

CODE OF CONDUCT

Reviewed & Ratified March 2012

PREAMBLE

We in St. Augustine's College are committed to maintaining appropriate school behaviour and have clear behavioural expectations of our students. We aim to promote positive behaviour at all times. The rules and procedures are designed to protect the safety, rights and responsibilities of students, parent(s), guardian(s), and staff, with the overall aim of creating a school climate where there is respect for each individual, their good name and their property.

Every reasonable effort will be made to transform unacceptable behaviour into acceptable behaviour. The staff contributes towards good discipline by creating a positive environment, which fosters feelings of acceptance and achievement. Desirable behaviour whether on an individual or a collective basis is recognised and praised. Formal recognition of good behaviour may be recognised in the school 'Merit System' and at the school's annual award ceremony.

The Code of Conduct has involved all the school's partners in developing the code. It has incorporated input from the staff, management, parents/guardians and most importantly from the students. This will endeavour to instil a greater commitment from all parties in its implementation. The Code will be reviewed regularly.

The Code focuses on preparing students to be happy, productive members of our society. The Code ensures that teaching and learning can take place without disruption.

Any misbehaviour by students not specified in the Code (the contents of this document are not exhaustive), but which in the opinion of the school authorities constitutes a serious offence will be dealt with as appropriate. The Code has been developed in line with our Mission Statement. It was formulated in accordance with *Section 23 of the Education Act 1998*. It was ratified by all the school's partners and adopted by the Board of Management.

The Code applies to all students of the school, regardless of their age:

- On school premises, before, during and after normal school hours
- At a school - sponsored event (either on or off school premises)
- At lunch break whether on or off school premises
- Travelling to or from school or a school sponsored event.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) or students, who have questions or concerns regarding the School's Code of Conduct, are encouraged to contact the school Principal, or the Board of Management to discuss their concerns. The Code is available for viewing on the school's website www.staugustine.ie. The Code is also available in the student's school diary/planner. The Code is communicated both verbally and in writing to the students and parent(s)/guardian(s). Students will be regularly reminded of the behaviours that are expected of them, especially during Class Tutor classes. Written records of a student's behaviour are kept throughout the period that the student spends in the school.

Ailbhe Ní Neachtain
Principal

Fr. Gerry Horan, O.S.A.
Chairperson of the Board of Management.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Augustine's College is a caring community committed to offering all of its students and staff, a happy and safe environment in which they can work, learn and play. We endeavor to facilitate the academic, personal, moral, spiritual and social development of each member of this school community. Our aim is to provide a balanced and well-rounded education for all our students.

Parents/Guardians must accept, as a condition of the enrolment of their child, our published Code of Conduct. The Code is available for viewing on the school's website www.staugustine.ie. The provisions of the code are fair and reasonable. The full support of all parents will be expected in implementing the Code of Conduct.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT COVERS THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Attendance; Behaviour in the Classroom / School Building; Corridor / School Grounds; Canteen; School Bus and Recreation Areas; Academic Success; Property; Health and Safety; Uniform; Smoking / Substance abuse.

A PARENT/GUARDIAN IS EXPECTED TO:

- Be supportive of the school and encourage a positive attitude towards learning.
- Encourage punctual and regular attendance.
- Provide an adequate environment for learning.
- Notify or explain late arrival, absences, and change in lunch or transportation routines.
- Keep the school informed of any situation that may affect a child's learning or behaviour.
- Attend school interviews and information meetings.
- Participate in co-operative problem-solving and decision making.

HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Communication between school and home is an essential feature of the Code. It is important that students, parent(s)/guardian(s) understand the content and the principles behind the Code. The Code is available to view on the school's website and is also available in the student's school diary/planner. Students will be asked to bring the Code home, to discuss it with their parent(s)/guardian(s) and both the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to sign in the school diary acknowledging their acceptance of the Code.

