



## St Patrick's CBC, Kimberley CODE OF CONDUCT: PRIMARY SCHOOL

### PRIMARY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

#### MISSION:

St Patrick's CBC values the prophetic Christian and moral vision of its founder, Blessed Edmund Rice, and seeks to create a challenging and stimulating educational environment.

As a School, we believe that this vision embodies:

- Recognition of the dignity and uniqueness of all.
- The exercise of self-discipline and duty in a climate of justice and fairness.
- Mutual respect, tolerance and empathy.

In seeking to achieve and promote this vision, our School strives to:

- Achieve the holistic development of each member of the school family, enabling them to attain their full potential in all dimensions of life – i.e. spiritual, academic, cultural, creative and physical.
- Promote critical and creative thinking and the ability to express individual views.
- Create an understanding and acceptance of our diverse backgrounds.
- Realise this mission by creating a family ethos in which all members of the community work as a team.

To achieve these goals, we depend upon important partners in the educational process – the parents of the learners. Your love, encouragement and interest in the progress of your child as well as your involvement in our school activities, are indispensable. We therefore try to maintain very close contact with our parents.

#### INTRODUCTION:

St Patrick's CBC has a history of over 100 years. For learners to equip themselves well – academically, spiritually and extramurally – the School must provide an environment which will promote this. By following the basic rules of the School, the development of a civil society that strives towards common behaviour which enables all constituents to live and work together in a supportive and nurturing fashion, is encouraged. Learners and their parents need to be aware that there are boundaries in which learners are expected to conduct their day to day life at school. Transgressions of these boundaries are met by certain consequences.

### **Rights and responsibilities:**

In the school context, educators, parents and learners have responsibilities. To sustain a healthy learning environment, the parties to the education relationship need to acknowledge their respective responsibilities.

Given the available resources, parents can expect only the best possible education whilst at the same time accepting responsibility to help the School achieve the goal of holistic education. It is the parents' responsibility to support the child and educator in the learning process. The educator needs to be treated with the same respect that the parents wish to be.

Every learner at St Patrick's CBC should respect their educators, their fellow-learners and themselves. An environment of mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance of others irrespective of culture, race, creed or gender conducive to learning is therefore promoted.

### **The Rights of Learners:**

- Everyone has the right to work and learn without being disturbed by others;
- Everyone has the right to be treated courteously and respectfully;
- Everyone has the right to work in a clean, safe and orderly environment;
- Everyone has the right to feel proud of St Patrick's CBC;
- Everyone has the right to a safe environment free from verbal, emotional and physical bullying.

### **The Responsibilities of the Learner:**

- To attend school on time, ready to learn and take part in school activities;
- To aim at the highest standards in all aspects of school life;
- To co-operate with staff and to accept authority and rules of the school;
- To consider and respect the feelings and property of other people in the school;
- To care for the grounds buildings, furniture, equipment, books and uniform;
- To support the values of the school;
- To meet homework and task deadlines;
- To ensure that all equipment is at school.

### **The Responsibilities of Educators with regard to Learners:**

- To seek to develop each individual learners' academic levels and talents as fully as possible;
- To teach effectively and to set the highest standards in work and behaviour;
- To care for and support each learner when at school academically, socially and emotionally;
- To ensure learners are able to make the best possible contribution to the community when they leave school;

- To encourage open communication with parents as a basis for close co-operation between home and school;
- To support the values of the school.

### **The Responsibility of the Parents with regard to the Learners:**

- To show by their own example that they support the school in setting the highest standards;
- To make sure that their children attend school on time, correctly dressed, prepared and well-equipped for the day's activities;
- To take an active, supportive interest in their children's work, homework, progress and extra-mural activities;
- To support the values and authority and discipline of the school, helping their children to achieve maturity, self-discipline and self-control;
- To encourage the development of their children's involvement in the school's co-curricular activities;
- To ensure that their children, for their own safety, are fetched timeously from school;
- To show respect for educators in the home and in their dealings with the school;
- To send a absenteeism letter to school explaining why the child has been missing any number of days from school;
- To send a medical certificate if the child is absent for 3 days or longer.

