

Abbey Community College - Code of Behaviour

Introduction

By sending your child to Abbey Community College, it is understood that you have read and accepted the school Code of Behaviour.

A signed form indicating acceptance of this policy must be returned to the school not later than the entrance assessment.

Persons whose behaviour is deemed to be governed by this policy include all staff, students, visitors and parents involved in school activities.

Our Code of Behaviour complies with statute and common law, in particular the Education Act 1998, Equal Status Act 2000, Education (Welfare) Act 2001, EPSEN Act 2004 and other relevant legislation.

School Ethos

In Abbey Community College in line with the philosophy of its founding partners, Kilkenny Carlow Educational Training Board and the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, we aim to educate in a reflective way, with an emphasis on the development of the whole person

The College aims to maintain a safe, positive, structured and caring environment where mutual respect, social responsibility and the moral values promoted by our trustees flourish.

Rationale

This code of behaviour is in place in order to

- ensure the safety of all members of the school community both on the school premises and on school activities
- promote a successful teaching and learning environment
- help students acquire good habits of discipline, behaviour and responsibility
- prepare students for future responsibilities in the working environment and adult life and assist in developing good habits of citizenship
- inform students and their parents of the procedures used by Abbey Community College to address issues of behaviour in the school by
 - defining standards of behaviour for students
 - informing students and their parents of the measures that the school may take to address student misbehaviour
 - informing parents of school procedures that will be followed before a student is suspended or expelled
 - explaining the grounds and conditions under which a suspension imposed on a student may be lifted
 - Informing parents of their legal responsibilities relating to occasions when their child is absent from school
- conform to the statutory obligation in Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2001 which obliges recognised schools to prepare, for the information of students and their parents, a code of behaviour in respect of students registered at the school.

Rules and Regulations for Students

Behaviour

The following rules safeguard our rights as persons and our property in Abbey Community College.

- students must show respect and courtesy to fellow students and staff at all times
- students will move between classrooms in a quiet, orderly manner. All students must wait in a quiet, orderly manner until the teacher arrives
- as chewing gum causes damage to furniture, fittings and the school environment, the chewing of gum on the school grounds is absolutely forbidden
- the possession, purchase or consumption of alcohol or addictive substances during the school day or during school activities is absolutely forbidden

- offensive language is absolutely forbidden
- smoking is absolutely prohibited on the school premises, its vicinity and during school functions and activities
- all damage to school property must be immediately reported to the school authorities, after which appropriate action will be taken
- students must not bring the good name of Abbey Community College into disrepute.

Respect for Property

At Abbey Community College we strive to keep our environment clean, safe and tidy. We expect that all our students will take care of their own property and respect that of others.

- each student is responsible for his/her own property. The school cannot accept responsibility for goods lost in the school
- students are strongly advised to have their names on all personal items e.g. student uniforms, coats, sports gear, etc.
- all students are expected to provide their own materials for class. Therefore “borrowing” is an unacceptable alternative
- no student should interfere with the property of any other person in Abbey Community College
- accidental damage must be reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal. The cost of either repair or replacement will be borne by any student responsible for unacceptable damage to property in the school
- the use of Tippex / correcting fluid / indelible markers is absolutely forbidden.

Locker

Lockers are provided for the use of students but are at all times the property of the school. It is a condition of the use of the lockers by the students that the school reserves the right to open and search a student’s locker(s) when necessary. The student will be invited to be present during any such search.

Each student is required to provide a lock for the locker(s) to protect personal and school property.

The Teacher and Student in the Classroom

The relationship between student and teacher in the classroom is crucial to the positive, supportive and collaborative nature of Abbey Community College. Particular attention will be paid to fostering an atmosphere where good learning and teaching will occur.