The school diary/journal is the official means of communication between parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school authorities. Students must have the diary/journal with them at all times in the school and use it appropriately. A staff member may review it at any time and parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to monitor it on a regular basis

EXPECTATIONS

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is to be in keeping with the schools attendance policy. St. Augustine's College Attendance Policy involves helping each student develop to their full potential, both socially and educationally. In St. Augustine's College we believe this can only happen where each student is encouraged to attend punctually every day. The attendance policy is available in its entirety on the school website and in the student diary

In accordance with the Department of Education and Science it is compulsory for school-age students to attend school on each school day and remain for the full day. Teachers will report to the Principal students who are absent from school for no valid reason. Appropriate action will be taken after consultation with the parent/guardian, School Authority and/or other authorities if deemed necessary. The school is obliged to notify the Welfare Officer when a student is absent for 20 days or more from school. It is the parent's/guardian's duty to notify the school of their child's absence. Students may not leave the school grounds during school hours without permission. In the event of a student arriving late to school or having to leave the school at any time during the school day, the student must report to the office with the appropriate notification from their parent/guardian and they must sign the necessary register. Parents/guardians may also contact the school directly by phone to inform of their child's absence. In all cases the student must sign the register in the office.

ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

St. Augustine's College may recognise students' good attendance levels by means of written communication to parents at the end of the academic year may be recognised formally at the School's Awards Ceremony.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

Disciplinary actions consistent with the Code of Conduct will be imposed by the class teachers and in extreme cases by the Principal, Deputy and Assistant Principals for unexplained or frequent absences. Individual class teachers will impose sanctions for lateness consistent with the Code of Conduct.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

- Breaches of the Attendance Code will be communicated to parents / guardians.
- Parents/ guardians will be informed by text of the absence of their son/daughter between 10am and 2.30pm each day.
- Any changes to the normal class time arrangements will be communicated to parents in advance.
- Parents/guardians will be reminded at parents information nights and at parent teacher meetings the importance and value of good attendance.

STUDENT

- Students are expected to be punctual at all times.
- All students are requested to be in their classrooms on time, to be punctual and to be fully prepared to commence class.
- All relevant preparation for upcoming classes such as having the correct books and equipment should be done during break times (morning break and lunch) and before first class in the morning.

ABSENCES

Students away for school activities will not be marked absent.

- Students must present absence notes to class teachers on the day they return to school (the pre-printed notes in the school diary).
- Students must leave the absence notes in the school diary for record keeping.
- It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation (e.g. appointment slips, notes etc.) and present them to the class teacher, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal for all appointments that will prevent him/her from attending a class. Such documentation should be presented prior to his/her release from school.
- Students must report to the office if late arriving to school in the morning and in the afternoon.
- If a student leaves school during the school day, they must get permission beforehand from the class teacher, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal and sign the 'leaving school' register in the office. If a student returns to school during class time he/she must sign back in at the office.

- Students will receive sanctions for unexcused absences and lateness in accordance with St. Augustine's College Code of Conduct.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Students must work to the best of their ability. Failure to demonstrate effort, interest, and pride in one's work, is deemed unacceptable behaviour. Failure to make a reasonable effort will be treated as a minor offence. If the frequency of the breach of code is repeated it will then be treated as a serious offence.

UNIFORM, APPEARANCE AND DRESS

The school uniform is an essential part of life at school as it embodies all that this school stands for. It represents the high standards we expect from students of school. The uniform represents the shared values and goals of our students. It also strengthens the notion of community, whereby the actions of individuals will impact on others. School prepares its students for life by applying a strict uniform code, in that most work places have standards with regard to dress that must be upheld. It also teaches the students the value of neatness, tidiness and projecting a good image of oneself. The support of parents/guardians is of utmost importance in this regard and sanctions will apply where there are breaches in the uniform code. Each student is expected to wear the full school uniform everyday and to be neat and tidy in his/her overall appearance.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The school uniform consists of the following:

Green jumper with school crest, School Tie, Grey shirt, Grey pants for boys, Grey pants or skirt for girls (to knee) and a school tracksuit (PE gear) consisting of a training top, pants, jacket and/or hoodie.