Should the expected norms and standards of behaviour of learners not be met, corrective action will be taken by the school. This Code of Conduct applies whenever a learner may be associated with St Patrick's CBC. Learners are expected, whether it be during normal school hours and on the school premises or outside of normal school hours and off the school premises, to behave, act and dress in such a way that it will bring credit to themselves, the school and the wider community.

Educators at St Patrick's CBC have the right to insist on respectful behaviour by the school learners. It is the responsibility of the educator to ensure that there is orderly behaviour in the classroom which is conducive to learning by all.

### **1. GENERAL CONDUCT**

#### **In the light of above, learners at St Patrick's CBC are expected to:**

- Behave responsibly and not endanger the safety and welfare of self and others;
- Respect and care for the property of the School, self and others;
- Maintain sound relations with others at the school, be courteous and respect the dignity and self-worth of others;
- Be punctual and observe the timekeeping practices of the school;

- Demonstrate a positive attitude towards the opportunity to learn, and be diligent in their efforts to learn;
- Behave honestly and conduct themselves with integrity;
- Accept the authority of Educators;
- Accept legitimate punishment and disciplinary action taken against them;
- Wear the school and sports uniform with pride.

It is impossible to list every infringement of this Code. The procedures below will outline the broad principles of the implementation of fair discipline at St Patrick's CBC.

Learners need to be aware that being in the company of those contravening the Code may make them guilty by association. They are encouraged to leave situations which could be to their detriment.

## **2. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

Various forms of informal and formal disciplinary measures will be applied at College. The severity of the punishment will depend upon the seriousness of the infringement of this Code and its principles as well as any mitigating or aggravating circumstances. Repeatedly committing the same offence will result in progressively more severe punishment and may call for a formal disciplinary measure. Should the offence be of a very serious nature the school's Executive Head reserves the right to suspend the learner pending a Disciplinary Hearing. As far as is reasonably possible a record will be kept of all infringements of this Code. The removal of rank, privilege or award will be given consideration where the Code of Conduct has been transgressed.

### **2.1. INFORMAL MEASURES COULD BE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- Counselling of the learner by an educator i.e. learner is called and situation discussed. Incorrect behaviour is pointed out and expected behaviour is highlighted;
- Community Service during which various tasks will be allocated at the discretion of the Educator in charge;
- Writing out e.g. the Code of Conduct (or relevant part thereof);
- Writing a letter of apology or offering a public apology;
- Confiscation of jewellery other than religious jewellery (cross of St Christopher) and Medic Alert bracelets;
- Confiscation of cell phone, iPod, MP3 players or any other technological device (no SIM cards will be returned to learners before the device is returned);
- Replacing and property that was tampered with or damaged – this may be levied on the school account;
- Marks deducted for work or projects handed in late – as determined by their subject policy;
- Demerit system.

These informal measures may be applied by the Educator, Grade Head, Phase Head, Head of Primary School or the St Patrick's CBC's Executive Head.

2.2. FORMAL MEASURES COULD BE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Parent interview;
- Referral for psychological counselling at the parents' cost;
- Suspension from School – length will depend upon the seriousness of the offence;
- Disciplinary Hearing;
- Expulsion.

These formal measures may be applied by the St Patrick's CBC's Executive Head and/or the Head of the Primary School.

