision in order to undertake a learning experience in class, while travelling away with a school group or on a school tour/ excursion.
- Students who need to contact a parent/guardian need to go to the office and ask the secretary to make the call.
- Parents/Guardians should not call or text their children during the school day. Contact at any time can be made through the school office.
- Students must take personal responsibility for their phones if they bring them to school.
- Students should only use the school Wi-Fi when permitted to use phones/devices under teacher supervision on the school premises.

Students found using mobile phones or other personal devices (unless under the direction of the teacher) will incur a sanction:

- 1) The phone/device will be confiscated. Parents/Guardians will have to collect the phone/device in Reception. There will be a fine of €10 imposed on the collection of the phone/device, in addition to a detention.
- 2) If a student is found using a mobile phone or personal device (unless under the direction of the teacher) a second time, the above applies with a fine of €20 imposed on the collection of the phone/device, in addition to a detention.
- 3) Subsequent breaches of this rule will be regarded as a very serious breach of the Code and further sanctions will be imposed.

Any money collected will be used for school facilities with a percentage given to our RFL charities.

Audio/camera/video recording:

The use of the audio, camera or video recording functions of these devices is not permitted at any time while in the College, on the College campus or when students are travelling to and from the College. This also applies to school trips and extra-curricular activities. Any inappropriate use of audio, camera or video recordings during school time or activities will result in a serious sanction, which may include a suspension.

- At St. Benildus College pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without expressed permission from staff.
- Taking photos or videos on school grounds or when participating in school activities is only allowed with expressed permission from staff.
- Care should be taken when taking photographic or video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- Pupils must not share images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside.
- Sharing of images or doctored images of any member of the school community is an unacceptable and absolutely prohibited behaviour and will have serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.
- Sharing explicit images of other pupils will incur a sanction up to and including expulsion.

Digital and Electronic Devices

Laser pens, MP3 players, I-pods and other electronic devices are not permitted. All devices capable of recording voice/sound, devices capable of emitting sound and devices capable of emitting light beams or images must not be used during the school day. All handheld game consoles and other such gaming devices are also banned from school life and all school related activities. All students must abide by the school's AUP (Acceptable User Policy). Students are permitted to use the school's ICT equipment for educational purposes only. Students must not use ICT equipment to create, convey or generate (i.e., print or any other means) obscene or unsuitable material. In accordance with the Acceptable User Policy, students may use the internet for educational purposes only. Students who are found to be in breach of the ICT acceptable usage policy will face sanctions. The sharing of inappropriate images of oneself or another student is unacceptable and is absolutely prohibited behaviour with serious consequences and sanctions for those involved.

19. BICYCLES AND MOTOR VEHICLES

The College encourages students to walk or cycle to/from school. Students who use bicycles/scooters must dismount before entering the school premises. Helmets should be worn by all cyclists/scooter users. Students should not carry another student on the crossbar or frame of their bicycles, on or off the school premises, as this could be dangerous for both parties involved.

Regulations under the Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023 were commenced on May 20th 2024 with regards to e-scooters and e-bikes. E-bikes will be treated the same as bicycles and will be permitted to use cycle lanes and bus lanes but will not be permitted for use on footpaths.

E-scooters are not permitted on the school premises under any circumstances. Breaches of this rule will be considered a serious breach of the Code.

Students are prohibited from driving any motor propelled vehicle into or within the school grounds or on school-related activities except in the case of a senior student who has the prior permission of the school authorities to drive a specific vehicle. Any injury or damage caused by or to a student's car whilst on school premises is a matter for the vehicle owners own motor insurance. The use of the specified vehicle will be subject to the conditions as laid down by the school authorities, e.g. to park their car in a designated place/area.

In addition, it is important to note;

- The school makes car spaces available only as a concession.
- The school does not make a charge for such spaces.
- The school does not undertake to safeguard the vehicles whilst parked.

Therefore, cars parked on the school grounds are parked at the owners own risk.