School tracksuits are available to order through the school at a cost of €60/€65. The cost of the tracksuit will be reviewed annually.

Students are expected to wear full school uniform at all times with the exception of students with PE first class in the morning may come to school in their PE gear but must change into their school uniform after PE class and students with games in the afternoon may change into their PE gear at lunchtime.

Transition Year students may also be given permission to wear the school Tracksuit for certain activities if the activity is deemed as being of a physical nature. The activity and the timeframe of this permission is however the sole discretion of the school authorities

- The correct school uniform must be worn coming to school and going home from school, on school outings and when representing the school. This includes during all state examinations.
- If a student cannot wear the uniform for medical reasons she/he must have a note from his/her parents/guardians explaining the circumstances.
- Facial piercings, studs are not acceptable.
- Students must maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and smart appearance. Hair should be neat and tidy.
- Hats, scarves, gloves or jackets may not be worn in class.
- Students should ensure their name is on all uniform items e.g. jumper, jacket.
- Clothes that have language and/or symbols that promote alcohol/tobacco products are deemed to be unacceptable.
- Large inappropriate jewellery is not permitted for safety reasons.
- Only one ear-ring per ear is allowed for safety purposes.
- The school expects full cooperation from parents/guardian in ensuring their son/daughter is correctly attired at all times.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ANY INTERFERENCE WITH FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT, FIRE DOORS, AND ALARM SYSTEM WILL BE TREATED AS A VERY SERIOUS OFFENCE LEADING TO AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION. REF TO THE SCHOOL'S CODE OF DISCIPLINE.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE

A staff member who discovers an outbreak of fire will extinguish the fire using an extinguisher or any other means if they consider they can do so. All staff have been trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

Students or staff who discovers a outbreak of fire should sound the fire alarm by breaking the glass at nearest point.

On hearing the alarm each teacher in class will inform her/his class to prepare to leave the building and assemble at its assembly point. All students must co – operate with this procedure

The teacher will stand at the door, select the exit route (away from the fire) and direct the class out.

When all pupils have left the classroom the teacher will do a final check on the room to see all have left and then close the door. Teachers without classes at the time of the alarm will report to the Hockey pitch and assist in the organisation and supervision of pupils

It must be noted that fire drill procedure is of utmost importance where health and safety are concerned.

SMOKING

Arising from the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002, smoking is prohibited within the entire school boundary and on school buses, with no exceptions. It is the policy of St. Augustine's College that all of its workplaces are smoke-free and that all employees, students and visitors to the school have a right to work and/or visit the school in a smoke-free environment. This rule arises from the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002. Because of its serious nature, any student found smoking/in possession of cigarettes, will face an automatic three day suspension.

ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES

Addictive substances e.g. alcohol, illegal drugs, aerosols **and solvents** are strictly banned **on the school premises, on school activities and / or on school trips**. Any student found in possession of any of these substances will face the prospect of immediate suspension. The school will also be obliged to inform parents/guardians and the relevant authorities.

OTHER BANNED SUBSTANCES

Chewing gum, fizzy drinks, high energy drinks or stimulation drinks (Red Bull etc).

CLASSROOM / SCHOOL BUILDING

Students have a right to be in an orderly and safe learning environment. Behaviour such as talking out of order, shouting, leaving class without permission, showing disrespect for teachers and students, failure to do work to the best of one's ability, are deemed unacceptable.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students have a right to travel on a school bus, in accordance with Department of Education Regulations. Students must conduct themselves in an orderly manner. The School's Code of Conduct will be applied to any reported incidents of misbehaviour.

BEHAVIOUR ON SCHOOL OUTINGS

On outings, students are expected to represent the school in an exemplary manner. Directions from the staff in charge must be complied with at all times. Students and parents must sign the excursion policy and rules documents before going on any trip. School rules as already outlined remain in force.