LEVEL ONE INFRINGEMENTS	
1	Not adhering to the time practices at School
2	Not attending sports practises or cultural rehearsals
3	Infringing the dress code
4	Disruption of the classroom environment
5	Chewing gum
6	Littering
7	Cell phones
8	Wearing make-up, nail polish, highlighted hair, incorrect braids and hair accessories
9	Inappropriate jewellery (tongue rings, belly rings)
10	Not attending Liturgical Singing, Mass Assemblies or Special Events

LEVEL TWO INFRINGEMENTS	
1	Being absent from class without an acceptable reason
2	Leaving the School premises without permission
3	Disrespect for College property or the vandalism thereof
4	Possession of or smoking cigarettes on the school premises
5	Offensive language
6	Tampering with or damaging other people's property
7	Disrespectful or insolent behaviour towards Educators or Council Leaders
8	Defamatory statements made of other people
9	Bullying (if minor incident)

LEVEL THREE INFRINGEMENTS	
1	Theft
2	Repeatedly committing the same offence which has resulted in at least three informal disciplinary measures
3	Indecent public behaviour and/or sexual impropriety
4	Possession of offensive or pornographic material
5	Obscene language and/or gestures

6	Accessing pornographic material in the Computer Centre
7	Any learner who possesses alcohol or is found drinking on the school premises or displaying any systems of intoxication
8	Any learner who possesses or is found under the influence of any illegal drug or who displays symptoms of such illegal drug(s) at an official educational, cultural or social activity of the school within or outside of the school premises.
9	Possession of a dangerous object; any explosive material or device; any firearm or gas weapon or any article, weapon or instrument which can be employed to cause bodily harm to a person or damage any property, or to render a person temporarily paralysed or unconscious at any official educational, cultural or social activity of the school within or outside the school premises
10	Bullying – verbal, emotional or physical
11	Fighting
12	Cheating during examinations or tests
13	Violence
14	Any transgression involving the law
15	Racism
16	Repeatedly impeding on the rights of other learners to be educated by disrupting the classroom environment
17	Any other act of misconduct that, in the opinion of the Head of Primary School and the St Patrick's CBC Executive Head, reasonably constitutes serious misconduct

### **3. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

3.1. Level 1 infringements which result in informal disciplinary measures will be recorded as far as reasonable possible on the learners file but parents will not necessarily be informed. However, should Level 1 infringements be repeatedly committed, parents will be informed.

3.2. Level 2 infringements are recorded as far as is reasonable possible on the learner's file and the parents are informed in certain instances.

3.3. The following procedure will apply where infringements require formal disciplinary measures i.e. Level 3 infringements.

3.3.1 In order to gather information and decide upon the specific disciplinary steps to be taken the alleged misconduct will be investigated by the Phase Head/Head of Primary School upon receiving the notice of such alleged misconduct. At this stage, before the validity and details of the alleged misconduct have been established, the School will not necessarily advise the parents/guardians of such an investigation. If there has been misconduct which requires further steps to be taken, parents will be informed

3.3.2 Depending upon the seriousness of the alleged misconduct, the St Patrick's CBC Executive Head may suspend the learner pending a full investigation.

- The parents will be phoned for a meeting at which the situation will be explained to them and the learner. Parents will be requested that the learner leaves the school premises immediately and may only return upon being informed.
- Such suspension may not last longer than two school days unless the misconduct proves to be of such a serious nature that there will be a Disciplinary Hearing and a possibility of expulsion.

3.3.3 Should, following an investigation, the infringement be confirmed but not regarded to be of such a nature that the suspension continues or the learner faces a Disciplinary Hearing of the sub-committee of the Board of Governors -

- A meeting will be convened with the learner, parents/guardians, Phase Head, Head of Primary School and the St Patrick's CBC Executive Head where the corrective measures will be explained.
- The learner may return to school.