20. BENILDUS BE ALL PLASTIC FREE

We endeavour to make the College an eco-friendlier environment by banning the use of single-use plastic bottles. We promote the use of our St. Benildus College reusable bottle. Students who use single-use plastic bottles are in breach of the Code of Behaviour and may incur a sanction.

21. THE BOOK SCHEME

All schoolbooks under this scheme remain the property of the school and are on loan to students. The schoolbooks must be returned at the end of the school year/at the end of Junior Cycle/Leaving Certificate or if the student leaves the school. It is important that schoolbooks are kept in good condition so they can be reused. Parents/guardians are responsible for replacing any lost or damaged books.

22. GENERAL SANCTIONS

The school may apply a range of sanctions appropriate to the circumstances and seriousness of each individual case. These are tiered in nature to ensure a just and equitable approach that respects the dignity of all involved and depends on the seriousness of the breach of discipline in question.

Sanctions are necessary to support expected standards of behaviour. The Board of Management views such sanctions as corrective supports rather than punishment. The purpose is to promote positive behaviour and a safe learning environment for the whole school community, based on respect for all. In its approach to supporting good learning behaviour and responding to inappropriate behaviour the College authorities follow the guidelines issued by The National Educational Welfare Board 2008.

Sanctions will be:

- Appropriate.
- Proportionate.
- Used consistently.
- Clearly communicated.
- Part of a plan to change behaviour.
- Based on the principles of natural justice.

Sanctions may include the following:

- Extra work
- Tuesday and/or Friday and/or Saturday detention
- Withdrawal from class for whole school days or part thereof.
- Exclusion from school events, school trips, graduations, Debs, etc.

This list is not exhaustive.

Most students behave appropriately, with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional minor misbehaviour should be attended to effectively by the class teacher. The teacher is the most important person in developing a friendly open atmosphere with mutual respect between teacher and student. The teacher is responsible for discipline within the class and will attempt to modify behaviour to ensure a positive, happy, learning environment within the classroom.

The accepted procedure for dealing with discipline issues include:

- Meeting and discussion with student.
- Verbal warning.
- Additional class work or homework.
- Move within classroom.
- Communication with parents/guardians
- Report to Year Head for persistent misbehaviour or a once off serious incident.

The Year Head has overall responsibility for the students in the Year group and serious incidents and recurring minor misbehaviour concerning any student will be referred to the Year Head. The Year Head will decide on a course of action which may include one or a combination of the following procedures:

- Meeting and discussion with student.
- Referred for Guidance /Counselling which may involve a Behaviour Modification Programme.
- Contact with parents/guardians.
- On Report.
- Tuesday and/or Friday after school detention.
- Saturday morning detention.
- Referral to the relevant Deputy Principal.

In serious situations the Principal/Deputy Principal may be directly involved from the outset. The accepted procedures at this stage include:

- Meeting and discussion with student.
- Meeting and discussion with parents/guardians.
- Referral to Guidance/Counselling which may involve a Behaviour Modification Programme.
- A Council of Discipline Meeting to determine the sanction
- Detention (See Appendix 1)
- Withdrawal from class for whole school days or part there of.
- Suspension – Internal or out of College (See Appendix 2)
- Referral to the Board of Management with recommendation for expulsion (See Appendix 3)

Mary Brohan
Principal/Secretary of the Board of Management

22-9-26
Date

Decl Moulds
Chairperson of the Board of Management

22-9-26
Date

APPENDIX 1: DETENTION

1. Detention is a fundamental element of our Disciplinary Structure, and it is essential that the College receives the support of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) in this matter.
2. Failure to attend a detention will lead to further sanctions. Subsequent failure to attend will lead to a more serious sanction.
3. **In exceptional circumstances** permission to defer a detention must be sought and received from the student's Year Head in advance of the detention. The detention will be rescheduled at the discretion of the Year Head.
4. Failure to fulfil a detention properly e.g., not wearing full school uniform, being late, lack of work, misbehaviour will not be accepted. At a minimum, this will result in the detention being fulfilled properly at a future date.

