



# **Code of Conduct**

**Version 2.0**

**March 2016**

## Document Version Control

| Version | Date       | Description  |
|---------|------------|--|
| 1.0     | Jan 2007   | First version adopted by Board of Management after major review of previously existing document. |
| 1.1     | May 2007   | Minor amendments   |
| 1.2     | May 2008   | Minor amendments   |
| 2.0     | March 2016 | Major revision   |

## **PREAMBLE**

Glenstal Abbey School forms an integral part of the wider community associated with the Benedictine monastery at Glenstal. Informed by the spirit of the Rule of Saint Benedict, this code is intended to improve the quality of our individual and collective lives at Glenstal Abbey School. In matters of conduct and discipline it is our aim to respect students' distinctiveness, in keeping with St Benedict's teaching that the one in charge should 'so temper all things that the strong may have something to strive after, and the weak may not fall back in dismay' (*Rule 64:19*). The ethos of the school is based on three essential principles which should characterise a Benedictine school: Reverence, Respect and Responsibility.

### ***Reverence***

Every person should have reverence for the sacredness of God's creation by behaving reverently towards it. Reverence is shown in a specifically religious context, such as in church, and must influence our approach to persons, property and to the environment.

### ***Respect***

Every member of the school community has the right to aspire to a happy, fulfilling life while in the school. The relaxed nature of the school must be cherished and students must learn how to combine friendliness with respect in their relations with those around them.

Students have a right to:

- Be treated with courtesy, kindness and respect.
- Live and learn in a safe, supportive environment, free from emotional, physical and sexual abuse.
- Be valued for their denominational, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity.
- Expect that school rules are fair, consistently implemented and respect the rights of all.
- Express feelings and opinions openly and honestly in a respectful manner.
- Expect that the school will strive to help them as they grow physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

### ***Responsibility***

If students are expected to show and be shown reverence and respect then it follows that they have responsibilities in return. Students shall ensure that they:

- Acknowledge the ethos of the school and the monastic community who live here.
- Value others and respect individual differences.
- Recognise that they have a responsibility to learn and work to achieve their personal best while allowing others to do the same.
- Develop responsibility for their actions.
- Maintain a safe and secure school environment by modelling and supporting the school rules.
- Value their physical and spiritual environment.

### ***Safeguarding***

The school implements the Child Protection Policy mandated by the Department of Education and Skills for all schools. The school is committed to preventing the abuse of any student. Should a student feel that he has been the object of any form of abuse, he must bring it to the attention of any member of staff or another student. That person must bring it to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person, who will deal with the matter immediately. The school will deal with such matters in a way that will respect the rights of all parties. No member of staff can promise absolute confidentiality on hearing such matters. The guiding principle in these procedures shall be to vindicate and protect the welfare of the student.

## **ACTIONS**

The values in the preamble must be expressed in action. A student, while enrolled in Glenstal Abbey School, whether in or out of term, shall behave at all times in a manner and way that shall not endanger, physically or otherwise, any other person, whether another school student, staff member, or person associated with the school. Students are expected at all times to uphold the good name of the school. A very high standard of behaviour is expected on school outings, on public transport and in the environs of the school. A student who brings the name of Glenstal Abbey School into disrepute at any time during the year may be subject to the sanctions of the school.

## ***Bullying***

The question of bullying is of particular importance in the promotion of a mutually supportive and healthy school environment.

- Every student in Glenstal has the right to enjoy his learning and leisure free from intimidation.
- Any hurt caused by words or actions is inconsistent with the school's culture and ethos.
- Complaints about bullying will be listened to attentively and dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Care Programme.
- The whole school community shall work to promote an atmosphere where positive behaviour is the norm.
- Bullying is repeated aggression - verbal, psychological or physical - conducted by an individual or group against others.
- Reports of bullying will be dealt with, in the first instance, under the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Care Programme.

## ***Treatment of Property***

Everyone has the right to have his property respected, but should take reasonable precautions to protect it. The school does not provide insurance for the loss of students' belongings and therefore the student is solely responsible for his own property. Unauthorised borrowing is stealing. Stealing and damage to property are serious offences and result in serious consequences. In the interests of the greater good, searches, without notice, may be undertaken to identify culprits.

Vandalism to the fabric of the school will be charged to the expenses account of the students concerned. If the individuals responsible are not identified, the cost of repair may be apportioned by the Bursar on the advice of the Headmaster. In the interests of security, CCTV cameras are used to monitor access to the grounds and other vulnerable areas. These cameras are there to protect students, staff and property. To interfere with them in any way is a serious offence.

All litter is to be placed in bins; this applies also in Murroe and on the avenue. Maintaining a litter-free environment is the responsibility of all, even if one has not been directly guilty of dropping it.

## ***Attire, Personal Hygiene and Health***

There is no official uniform; however an acceptable standard of dress must be maintained. Sports gear is not acceptable in the refectories or in the house. Each student is responsible for ensuring that all of his clothes are named and numbered. For formal occasions (eg Sunday Mass, concerts and on occasions when representing the school) formal wear (shirt, tie, jacket, cloth trousers and leather shoes) is required.

Hair should be kept neat, clean and tidy, to the satisfaction of the relevant Housemaster. Earrings or other piercing-jewellery may not be worn, as they constitute a health and safety hazard. All students should shower daily.