3.3.4 Should, following the investigation, the infringement be confirmed and it is regarded to be of a serious nature that expulsion could follow, then -

- The St Patrick's CBC Executive Head may decide that the suspension be extended until such time as the Disciplinary Hearing takes place
- A notification of a Disciplinary Hearing of the sub-committee of the Board of Governors will be issued to the learner and the parents/guardians by the Head of College. This shall be handed over to the learner and parents personally or else forwarded by registered mail to the parents' or guardians' last known residential address. A copy of this notification must be submitted to the Disciplinary sub-committee of the Board of Governors.
- The parents/guardians must, where possible, receive such notification at least 48 hours (two working days) in advance
- This notification will state -
  - The time, date and venue of the Disciplinary Hearing
  - Sufficient information so that the learner and parents will be fully informed of the alleged misconduct and the seriousness thereof
  - That the learner and parent/guardians have to attend the Disciplinary Hearing and that their non-attendance may prejudice the child's case as the Hearing will be held in their absence and a decision made without their involvement

Save in exceptional circumstances, legal representation at a Disciplinary Hearing is not permitted. Application for such representation is made to the Head of College and may be granted at his discretion.

3.3.5 The Disciplinary sub-committee of the Board of Governors will -

- Be constituted of at least three members of the Board of Governors, other than the ex-officio members and the Chairman of the Board of Governors
- Include the Head of the Primary School or a nominated representative
- The Disciplinary hearing will be chaired by one of the members of the sub-committee who will
  - Be responsible for managing the hearing process and after consultation with other members of the sub-committee, will decide on the guilt or innocence of the learner in respect of the allegations made
  - The findings of the chairperson should be based on evidence presented at the enquiry. No finding of misconduct should be made for which prior notice was not given.
  - Decide on the action to be taken after consideration of the mitigating and/or aggravating factors
- Whenever it appears to the Disciplinary sub-committee of the Board of Governors that the disciplinary proceedings may put any witness under the age of 18 under undue mental stress or suffering if he or she testifies at the hearing, the sub-committee may, if practicable, appoint a competent person as an intermediary in order to enable the witness to give his or her evidence through that intermediary.

3.3.6 To ensure that the Disciplinary Hearing is properly conducted, the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Hearing will at the hearing –

- Ensure that the notes are taken and/or that the proceeding are tape recorded
- State the allegations for which the Disciplinary Hearing had been convened
- Allow evidence to be led
- Allow witnesses to testify
- Allow parents and learner to question such evidence
- Should an intermediary have been appointed, an examination or cross-examination of the witness must not take place in any manner other than through the intermediary
- Allow the parents and learner to state their own case
- Ensure that all parties are treated with the necessary respect and dignity
- After completion of the Disciplinary Hearing, the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Hearing has to inform the learner and the parents of the outcome of the Hearing as well as the disciplinary steps to be taken and the reasons for such in writing.
- Inform the learner and the parents of their right to appeal against the decision
- An appeal may be made for the following reasons:
  - The disciplinary procedure was not properly followed
  - The final decision on guilt was considered unfair
  - The decision regarding the action to be taken is considered to be inappropriate
  - Mitigating factors were not properly considered

- The Chairperson of the Disciplinary Hearing was considered to have been biased or subjective
- The learner was not given a fair opportunity to present his/her case
- New and relevant evidence has come to light – the reason for it not being presented at the Disciplinary Hearing has to be stated clearly

3.3.7 Should the learner and parents wish to appeal against the outcome of extended suspension or expulsion, they may do so within five working days after receiving the written outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing.

- The appeal is made in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors
- The Chairperson of the Board will constitute an Appeal Committee consisting of at least two members who may be members of the Board of Governors who were not part of the initial Disciplinary Hearing or members of the Parent Forum
- The detailed reasons for the appeal have to be submitted in writing
- At the Appeal Committee meeting the outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing will be interviewed and it will not be a “Re-hearing”
- Should the Chairperson of the Appeal Committee decide that there are grounds for such a re-hearing he may do so

If a learner has been suspended pending the completion of the Hearing process, the submission of the Appeal will not affect the suspension which will remain in place until the Appeal has also been concluded.

When a decision has been made by the Chairperson of the Appeal Committee, after consideration of the matters raised in the Appeal, a written recommendation will be made to the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Hearing. A copy of this will be given to the parents/guardians. This written recommendation is to be done within five working days.