- we have high expectations for good behaviour, particularly in the classroom
- with encouragement and praise we can achieve much success. Our work in class will enable us all to take pride in our school community
- the classroom teacher will establish an atmosphere where mutual respect for all members of Abbey Community College will flourish
- each teacher will inform her/his students regarding the levels of courtesy and behaviour expected from students in her/his classroom
- it is the responsibility of each student to provide himself/herself with a complete set of materials for class, i.e. two pens, one pencil, an eraser, topper, ruler plus any other material, eg. Maths set, etc. as instructed by the teacher
- at the end of class, students are expected to write all homework and study assignments into their Student Record Book
- students are expected to co-operate fully with their teachers. To do this, students must carry out their teacher’s instructions, show interest in their classwork and complete all homework as instructed. Homework includes reading, oral and written work. All homework should be clearly assigned and written into the student’s homework journal before class ends
- students must enter and leave the classroom in an orderly fashion
- classrooms and corridors must be kept tidy at all times. It is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that this will occur
- it is each student’s responsibility to be in on time for class. Each student must have his/her books and necessary material ready in good time for class

- eating and drinking in class/ between classes is absolutely forbidden. Mid morning break and lunchtime are the appropriate times for these activities
- it is expected that students will use the toilet facilities before 8:55am, during break or lunchtime. If the student needs to use the toilet facilities at a time other than above, then the express permission of the class teacher must be obtained.

Punctuality and Absenteeism

School Attendance

In order to maximise their learning experiences students need to maintain regular attendance in the school. Under the Education Welfare Act 2001, the school is obliged to keep a record of each student's attendance in the school. Under this Act parents / guardians are required to inform the school in writing of the reasons a student may be absent.

Absences of more than 20 school days will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer in accordance with the Education Welfare (2001) Act.

In Abbey Community College we value punctuality and regular attendance at school. Therefore the following rules will apply to students:

- **all students are expected to be in school before 8:50 to properly organise themselves for their morning classes.** Students are expected to prepare for afternoon classes at 1.40 pm. Students are expected to be punctual for all classes during the school day
- **students are expected to be vigilant in the use of the ‘Anseo’ attendance system** when entering and leaving the school
- **students will be deemed late if not at their designated classrooms at 9.00 am.**
- **persistent lateness is regarded as a serious matter which will result in sanctions and contact with home**
- latecomers will be dealt with under the points system unless they have a written note explaining their lateness. An attendance and punctuality record will be maintained for all pupils
- In order to obtain permission to leave the school grounds, the student's parent / guardian must complete and sign the permission form in the record book. The completed permission form must then be countersigned by the Year Head / Deputy Principal / Principal. The student must then “sign out” and “sign in” using the ‘Anseo’ system. Permission to leave the school should only be requested for a serious specific reason. It is strongly recommended that medical / dental appointments etc. be made outside of school hours where possible
- when a student has been absent, the parent/ guardian must fill in an absence form in the student record book and sign it. The student must produce the completed form at roll call or on request.

Break and Lunchtime

At Break and Lunch, students should

- Relax
- Prepare
- Show common respect for people and property
- students must remain on the school grounds at Break and Lunch. Only those students who live in the immediate vicinity of the school and who have written permission from their parents may go home at lunchtime. Students may not leave the school grounds at Break
- there will be designated areas where students may eat lunch
- food and drink consumption between classes is expressly forbidden
- students should queue in orderly fashion for canteen and shop as requested by supervisor
- students are expected to keep the General Purpose Areas tidy and litter free.

School Uniform

We are proud of our school uniform. It identifies each student as a member of our school community. Therefore we must show our community at its best at all times.