PROPERTY

Students are expected to respect all school property and the property of fellow students (building, books, materials, equipment, etc). For health and safety reasons school bags/personal property must not be abandoned in any public area in the school. Items abandoned will be confiscated. Pupils must take care of their own property in a

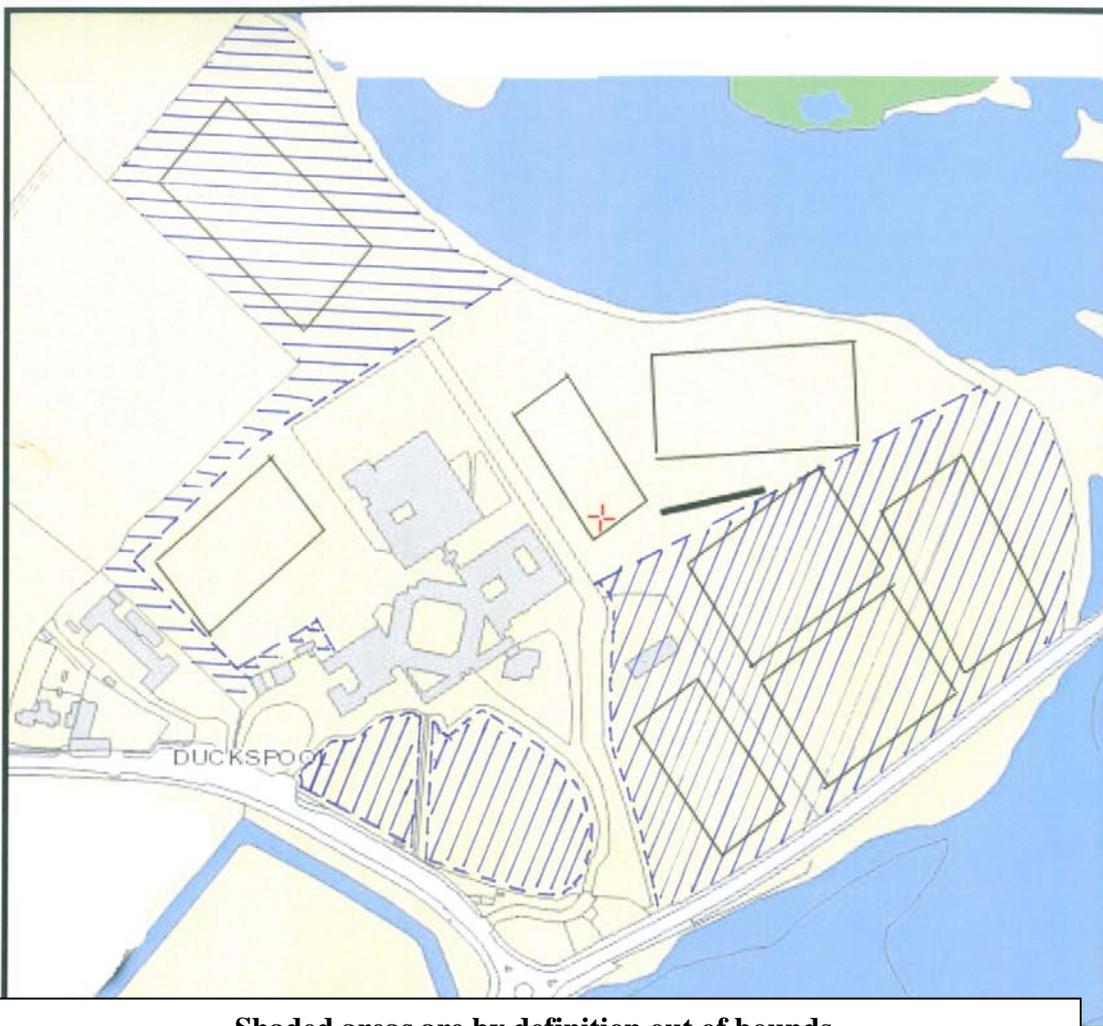
responsible way and they must respect the property of others. Students have an important role to play in ensuring that the school is clean and attractive. Damage to school property will be deemed as a serious offence.

