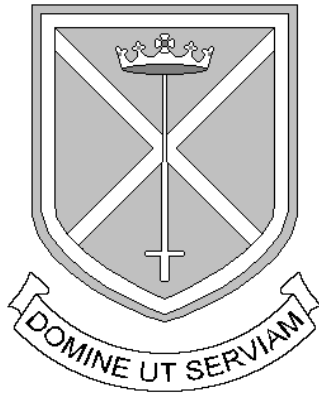


# **St Alban's Catholic High School**

## **Student Behaviour Policy**



**November 2009**

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## **Section 1 Introduction**

**1.1** Our Behaviour Policy is designed in such a way that it follows the principles set out in our Mission Statement and Home School Agreement. Whilst we aim to foster an atmosphere in which students may reach their academic potential and also develop fully as individuals, we recognise that there may be occasions when behaviour falls below the high level we are trying to achieve. Students' particular needs and difficulties are taken into account to safeguard their interests. Therefore, clear guidelines for what may happen if behaviour is unacceptable are essential. 'Learning, Respecting, Caring' is paramount in the school's mission.

**1.2** The school will not be successful if it works in isolation. We must maintain strong links with the parents of our students. The support of parents and their understanding of any sanction which may be implemented for unacceptable behaviour is crucial. The Form Tutor and Student Support Manager, working with other staff, have a responsibility on a day-to-day basis for the overall well being of each student. Each student should be able to develop secure and trusting relationships with members of staff and with each other. Changes in pastoral staff responsible for any student will be kept, where possible, to a minimum.

**1.3** The scope of this Policy extends as is recommended by DCSF guidelines to

- i) On the school site
- ii) Outside school on school business (e.g. trips, visits)
- iii) Situations where the student is not on school business but where taking action aids '*maintaining good behaviour and discipline among the pupil body as a whole*'. One example of this would be travelling to and from school.

## **Section 2 Overview**

**2.1** St. Alban's students are expected to be responsible for their own behaviour. They should have respect for themselves, respect for others and also for the environment in which they work. This is a Catholic School and students are reminded of Christ's message: *Just as I have loved you, you also must love one another* (John 13.34). This will be shown by high standards of behaviour and empathy for others, effort, punctuality, classwork, homework, organisation, attendance and uniform. We endeavour to acknowledge behaviour that is of a high standard and have a system of rewards for doing so.

**2.2** A high standard of behaviour is maintained by considering three aspects:

- **Respect for oneself**

This is shown by a positive and active involvement in classwork and school life. Inside the classroom this means that lessons are able to progress without disruption. Each student should ensure that they arrive for all lessons with the correct books and equipment, in the right uniform and with an expectation that they will contribute in a positive way to the success of the lesson.

- **Respect for others and their culture**

All members of the school community should be treated with respect. This is shown by the way that we speak to each other and by being courteous, well mannered and by showing regard for the feelings of others and difficulties they face. Discrimination will not be tolerated.

- **Respect for the environment**

We all benefit from working in a clean and tidy environment that is well-resourced and safe. To maintain this all members of the school community should not drop litter or use chewing gum. It is also important to respect other people's property and work displayed around the school, and to report any theft or damage to the nearest member of staff.

**2.3** There are many aspects of the daily life of the school that can have an effect on behaviour and student progress. These are listed in the following paragraphs with details of our expectations

for each. They are followed by the rewards and sanctions that are available to the school in responding to good or bad behaviour. It is not possible in this document to cover every situation that might arise so an element of common sense and a desire to do the best for the student and the school is required in responding to something not covered here.

**2.4** To support students in school we have a strong pastoral care structure. The key player in this for an individual student is the form tutor as they have daily contact with the students. There is a Student Support Manager for each of the three Key Stages in the school. A number of other staff are also available as necessary, including a Catholic Social Worker, Safeguarding (Child Protection) Officer, Behaviour Support Assistant and Chaplain. In addition a Head of Key Stage retains an overview of academic performance which we believe is linked to behaviour and application in school. The school's specialism of Inclusion is also supportive of the expectation of good behaviour.

## **2.5 Sixth form students**

We expect our sixth form students to set a good example to younger students and we have high expectations of their behaviour and conduct. All students are within the school are included within the terms of the behaviour policy, however it may be appropriate in some cases for different sanctions to be applied as some sanctions, such as detentions, are not applied to sixth form students. Sixth form students are not expected to wear uniform but should dress for school in what is regarded as smart casual clothing. A 'Pink slip' system is used to record instances where students fail to meet expectation, and this is collated by tutors.