APPENDIX 2: PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION

Policy:

In St. Benildus College all students have the right to learn in an orderly and caring environment. All students, teachers and other members of the College community have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment and discrimination.

In certain cases of unacceptable behaviour, it may be in the best interests of the school community and the student involved that the student is removed from class or the school for a period of time. The Principal has the authority, under the Articles of Management for Secondary Schools to suspend any pupil for a limited period.

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that has caused concern. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious misconduct or serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

The purpose of suspension is:

- To make clear to the student that his behaviour is seriously unacceptable.
- To allow him to reflect, in consultation with parents/guardians, on his response to the situation.
- To help the student realise that even more serious consequences may ensue if his behaviour is not modified.

Procedure:

When a decision to suspend is reached parents/guardians will be notified by phone and written confirmation will follow. The letter will indicate the reason for suspension, the commencement date and the length of suspension. Parents/guardians will be informed of their right to appeal the suspension to the school authorities or to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (if the total number of days for which a student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty day). The College is obliged to inform the National Education Welfare Board if the suspension is longer than six days or if the student has been suspended for a cumulative total of more than twenty days during a school year.

Appeals:

The appeals process will at all times follow the principles of natural justice. Parents/guardians and the student will be made aware of the details relating to the behaviour which resulted in the decision to suspend. An internal appeal may be made to the Principal who may recommend that a subcommittee of the Board of Management be appointed to facilitate an early decision. The decision of the Board will be communicated in writing to the appellants. If dissatisfied the appellants have the right to appeal to the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

The grounds for removal of a suspension may include:

- Successful appeal to the Principal or Board of Management.
- Successful appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- New circumstances come to light.
- An alternative strategy being agreed in consultation with parents / guardians.

Procedures for return to College:

The College may request agreed conditions for the formal reintroduction of the student into the College. e.g.

- Attendance at counselling.
- Undertakings of good behaviour.
- Other pastoral supports.
- On report for a defined period of time.

All students returning from suspension will be required to attend at least one appointment at the Guidance/Counselling Office.

APPENDIX 3: PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION

Policy:

The Board of Management of a recognised secondary school has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step and is one which will only be taken by the Board in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of other students or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the College constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of others in the school community.
- The student is responsible for serious breaches of the College Code of Behaviour.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. This would arise when a student was involved in a significant breach of the College Code of Behaviour such as:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supply or possession of illegal substances in the school or when on school related activities.
- Sexual assault or harassment.

Procedure:

The College authorities will follow fair procedure when proposing to expel a student. The steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. In line with fair procedures and natural justice the Principal will inform the student and his parents/guardians about the details of the alleged misbehaviour and that it could result in expulsion. The student and parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour. Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the alleged misbehaviour.
The Principal at this stage may decide to suspend the student in accordance with the provisions of the Education Welfare Act 2000 if, in her opinion, such an action is appropriate to ensure the good order and discipline are maintained and that the safety of students is served.
2. Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal will make a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The student and parents/guardians will be notified of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and will be invited to that hearing. Parents/guardians will be advised of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management at the hearing.
The Board meeting for the purpose of the hearing will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures. At the hearing the Principal and the parents or a student aged eighteen years or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence. After both sides have been heard the Board should ensure that the Principal and parents are not present for the Board's deliberations. It is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
3. Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled the Board will inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing of the intention to expel a student. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives the written notification. The Board may delegate authority to the Principal to suspend the student during the passage of these twenty days where it considers the student's continued presence in the College constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety of others in the school community.
4. Where the twenty day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents/guardians should be notified immediately that the expulsion will proceed and of their right to appeal the decision 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 (at regular intervals) the College Policy and Procedures for Expulsion. This review will ensure that the Policy and Procedures are consistent with College ethos and Code of Behaviour and that expulsion is used