RECREATION AREAS

Students are expected to behave in an orderly manner. Behaviour such as extreme rough play, fighting, inappropriate language etc., is unacceptable. If any student is found in a “Restricted areas” or “Out of Bounds” areas, Appendix 1 Map of “Out of Bounds” areas (Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball Alleys and its surrounds; the hammer cage area; the hockey pitch and accessing or on the school roof) it will be treated as a serious offence and may lead to a automatic three day suspension.

BOUNDARIES

Students must remain within the school boundaries from arrival to departure times. Failure to do so will be seen as a serious offence. If any student is found in a “Restricted Areas” or “Out of Bounds” areas (Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball Alleys and its surrounds; the hammer cage area; the hockey pitch and accessing or on the school roof) it will be treated as a serious offence and may lead to an automatic three day suspension.



Shaded areas are by definition out of bounds

PERSONAL SAFETY

Students are expected to show concern for the personal safety of themselves and others at all times. Students should not engage in horseplay where others may be adversely affected. This includes play fighting, running through public areas, or engaging in conduct potentially harmful to themselves or others. Please note: Breaches of health and safety requirements will be treated as serious breaches of this Code of Conduct.

CANTEEN

All food should be consumed only in the canteen during morning break and lunch time. Students who use these facilities have a right to do so in a safe and orderly environment. Behaviour such as running, fighting, rough play, throwing food, leaving the canteen without cleaning up and returning tray etc., is deemed to be unacceptable and will be treated as a serious offence. All food purchased in the canteen must be consumed in the canteen.

MOBILE PHONES AND/OR ANY ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Mobile phones and/or any electronic equipment are prohibited in St. Augustine's College, save in exceptional circumstances (school tours which extend beyond the normal school hours). Where students must bring mobile phones to school, they should be left in the student's locker. The phone should never be turned on and/or used during the day.

If there is a breach of this rule, staff may confiscate the phone and/or electronic equipment. It must be given to the teacher on request and it will be left in the school office for collection by the student's parent/guardian at a time convenient to school management. On the first offence the student's parents/guardian must collect the phone/electronic equipment from the principal and on the second offence the phone/electronic equipment will be confiscated for the remainder of the academic year.

Note: In emergency cases parents/guardians may contact their son/daughter through the school office 058 41140. Please note that the school is not responsible for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school property.

The introduction of unsuitable or pornographic material may also lead to permanent exclusion. This is because such material hinders the proper and balanced development of the pupil.

All of the above also applies to students while engaged in any school related activities.

INTERNET

Students who wish to use the internet facilities may do so under teacher supervision provided they and their parents or guardians have signed the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Failure to follow the policy, for example by attempting to access inappropriate websites is regarded as a serious offence.

DRIVERS

Student who drive to school in cars, motorbikes must do so with extreme care at all times and in accordance with the rules of the road. Written permission from parents/guardians is needed if a student wishes to use his/her vehicle during the school day. If a student wishes to carry passengers, the passenger's parents/guardians must verify in writing to the school authority that their child may travel in the students' vehicle. Any student known to be driving in a dangerous or reckless manner will no longer have rights to parking on school grounds. Dangerous driving will be reported to the appropriate Garda authorities

CODE OF DISCIPLINE

We acknowledge the contribution to the School from students who make every effort to behave and thereby enhance the life of the school. The school places greater emphasis on encouragement than on sanctions, in the belief that this will, in the long run, give the best results. Positive Behaviour will be acknowledged in the following ways.

It is accepted that there is a need for sanctions to register disapproval of unacceptable behaviour. We have devised a graded system of sanctions, in line with those suggested by the Department of Education and Science (Oct. 1991) and suitable to the particular needs and circumstances of this school. Every effort will be made to keep you the Parents informed of instances of serious misbehaviour on the part of your children, and your co-operation in addressing the problem is requested and expected.