- students are expected to be neat and tidy in dress and appearance and to wear the full school uniform. Black shoes are required as part of the school uniform. If students, for certified medical reasons only, are unable to wear shoes, then black trainers may be worn.
- students who wish to observe the religious practice of wearing a hijab, must wear a navy one.
- hair must be neat and tidy at all times. Boys must be clean-shaven at all times
- students are permitted to wear a watch, one stud in each ear-lobe and one ring on each hand. The wearing of other jewellery is forbidden. No facial piercings allowed.
- make up, including coloured nail varnish, is not allowed unless there are certified medical reasons for using it
- appropriate PE gear is obligatory for students in the PE class
- when representing the school, students are required to wear the full school uniform
- on persistent breach of the above code, parents may be asked to collect the student from the school
- Abbey Community College reserves the right to adjust these rules periodically

If a student does not have correct uniform, s/he must report to the Principal/Deputy Principal before 8.50 am.

Student Record Book

The Student Record Book is designed to:

- monitor the student's attendance and punctuality
- monitor the day-to-day behaviour of each student
- provide a number of permission forms which require the signature of the student's parents/guardians
- provide a journal in which students will organise homework on a daily basis

The book contains

- the student's essential personal details
- permissions for going home at lunchtime (if appropriate), outings, field-trips, notes in case of illness, alternative addresses, permission to leave school.
- a homework journal
- the Student Record Book is an invaluable link between home and school.

The benefits of a Student Record Book for students are many. It maintains close and immediate contact with parents on issues of permissions and behaviour.

Parents are requested to check their son's/daughter's Student Record Book at least once a week during the school term.

- each student is responsible for maintaining the book in excellent condition.
- each student is required to have his/her Student Record Book with him/her in all classes. In order to facilitate entries in the "Absence Record" or "Permission to leave School" sections and to facilitate parents/guardians checking the Student Record Book **it is essential that students bring home the Student Record Book each evening.**
- each student is responsible for the safe keeping of his/her Student Record Book. Loss of the Student Record Book must be reported immediately to your Year Head
- the current replacement cost of the book is €6 for the first replacement, €10 thereafter
- the book must be produced for the classroom teacher, Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal on request.

Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Device Acceptable Use Policy

While Abbey Community College accepts that it is a student's choice to have a mobile phone/personal electronic device (PED), the following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved.

In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians are asked **not** to arrange to contact students by mobile phone/PED at any time during the school day (**08.45-15.36**). Contact with the school may be made through the office (051)832930 and where circumstances demand, students will be directed to use the office phone on the advice of the Year Head.

- a) Where a student brings a mobile phone/PED to school, the mobile phone/PED must be switched off and kept in a **locked** locker during the school day (**08.45-15.36**) and may not be used for **any purpose** on school premises or grounds except with the expressed prior permission, guidance and supervision of a teacher.
- b) The mobile phone/PED is the sole responsibility of the student and the school does **not** accept responsibility if the mobile phone/PED is damaged, lost or stolen. Students bring mobile phone/PED to school at their own risk.
- c) Students found in contravention of a) will have the device confiscated, including the SIM card until the **next school day**, at which time it may be collected by a parent/guardian from the school office. Confiscation of a device will also attract a ‘M1 (device use)’ which is 10 points on the school’s ‘Points System’.

A subsequent offence will result in the mobile phone/PED being confiscated for **two school days** and will attach a ‘M1 (device use)’ and collection by a parent/guardian from the school office.

Failure to hand over a mobile phone/PED including the SIM card when requested will result in 1) an automatic detention (M2), 2) confiscation of the device for **two school days** and 3) collection by a parent/guardian from the school office. Refusal to hand over the mobile phone/PED including the SIM card to the Deputy Principal/Principal will result in immediate suspension.

Incidents where students use electronic devices to bully other students/staff or send offensive messages or calls will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying policy. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use an electronic device to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardaí in such incidents.

Anti-Bullying Policy

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Abbey Community College has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school’s overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for the Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

The Board of Management recognise the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore committed to key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

The Policy is available to view in full on the school website:

<http://www.abbeycommunitycollege.com/Policies>

Bullying is repeated targeted behaviour that causes hurt. All occurrences must be reported.

Substance Misuse Policy

The possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs is strictly prohibited on the school premises. Procedures to deal with instances of substance misuse in the school and the sanctions that apply are set out in Abbey Community College’s Substance Misuse Policy. They include sanctions up to and including expulsion.