3.3.8 The outcome of the Appeal Committee is the final step in the school disciplinary process and marks the end of the internal disciplinary measures.

#### **4. SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS AND CONSEQUENCES**

##### 4.1 Electronic devices

4.1.1 Cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, Laptops and any such like electronic devices are banned from College

4.1.2 Should a learner at any time be seen to not adhering to the above, the electronic device and attachments will be confiscated. No SIM cards will be removed from phones and handed to learners. The device will be placed in an envelope and handed to the Bursar for safekeeping. It may be collected, in person, on the last day of term.

## **5. ACADEMIC MATTERS**

### 5.1. Dishonesty in examinations/tests

5.1.1 The educator/invigilator will draw a line on the script at the point that the learner was seen to be cheating. The time and date will be indicated on such line and signed by the educator/invigilator on duty.

5.1.2 The educator/invigilator will confiscate all incriminating material as well as the script.

5.1.3 The learner may continue with the test/examination starting with a new paper.

5.1.4 A written report will be submitted to the Phase Head with the incriminating material.

5.1.5 If evidence of copying is found, then the learner will receive zero for all work done up to the time that he/she was found to be cheating

5.1.6 A copy of the report and a letter will be placed on the learner's file

5.1.7 Should this behaviour be repeated it may result in a Disciplinary Hearing in front of the Disciplinary sub-committee of the Board of Governors

### 5.2 Not submitting work for assessment on the due date:

5.2.1 Educators must inform learners when the due date for submissions of a task is and is to ensure that this is written both on the classroom's homework notice board as well as in the learner's homework notebook.

5.2.2 Should work not be submitted on time, the learner will receive a zero mark for the particular assignment.

### 5.3 Absenteeism for tests/examinations

5.3.1 Due notice for informal class tests will be verbally given to learners as well as put on the classroom notice board and written into the learners' homework notebooks. Cycle test timetables and examination timetables are given to learners at least two weeks prior to the commencement of a test series or examination session. A copy of these will also appear in the weekly WIS at least two weeks before the start of a session.

5.3.2 Failure to be at school for the set time to write a test or examination, without the submission of a valid medical certificate, will result in a zero mark being recorded. Should a medical certificate be presented, the learner will have an 'absent' mark recorded and final totals will be appropriately adjusted.

## **6. UNIFORM**

Uniform checks are carried out regularly by staff. Uniform checks are also done daily by class educators. It is the responsibility of staff and indeed all learners and their parents, to ensure that the School uniform is worn correctly and neatly. In the event of incorrect uniform, the parents will be contacted to ensure that the problem is rectified by a specific date.

#### 6.1 Nails

No nail polish or decoration of any kind may be worn. All learners are to ensure that nails are kept short and clean.

#### 6.2 Hair

The emphasis for boys and girls is on neatness and on natural styles. Learners must have regulation haircuts BEFORE they return to school. Boys may not step their hair. Girls may not tint, dye, perm, colour or straighten their hair. Only thin braids may be worn. These are to be the same colour as the girls' natural hair and may not contain any decorations. Thick braids are not allowed. Long braids are to be tied back. Hair accessories must be bottle green or black. Clips may be silver or black and must be plain. No decorative clips are allowed. If hair does not conform to school specifications, parents will be contacted immediately to have the problem rectified.

#### 6.3 Shoes

Shoes are expected to be clean and conform to school specifications

#### 6.4 Jewellery

St Patrick's CBC is a Catholic school

Learners may wear watches, crosses or St Christopher's crucifix (gold or silver) and a Medic-Alert bracelet on plain chains. All watches and crosses must be non-decorative. No other religious jewellery besides the St Christopher and the cross may be worn. Girls may wear studs (gold or silver). Only one stud per ear lobe may be worn and no sleepers. Learners may not wear one earring. Boys may not wear earrings. If found to be wearing incorrect jewellery, it will be confiscated and placed in an envelope and given to the Bursar for safekeeping. It may be collected, in person, at the end of the term.