MERIT SYSTEM

The school may acknowledge and reward students who have learned and modified their behaviour. The school can grant merit points if a student displays positive, corrective behavioural attitudes in line with the Code of Conduct expected of all students in the school. Students who have accumulated 0 demerits at the end of each term will be automatically awarded 5 credits each.

It is important to note that a Merit does not cancel a demerit, however when reviewing a pupil's behaviour merits accumulated may be looked on very favourably.

Merits may be acknowledged further at award night.

Examples of merits awarded for

- School voluntary work
- Exceptional performance
- Community work

Class groups who have worked and behaved positively may be awarded class privileges.

Students who find themselves "On Report", due to an accumulation of demerits may, on presentation of a positive report from teachers, be awarded Merits.

DEMERIT SYSTEM

An accumulation of SIX DEMERITS shall result in referral to the Discipline Committee.

Serious Offences (2 demerits)

Examples are: (these lists are indicative not exhaustive)

- Any repeated minor offences
- Damage to property, graffiti
- Lack of respect to/for others (c.f bullying policy)
- Intimidation / bullying (c.f bullying policy)
- Disruption in class
- Leaving the school at any time without permission or "dossing class". (c.f. Attendance policy)
- Unacceptable language
- Disorderly behaviour in class or on corridors
- Careless driving / driving without due care / speeding
- Failure to follow Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Students involved in any of the above may be detained, suspended or referred the Discipline Committee depending on the seriousness and/or frequency of the offence.

Minor Offence (1demerit)

Examples are: (these lists are indicative not exhaustive)

- Lack of punctuality
- Lack of honesty

- Not wearing full uniform
- Not producing homework to the best of ones ability when required
- Not having the correct books etc. in class
- Untidy in dress
- Causing litter
- “Horse-play” in school
- Lack of courtesy to others
- Improper dress for P.E..

There is no negotiation when behaviour is deemed extremely serious, dangerous, or is persistent and defiant.

AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION OFFENCES

The following shall result in an automatic suspension:

- Smoking / substance / alcohol abuse. (c.f. substance abuse policy)
- “Restricted areas” or “Out of Bounds Areas” (Abbeyside/Ballinacourty Handball Alleys and its surrounds; the hammer cage area; the hockey pitch and accessing or on the school roof (c.f. Attendance policy)
- Interference with fire safety equipment.
- Defiant behaviour (towards **any** staff member)

OUR DISCIPLINE STRATEGY

Our school and classroom rules are intended to translate standards into practical guidance about the behaviour expected from students. The rules provide clear boundaries. They describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible individuals. The emphasis is always on improvement of expectations and will take due consideration of students with special needs and will put in place procedures to insure their understanding of all behavioural expectations.

The following strategies may be used when dealing with unacceptable behaviour:

- 1 Interviewing student.
- 2 Re-location in the classroom.
- 3 Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- 4 Penalty Sheet / punishment exercise.(Should be appropriate to offence)
- 5 Referral to Class teacher/ Pastoral care
- 6 School Community Work / Canteen duty.
- 7 Detention: Students are supervised during this time and given work to do. A pupil is detained for one hour whenever his/her name is entered in the "Detention" book. This happens for serious offences, repeated minor offences etc..
- 8 Referral to the Discipline committee.(after accumulation of 6 demerits)

The Principal has the right to apply immediate sanctions or make referral to Discipline committee in the event of an action or behaviour that is deemed serious and harmful to the health and safety of the school community.

PASTORAL CARE

We believe that pastoral care is a whole school process and involves all school staff. With this in mind all staff, both teaching and auxiliary have been given training in best practice in dealing with sensitive issues. In cases which deal with issues of a sensitive nature students will be referred to one of the pastoral care team.

The pastoral care team in St. Augustine’s College consists of **Class Teachers, Year Heads, Guidance Councillors, School Chaplain, Deputy Principal and Principal.**

AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

While there is no official slot for detention a teacher may if they see necessary detain a student/s after school for one hour by giving notice in writing of one week.