Rules and Discipline Procedures

Positive Discipline

A Positive Discipline Programme is in place for 1st Year Students. The focus of Positive Discipline is to use incentives such as encouragement, motivation praise and reward to improve behaviour and performance. The aim of the programme is to foster team spirit in a class group and to harness peer pressure to improve attendance, class-work, homework and behaviour. The Positive Discipline

programme entails collaboration among Year Head, class tutors, class teachers, students and parents.

Points System

The ‘Points System’ is the name given to the graded system of sanctions for inappropriate behaviour. Discipline commences in the classroom. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline in his/her own class while sharing a common responsibility for good order within Abbey Community College. The ‘points system’ has been developed over many years as a support to effective classroom management. In general, teachers deal with discipline issues themselves and may decide to apply the system if it is deemed appropriate.

‘Points System’

A1	Distraction / Inattention	1
B1	Absent note not signed	3
C1	Disruptive behaviour including speaking out of turn /talking	5
E1	Coming to class without required books/equipment	5
E2	No homework/very poor attempt at homework	5
E3	Late for class	5
E4	Copying homework/doing work for one class in another class	5
E5	Litter	5
E6	Confiscated Books	5
J1	Dangerous behaviour	10
J2	Skipping class	10
J3	Bags / PE gear, Books scattered on floor	10
J4	Defiance / refusal to accept correction/rudeness	10
J5	No PE gear for scheduled class	10
J6	Eating in class	10
J7	Offensive language	10
K1	Improper uniform (without satisfactory explanation)	10
MI	Device Use	

- A student who accumulates 40 points in any rolling four week period will be detained on the following Wednesday/Thursday evening from 4:00-5.30 pm
- Failure to attend detention will result in the student being suspended.
- Saturday detention may be imposed if management deems it necessary.

Rules and Sanctions not included in the “Points System”

- Excess Jewellery Confiscate and return at end of week
- Chewing gum Fine €10
- Smoking Immediately sent home.

Management reserves the right to impose a community service as an alternative to the above sanctions. Community service is aimed at improving our school environment.

Discipline Procedures

This section sets down the code of discipline and sanctions applicable to all students in Abbey Community College during the school year. Parents / Guardians and students are requested to study it carefully.

The rules and regulations of Abbey Community College have been developed by management, staff, students and parents with the purpose of making our working environment a kinder, safer and healthier place for students, staff and visitors alike. While we value and protect the rights of the individual, we must also protect the rights of all the persons in our school. These rules and regulations are reviewed periodically by the above parties.

The classroom teacher aims to foster an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning. When dealing

with issues of indiscipline the teacher will deal with the matter as s/he deems appropriate

- points may be imposed
- the student may be formally interviewed by the Class Teacher and/or Year Head and/or Deputy Principal and / or Principal in the hope of preventing a repetition of misbehaviour
- repeated breaches of rules within the points system will result in the student being put “On Detention”. detention takes place normally on a Friday evening after school
- the Principal / Deputy Principal / Year Head may also put a student on Detention for a specific instance of misbehaviour
- the parents/guardians may be invited to attend a meeting with the teacher / Year Head and/or Deputy Principal and/or Principal
- following a series of detentions, members of the Pastoral Care team may be asked to intervene as a support to the student
- students may also be asked to do community service and / or may be suspended
- a student may be formally invited to attend a meeting with the School Discipline Committee consisting Principal / Deputy Principal / Year Head and a teacher
- persistent instances of indiscipline may lead to a student being suspended from school for a specified number of days. Notice of such a suspension will be given to parents / guardians. Following the imposition of a suspension, the parent / guardian or a student over 18 years of age has a right of appeal to the Board of Management. Notice of this appeal must be made immediately in writing to the school Principal
- if a student is involved in a serious breach of school discipline, the Principal may immediately suspend the student in question, pending discussion with the parents/guardians of the student. It should also be noted that if any individual incident is deemed to be sufficiently serious a student may be detained or suspended without going through each stage in the discipline procedure
- at the end of each academic year, the student’s behaviour is reviewed. A student and his parents / guardian may be requested to meet with school management to renew formally their commitment to the schools code of discipline
- expulsion will only be considered when the behaviour of a student puts the safety of others at risk, or where behaviour is so disruptive as to interfere substantially with the rights of others to education. Cases concerning expulsion from school will follow the protocol and procedures as outlined in Section 29 of the Education Act and Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act

