

# **St. Catherine's Senior Girls' School**

**Ratoath Road, Cabra West, Dublin 7, D07045.**

## ***Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers & Visitors***

## Overview

At St. Catherine's Senior Girls' School, we are very proud and fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive school community. At our school the Board of Management, the staff, the parents/guardians and caregivers all recognise that the education of the children is a partnership between us.

We expect our school staff and community to respect our school ethos, keep our school tidy, set a good example of their own behaviour both on school premises and when accompanying classes on school visits.

In addition, we also expect our parents, carers and visitors to keep our children safe by adhering to the school's request to park safely outside the school gates during morning and afternoon collections. Please note the yellow lines (zig-zag lines) are a no parking zone. Parking in this area create a significant safety risk for the learners of our school.

As a partnership, we are all aware of the importance of good working relationships and we all recognise the importance of these relationships to equip our children with the necessary skills for their education. For these reasons we will continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide the expectations around the conduct of all parents, carers and visitors connected to our school:

1. We are committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner, through an open and positive dialogue framed by Restorative Practice methodologies. However, we understand that everyday misunderstandings can cause frustrations and have a negative impact on our relationships. Where issues arise or misconceptions take place, please contact your child's teacher first (and the principal as a second step), who will be available to meet with you and go through the issue and hopefully resolve it. Where issues remain unresolved, please follow the school's complaints procedure. This is available on request from the school office.
2. This code aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental agreement to these expectations.
3. The code of conduct also sets out the actions the school can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

### **Behaviour that will not be tolerated:**

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's normal operation or activities anywhere on the school premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or child.
- Damaging or destroying school property.

- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the school community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the school on social media websites or other sites
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards your own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on school premises.
- Dogs being brought on to the school premises. (other than guide dogs)

Should **any** of the above occur on school premises or in connection with school, the school may feel it is necessary to take action by contacting the appropriate authorities or consider banning the offending adult from entering the school premises and grounds.

### **What happens if someone ignores or breaks the code?**

In the event of any parent/carer or visitor of the school breaking, this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows:

- In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter, the concerns will in the first instance be referred to the Gardai.
- This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child or staff member in the school.
- This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the school community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying.
- In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander, then the school will refer the matter to the Catholic Primary School Management Association Legal Team for further action.
- In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, then the school will issue a formal invitation to the parent/carer to meet with the School Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting then the school will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not, they may be banned from the school premises (entry to school grounds beyond the main gates).
- If after this behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.

**Note:**

- (1) A ban from the school premises can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.
- (2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.
- (3) If a site ban is in place, it will be reviewed after a suitable period of reflection by all parties. The safety and wellbeing of the school's pupils and staff will be the key deciding consideration when reviewing the ban.
- (4) A site ban in place for either St. Catherine's Senior Girls' School or St. Catherine's Infant School will be observed by both schools should the parent, guardian or caregiver have a child/children attending both schools.

**Issues of conduct with the use of social media**

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected.

The school uses both a school website and an Instagram account to share news of school events and information for parents. We encourage you to positively engage with both if you wish.

Within these spaces however we ask that you use common sense when discussing school life online.

**'Think before you post'.** We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents or children.

We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, member of staff or child.

If parents have any concerns about their child in relation to the school as we have said above, they should:

1. Initially contact the class teacher
2. If the concern remains, they should contact the Principal
3. If still unresolved, the Board of Management through the Complaints Procedure

They should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

**Online activity which we consider inappropriate:**

- Identifying or posting images/audio/videos of children or staff
- Abusive or personal comments about children, staff or other parents

- Bringing the school into disrepute
- Posting defamatory or libellous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching school security procedures

In our school, the wellbeing and safety of the learners and staff are paramount. Any breach of the code will be addressed appropriately in line with the actions outlined above.

Thank you for abiding by this code in our school. Together, we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children, but also for all who work and visit our school.

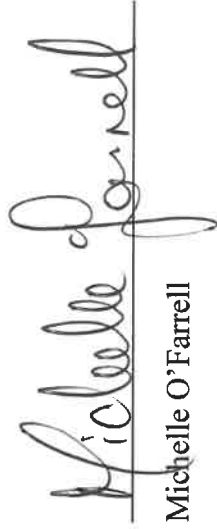
It is important for parents and carers to make sure any persons collecting their children are aware of this policy.

This policy was ratified at a Board of Management meeting dated **30<sup>th</sup> April 2024**. The policy will be reviewed at regular intervals to allow for any changes in our school community.

Signed:



Fr. Paul Thornton  
(Chairperson – Board of Management)



Michelle O'Farrell  
Principal