LOSS OF PRIVILEGES

Privileges such as representing the school, school outings, use of school facilities etc may be withdrawn from students who are in breach of this code.

“ON REPORT”

The school may decide it is in the interest of a pupil to be "On Report". This will happen after the school feels the pupil is failing to make satisfactory improvement. "On Report" involves the student presenting the report card in the school diary to the subject teacher at the beginning of every class during the day/week. The Report Card is signed at the end of each class by his/her teacher and the student will show the report sheet that evening to his/her parent/s/guardians. Parents/guardians will sign the report sheet on a weekly basis. If there is no improvement then, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to the school to discuss the matter.

INTERVIEW BY THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

The school will inform parents that their son's / daughter's behaviour merits investigation by the Discipline Committee. The Committee comprises of four teachers, two male and two female. Parents/guardians may be asked to be present at this meeting. The school's Principal must ratify the Board of Discipline's (committee's) decision. The student's parents/guardian will be notified in writing of the Board's decision after the meeting.

SUSPENSION

The Principal can suspend a pupil for a period of varying duration depending on the seriousness of the misconduct and whether or not it is a repeat offence. Parent(s)/guardian(s) have a right of appeal to the Board of Management. Students who have been suspended will be expected to report to the Principal/Deputy Principal the morning of their return with the relevant documentation. In the event of a student being suspended for the second time, the students' parents/guardians are requested to meet the Principal to discuss the student's future in the school.

EXPULSION

The Board of Management may expel a pupil. Parents/guardians have the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, (Education Act 1998, Section 29 (d).) The parents/guardians appeal should be stated on the application form provided by the Department of Education and Science (Circular M48/01). The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned. (Circular, M48/01).

An appeal may be made to: *The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, The Appeals Administration Unit, Department of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.*

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

A successful Discipline Strategy, if working effectively will not be over used as the number of sanctions will reduce with its effective implementation. If this strategy is found to be ineffective it will be reviewed and the appropriate amendments made.

This policy will be reviewed regularly. In practice, this process should be coordinated by a core committee consisting of two staff members, two parents/guardians nominated by the Parent's Association and two students in consultation with the wider school community. On going review and evaluation should take cognisance of changing information, legislation, developments in the school based programme and feedback from parents/guardians, staff and students. The policy should be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

POLICY REVIEWED AND RATIFIED BY ALL PARTNERS:

Teaching Staff; Students; Parents' Association and the Board of Management

DATE: March 2012.

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR CHARTER

At enrolment students are asked to commit themselves to the following code of behaviour and at the beginning of each school year afterwards

“I will work to the best of my ability at all times”,

This means I will be fully prepared for each class, I will listen attentively in class, I will ask questions when I have difficulty understanding. I will record my homework assignments in my school journal and always complete my homework to the best of my ability. I will turn in my assignments on time.

“I will support learning in St Augustine’s College”,

This means that I am committing myself to my own learning and that I will support others by encouraging them in their learning and acknowledges their contributions.

When I return after a period of absence I will do my best to catch up on the material I have missed.

“I will use polite and friendly language”,

This means that I will not verbally abuse others, will not use offensive or rude language, and will not use language that is racially or sexually offensive.

“I will respect other people”.

This means that I will not interfere with or take other people’s property , will not bully, or hassle others, will not sexually harass others, will not be racist and will at all times act to stop people being disrespectful to others.

“I will contribute to St. Augustine’s Colleges positive image”

This means that I will be polite to visitors and members of the public both inside and outside the school, and that my behaviour will be of a high standard. I will wear my uniform correctly at all times.

“I will keep St. Augustine’ College free of harmful substances”.

This means that I will never bring into the school drugs of any kind, alcohol in any form, cigarettes or any other substance that may be harmful to others.

Signed; _____	Date; _____
Signed; _____	Date; _____