Following a decision by the Board of Management of its intention to expel a student, the parent / guardian or a student over 18 years of age has a right of appeal to Co. Kilkenny VEC in the first instance. Notice of this appeal must be made immediately in writing to the secretary of the Board. This appeal procedure will take place in accordance with the Education Act (1998) Act, Section 29.

In summary the steps in the discipline procedures are as follows:

1. Teacher classroom and in-school management
2. Points
3. Preventative measure - interview
4. Formal detention
5. Preventative measure - formal interview / pastoral care
6. Preventative measure - formal Parent involvement
7. Community Service / Suspension
8. Suspension
9. Preventative measure - annual review
10. Contract of Behaviour
11. Expulsion

Safety in the School

The following are places in the school where particular care needs to be taken: Art Rooms, Computer Rooms, IT workstations, Home Economics Rooms, Engineering Workshop, PE areas, Science Labs and associated rooms, Demonstration Room, Wood and Technology Rooms. Each of these specialist areas has specific rules and guidelines for usage and safety, to protect the safety and well-being of all and ensure a safe working environment. These rules and guidelines are explained clearly to all students and they are expected to comply with them at all times.

These regulations comply with the overall school Health & Safety Statement.

Protocol for Visitors to Abbey Community College

- all visitors to the school must report to the school office irrespective of what business they wish to conduct in the school
- parents/ guardians of students who wish to meet a member of management or staff should make an appointment through the school office
- if a Parent/ guardian calls to the school without an appointment, it may not be possible to meet a staff member at that time.
- during the school day Parents / Guardians may not meet their children except through visiting the school office.

The Role of Parents

Abbey Community College recognises parents / guardians as the partners in the education process. Parents have a formal voice in assisting in the development of the school through the Parents Association.

They are welcome to make appointments to meet with members of staff and management in order to discuss their child's progress. These appointments should be made through the school office.

Parents / Guardians are expected to attend their child's Parent Teacher Meetings. They are also expected to attend all information evenings relevant to their child.

Performance Criteria

- atmosphere in each classroom is conducive to effective teaching and learning
- students are achieving academic potential
- teachers work in harmony with the students
- there is general acceptance that rules and sanctions are just and fairly applied
- that Positive Discipline is working effectively and all classes in the Junior Cycle have the opportunity to achieve awards on a frequent basis.
- that the majority of students' behaviour improves as a result of the implementation of the system.

Person (s)/ Groups responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy

- Teaching staff, through formal staff meetings, monitor the implementation of the policy
- Year Heads' weekly meeting monitors policy and individual student progress in school
- Year Heads' monitor points accrual on a daily and weekly basis
- The majority of staff members are involved in Positive Discipline on a daily basis
- Tutors, Assistant Year Head, Year Head and Deputy Principal monitor the overall operation of procedures and sanctions
- The Student Council through formal meetings periodically monitor the policy
- Board of Management may periodically review overall policies
- The Parents Association acting as an advisory body, monitor and support implementation of policy.

Time frame for Review of Policy, Person(s) / Groups responsible for reviewing this policy (if different from monitoring group)

The policy will be reviewed by the Senior Management team at the end of each academic year.

A major review will be conducted at least every five years by all stakeholders.

All policies and procedures are reviewed routinely by the schools' education partners and subsequently ratified by the Board of Management.