#### 6.5 Hands in pockets

This is NOT allowed

#### 6.6 Blazers

Blazers are compulsory in the second and third terms and must be worn to and from school each day. Blazers are optional in the first and fourth terms when the weather is hotter. When learners go on a class outing blazers must be worn. The blazer is also to be worn to all official

school functions, School Masses and assemblies. The School jersey may not be worn without the blazer. In the summer terms, boys do not have to wear their blazers when they walk outside of the School premises, providing the Junior Primary boys have the white shirt with the School pocket badge and the Senior Primary boys wear their ties. Blazers must have the correct buttons.

## **7. BEHAVIOUR**

Behaviour of Primary School learners must be such that it will credit the learner, his/her family and the School. The School will not tolerate any behaviour it deems improper from its learners. Learners are expected to behave with dignity and to treat others with respect and dignity.

### 7.1 Discipline procedures:

- Learners will be issued with a demerit for breaking school rules after receiving a warning from the educator
- All demerits will work negatively against the merits received.
- When a learner receives 5 demerits, he/she will be called in by the Phase Head for correction of behaviour
- When a learner receives 10 demerits, he/she will be called in to the Head of the Primary school for intervention.
- Should a learner receive 15 demerits, the parents will be called in by the Head of the Primary School and a report on the relevant misdemeanours will be put on the learners file.
- Parents are expected to assist the School by confronting their child about his/her behaviour so as to avoid the development of any future problems.

### 7.2 The following offences will be dealt with by management:

- Cribbing/cheating in a test or examination;
- Stealing;
- Serious bullying and/or fighting;
- Undesirable literature on school premises;
- Unacceptable substance (alcohol/drugs) on school premises;
- Insolent, disgusting, unacceptable behaviour;
- Inappropriate websites.

### 7.3 Reasons for receiving demerits:

- Continued disruptive behaviour during lessons so as to disturb others from learning;
- Disruptive behaviour outside the classroom or on the sports field which infringes on the rights of others;

- Use of foul language;
- Defacing or vandalising School property;
- Interfering or damaging the property of others;
- Chewing gum while in uniform;
- Insolent behaviour;
- Bringing St Patrick’s CBC into disrepute;
- Bunking classes and sporting/cultural commitments;
- Dishonesty;
- Incomplete homework;
- Bad sportsmanship;
- Being in possession of dangerous articles or toys that can cause injury;
- Fighting or misbehaving off School property, but still representing St Patrick’s CBC in uniform;
- Disrespecting educators and adults;
- Continued poor presentation of work after warnings.

#### 7.4 Merit System

The class educator is responsible for and is to be in control of the issuing of merits during his/her lessons. Any other educator may, however, recommend that a certain learner be awarded a merit in any additional field/lesson. It is the responsibility of teacher concerned to ensure that it is securely recorded in the file which remains in the classroom.

##### 7.4.1 Suggested criteria for awarding a merit:

- Academic work
- Good sportsmanship
- Good or improved behaviour
- Helpfulness
- Good ambassadorship for St Patrick’s CBC
- Always having correct stationery and equipment at school
- Collections for special events/occasions
- Presentation and neatness of work
- Achieving 80% - 100% in cycle tests or class tests
- Participation in whole class and/or group class activities
- Substantial improvement, commitment and diligence
- Showing initiative

##### 7.4.2 Merit Awards are given out at Monday morning school Assemblies

Number of Merits	Reward
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5	Learner's name announced in assembly
10	Bronze Certificate Award
20	Personal Civvies day Award
30	Silver Certificate Award
40	Tuck Shop Voucher
50	Gold Certificate Award
60	St Patrick's CBC Stationery Award (Pen/Pencil)
70	Principal's Award
80	Branded Item
90	St Patrick's CBC Merit Badge
100	Headmaster's Award