More detailed advice for Sixth Form students is contained in the Sixth Form Handbook.

## **Section 3 Attendance and Punctuality**

**3.1** The school is required by law to keep a record of student attendance. It is essential that we have an accurate record of who is in school for safeguarding of students. Good attendance and punctuality are essential for good learning. They are also essential skills for later life. Punctuality and attendance are monitored by form tutors and the attendance officer and problems are followed up.

**3.2** If students are absent from school:

- parents/carers should telephone the school in the morning on the first day of their child's absence; if this does not happen the attendance officer will usually contact the parent/carer to enquire
- any absence needs to be explained, ideally by a letter from parents/carer or note in a student's planner
- parents/carers should contact the school again if an absence is more than three days. If they do not do so, the school will make attempts to contact them
- the Education Welfare Officer may be asked to call at the student's home.

**3.3** On return to school, it is the student's responsibility to seek advice on completing any work missed. If a student is late to class, he/she must catch up on work missed. The subject teacher may give a break or lunchtime detention in order to ensure that this is done if they are late without good reason.

**3.4** Serious lapses in attendance or punctuality will be referred through the Form Tutor to the attendance officer. In some instances referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer who may take further action and may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

We strongly discourage parents from taking their children out of school for holidays or family outings during the school term. In most cases, unless there are extenuating circumstances, these will count as an unauthorised absence.

## **Section 4 Homework**

**4.1** Students should always write homework in their planner and include the deadline by which the work has to be handed in. Parents/carers should sign the planner each week to show that they have seen it. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school if it appears that homework is not being set.

**4.2** All homework must be completed by the due deadline. Students are encouraged to plan out their homework and coursework. They will feel under enormous pressure in Years 10 and 11 if they are trying to catch up on coursework that should have been done earlier. The school does provide advice on study skills to help in this respect. Homework should be dated and well presented. When it is finished, reading and extra revision can be completed.

**4.3** If there are serious lapses in a student's record for completing homework, the matter will be referred to the relevant Head of Department, and then to the Form Tutor, or the Head of Key Stage. The school has a Homework Policy.

## **Section 5 Uniform and Appearance**

**5.1** All students are expected to wear correct school uniform as it plays an important part in establishing a community spirit and also encourages students to take a personal pride in their own appearance. They are expected to wear it on the way to and on the way from school each day. The school expects that the appearance of all students will reflect credit on the individual, the family and the school itself.

**5.2** A copy of the uniform list is available separately and includes limits on the amount of jewellery that may be worn as well as comments on hoodies, hair styles and other issues that arise from time to time; it is reviewed annually for the school prospectus. Students who fail to meet uniform expectations may receive a sanction based on the fact they have not followed a reasonable instruction.

**5.3** The school prospectus lists the current uniform of the school.

## **Section 6 Effort**

Students should make every effort to complete work to the best of their ability. St. Alban's has a system for commending effort as well as achievement and reports on this to parents each term. This effort will be recognised in exercise books using the V,G,S,N and M system.

V-	Very Good
G-	Good
S-	Satisfactory
N-	Needs Improvement
M-	Major improvement needed

## **Section 7 Lesson preparation and organisation**

**7.1** It helps to plan ahead and to ensure that homework is done. Timetables should be checked at night to see which lessons take place the following day. The necessary equipment and books should be put in the student's bag for the next morning. Students should be ready and prepared to work from the moment they enter the classroom or teaching area.

### **7.2 Lesson guidelines**

Some useful guidelines to encourage a positive approach are listed in the 'Mission Statement' which is printed in the student planners and on classroom walls. There are simple unequivocal guidelines for our teaching areas which state that students should:

- arrive for lessons on time
- line up quietly outside the classrooms
- enter quietly and sit down when asked to do so by the member of staff concerned

- ensure they are fully equipped for the lesson
- remain in their seats and not move around the classroom without the permission of the teacher
- raise their hands before speaking and speak when invited to do so by the teacher
- listen and follow instructions first time
- leave classrooms tidy at the end of the lesson e.g. tuck chairs in, re-arrange any furniture which has been moved, leave no litter
- respect the furniture, building and equipment.
- move around the buildings in an orderly way, observing times when one way signs apply on staircases
- carry correctly completed Student Planners
- keep exercise books and files neat with no scribbling on covers.

**7.3** Behaving in a way that disrupts the lesson and the learning of others is treated as a serious offence. Students can expect a sanction if they do not meet the expectations of a member of staff.

## **Section 8 Electronic Devices**

**8.1** The use of mobile telephones is not permitted in school. It is appreciated that, for safety reasons, students may require to have access to a phone on the way to or from school. However, whilst at school, they must be both turned off and kept out of sight. Staff will confiscate mobile telephones if they are seen in school and hand them into the school office. Students can then collect them at the end of the day. In the case of repeated confiscation parents may be asked to discuss with the school appropriate arrangements to ensure the student does not need to have the phone in school during normal school hours. Use of a mobile phone during a lesson will be deemed a serious offence.

**8.2** Personal music players and other electronic devices should also not be brought into school. As with mobile phones, they are not covered by any school insurance and the school would not be liable if they were lost or damaged. Any loss would be the students' responsibility.

**8.3** Students are not permitted to use phones or electronic devices at break or lunchtime. These times are part of the school day.

## **Section 9 Chewing Gum**

**9.1** One of the biggest problems in keeping the school clean has been the damage done to carpets and furniture by chewing gum. For this reason we do not allow chewing gum in school.

## **Section 10 Bullying**

**10.1** All members of the school community have the right to feel safe. Any form of bullying is treated seriously and followed up as a matter of priority. Bullying is defined as "any physical, verbal or indirect abuse which is deliberately hurtful and causes distress, or which an individual perceives to be bullying in nature". This includes cyber bullying.

**10.2** Bullying includes any racial or sexual comments, even if they are only perceived as such by the person to whom they are directed. A log of all such incidents is maintained and the headteacher reports incidents to the governors and Local Authority on a termly basis.

**10.3** Students need to be aware of the expectation that they are sympathetic to others' difficulties; the ethos of the school reinforces this. At times, insensitivity is perceived as bullying, and students can expect to be corrected if they behave in this way.

**10.4** Students who are found to have bullied other students in any way will receive a sanction (see later section of this policy) and may also be required to meet with their victim to hear their feelings, and to work together to ensure that the behaviour is not repeated. In this way some form of reconciliation will be sought.

**10.5** There is a separate school policy on bullying.

## **Section 11 Serious Offences**

**11.1** To ensure an ordered and safe environment for all who work at the school there are some rules to which all must adhere and, if broken, will be treated as very serious matters.

**11.2** This includes the following:

- behaviour which places the student or others in danger
- setting off the fire alarm other than in an emergency
- any form of physical, or verbal abuse, including gathering in large group intending to intimidate others.
- bringing into school any harmful or illegal substances, including tobacco, matches and lighters
- smoking on the premises, or on the way to and from school, or being with students who are smoking.
- bringing onto the school premises any type of weapon, including any type of knife/penknife or any type of gun, including toy guns and replicas. This also applies to travel to and from school.
- Using foul language with staff, or in within the hearing of staff.
- Direct refusal to follow a reasonable instruction.

**11.3** Unforeseen situations may also be included in this category. This means any act not listed above which is perceived to be against the common good of the school community.

## **Section 12 Responding to behaviour**

### **12.1 Rewards**

When students successfully follow the guidelines outlined above and meet the school's expectations for good behaviour, we endeavour to recognise this. Our present rewards system includes, in no particular order:

- verbal praise, either personal or public
- the *green slip system* for recording particular achievements
- subject stamps and rewards
- letters home for good progress shown in interim reports
- positive comments in Student Planners, exercise books, and students' work
- praise postcards
- recognition on Presentations Evening and in assembly
- prefect status in Year 11, peer supporter status
- good references for students when they leave the school.

This list is always under review as is the way in which rewards are recorded. Parents will be informed of any changes in 'Contact', our regular newsletter.

### **12.2 Sanctions**

When behaviour does not meet expectations we employ a range of strategies to address the situation. These are noted below and are again not in any particular order. The school's rationale for imposing a sanction is to correct behaviour and realign students' actions with the Catholic ethos. The level of response will depend on the seriousness of the offence, whether or not it has happened before and the student's previous disciplinary record. Clearly, if a student has not corrected their behaviour, from a previously imposed sanction, this makes the matter more serious and a more significant sanction might apply than would otherwise have been the case. Sanctions include:

- verbal reprimand-'expectations reaffirmed'
- letter or phone call home
- detention at break time, lunchtime or after school (see below)
- involvement of pastoral staff
- being placed On Report for a period of time

- meeting with parents
- removal of privileges
- referral to a more senior member of staff
- removal from lesson(s)
- fixed term exclusion (see below)
- permanent exclusion (see below)
- referral to governors

When a student does not meet the expectation of a member of staff a 'Yellow slip' report is written and passed to the form tutor who will collate them and monitor their behaviour across the school. A sanction may well then be imposed in direct response. A build up of Yellow slips over a period will trigger student interviews with designated staff. This may be the form tutor in the first instance; in more serious cases, staff leading areas of the school.

**12.3** If poor behaviour has resulted in damage to the school or property the student would be expected to remedy the situation and this may include payment for repair or replacement. A record of poor behaviour is maintained through a paper 'Yellow Slip' system and the school's Management Information System. Any previous record is taken into account when responding to issues.

**12.4** There may be occasions where it may be perceived that inconsistency of approach is taken. The school would always acknowledge that equitable decisions are important, but also that every situation is different, history of behaviour is different and students' response to previous sanctions is different. This may equate to a different school response from one student to another.

### **12.5 Detentions**

Students may be detained during break or lunch times, or after school. Parents/carers will, in most cases, be given twenty-four hours' notice of any after-school detention. However, in some circumstances a student may be kept in on the same day and the school will discuss this with parents if this is the case. In the interests of safety a student's circumstances (e.g. travelling arrangements) will be taken into consideration.

**12.6** Please note that parents' permission is not required for a teacher to detain a student, we inform parents so they can be aware that it is happening. No student will be detained past 4.30pm.

### **12.7 Exclusions**

Exclusion from school is usually reserved for serious offences or persistent misbehaviour. Exclusions are applied to emphasise the gravity of the offence and to recognise that a period of reflection is appropriate. They may be permanent, for a fixed time or an internal exclusion.

**12.8** Permanent exclusion is rare, but may be appropriate in some cases. Guidance from the DCSF states "*permanent exclusion should be considered for serious breaches of the behaviour policy and where a pupil remaining in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in school*". Sometimes it will be appropriate where there is a history of misbehaviour, where other sanctions have already been applied and/or other strategies used without leading to the necessary improvement. Acts of racism and acts of bullying will be considered for exclusion.

However, in some exceptional cases, it will be appropriate for a first or "one off" offence, which might include:-

- a) Serious actual or threatened violence against another student or member of staff
- b) Sexual abuse/assault
- c) Supplying drugs
- d) Carrying offensive weapons.

**12.9** Alternatively, where there are breaches of this policy (including persistent disruptive behaviour) which require a significant response but where these are not serious enough to warrant permanent exclusion, a "fixed term" external exclusion may be applied in which case the student

does not attend school and works at home. This would usually be 'fixed term' i.e. a defined number of days.

**12.10** Where it is felt appropriate to consider a significant sanction but that an external exclusion is excessive, the school may apply an internal exclusion, in which case the student will be withdrawn from timetabled lessons to work with a designated member of staff. During this time the student is detained at break, lunchtime and after school. The student concerned is then able to continue with their studies for the duration of their exclusion.

**12.11** In a situation where the School is considering applying an external exclusion, a detailed investigation will be carried out (which may include obtaining a written statement from the alleged offender, although this might not always be possible). An account will then be made to the Headteacher who will consider the matter and then they will discuss the situation with the student concerned and their parents. The Headteacher will then reach a decision as to whether or not to exclude the student or apply any other sanction, and communicate the decision accordingly to the student's parents. In some cases, any decision is automatically referred to the Governors for ratification; in others, the student or parents can ask the Governors to review the decision.

**12.12** In reaching any decision, the Headteacher must first ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out and then decide (on the "balance of probabilities" not "beyond reasonable doubt") whether the student acted as alleged. If so, he must decide the appropriate sanction to apply taking into account not only the seriousness of the behaviour under consideration but also the previous behaviour of, and sanctions applied to, the student.

**12.13** The Headteacher is required not to impose an exclusion "in the heat of the moment" unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the student concerned. In that event, unless he feels there is enough information available to reach a decision immediately, he may exclude the student for a fixed term as a temporary measure (informing the parents that this is the case) and then reach a final decision at or before the end of that fixed term. That fixed term might be extended in exceptional cases to allow for further investigation or consideration but only after the Headteacher has invited the student or parents to comment and within the limit set by DCSF exclusions guidance. In any event, any such temporary exclusion that is applied should not exceed the period which the Head determines at the outset might be the maximum exclusion that might apply.