In the interest of good health:

- The laws of the state and the school's policy make clear that substance abuse has no place in Glenstal Abbey School.
- Physical exercise is strongly encouraged for all.
- The school strongly discourages smoking and no student has permission to smoke anywhere on the school campus.
- Unauthorised consumption or possession of alcohol will lead to suspension or expulsion, in accordance with the school's Substance Abuse Policy. Students in the company of another consuming alcohol are also subject to this policy.
- During free time, on school outings and/or tours, students may not enter public houses, off-licences, or duty-free areas to purchase alcohol or tobacco products.

### **RULES FOR SPECIFIC PLACES**

#### ***Areas of restricted access***

The following areas are out of bounds, except when supervised and by permission of those in charge:

- The Monastery, Guesthouse and Art School buildings.
- The farm.
- All houses on the grounds.
- The Teachers' Common Room.
- The school roofs.
- The lakes.

#### ***Dormitories***

The dormitories are communal areas and not private spaces. Each student is responsible for the cleanliness and tidiness of his own space; the tidiness of the space as a whole is the responsibility of all. See individual Rules posted in each house.

#### ***Conduct in the Classroom***

The classroom is a place of learning. The classroom occupies a central part of the students' life in Glenstal. A very high level of respect and responsibility is expected of the student so as to create a space in which each student can achieve his human and academic potential and develop in a positive, secure and happy environment.

Respect is evidenced by:

- Arriving in the classroom on time at appropriate timetabled times and as promptly as possible at other times.
- Bringing all the books and equipment required for all of the classes up to the next break in the timetable.
- Not consuming food in classrooms.
- Respecting and not defacing the fabric of the classroom, eg furniture, equipment, charts etc.
- Walking and not running indoors.
- Behaving in a polite and courteous manner with teaching and house staff.
- Dressing appropriately in the classroom. Clothes must be clean, tidy and neat at all times.
  - Collared shirts must be worn in class. Polo shirts are acceptable.
  - Trousers must be neat, eg Chinos.
  - The following are considered unacceptable: Jeans, Shorts, Sweatpants, Tracksuits, Tee-shirts, Sandals without socks, Slippers, Flip-flops and garments likely to offend.
  - If a member of staff judges a student's attire to be inappropriate, the student in question can reasonably be required to change.
  - Students may not dress casually or in sportswear for class even if participating in an activity later in the school day where classroom attire is not required.

Students show responsibility in the classroom by:

- Attending all the classes for which they are scheduled. Students, aware that they will be absent, should inform their teacher of their absence in advance.
- In the event of an absence, making every effort to get the missed material and complete any missed homework.
- Keeping text books and study copies neat.
- Paying positive and active attention to the teacher and by responding promptly to any instructions from the teacher.
- Completing all learning tasks requested by the teacher, especially homework.
- Not hindering the learning of others by disruptive behaviour, physical or verbal.

Each individual teacher may establish particular rules in the classroom – such as appropriate behaviour in laboratories, set places, acceptable noise levels etc.

Rules for School examinations will be posted at examination times

### ***Rules for Study***

Evening Study is a vital element of learning in Glenstal Abbey School. Study is a time for autonomous learning and students strive in these times to grow in reflective capacity and independent working skills.

- Students will move on the First Bell and be in place before the Second Bell.
- Students must sit where directed.
- Conversation during Study is prohibited.
- Eating is not permitted during Study.
- Drinking is permitted only from non-spill bottles.
- No intrusive/disruptive listening to music.
- No watching of movies at any time.
- No wandering between trenches during Study.
- Trenches must be tidied before the end of Second Study.
- Fifth year prefects assist the corridor supervisor in the exercise of his responsibilities in the supervision of studies. The exercise of this function is a privilege and all are expected to cooperate with the prefect to maintain an atmosphere of study.
- Students with study periods during the teaching day must spend those classes in the School Library or the 5<sup>th</sup> Year Study Hall.

First Study: 5.40 pm to 7.00 pm (1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Years to 6.50 pm)

Second Study: 8.00 pm to 9.30 pm (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Years to 9.00 pm)

### ***Mobile phones***

Mobile phones may not be brought into the church, Morning Assembly, or to the refectory, nor may they be used after lights out. Mobile phones must be registered with Housemasters. Failure to comply with any aspect of this rule may lead to confiscation. Mobile phones may not be used in an inappropriate manner to bully or abuse.

### ***Computer Room***

For access times and rules refer to notices in the Computer Room. All private Personal Computers (PCs) must be registered with the I.T. Administrator. If they are not registered, they will be confiscated. Random checks will be held on PCs.

### ***Notice Boards***

Only members of staff may post, remove or alter notices.

### **Library**

The School Library is a marvellous asset for the enjoyment of all. A working atmosphere is essential to the effective functioning of a library. Rules for borrowing books, responsibility for damage to books, and conduct in the Library are posted in the Library.

### **Refectories**

In the Rule of Saint Benedict the refectory is a sacred place. Students should conduct themselves with dignity and respect in the refectory. Students must respect both the catering staff and the food they serve. The pantries are also important places in the common life of the school.

- Students must attend all week-day meals unless excused.
- Cutlery and crockery may not be removed from the refectory.
- Food and Drink may not be removed from the refectories.
- Rules are posted in the pantries to ensure hygiene.
- Sports gear may not be worn in refectories.

### **Health Centre**

- Good behaviour and quietness is to be the norm in the Health Centre.
- Visits can only be approved by the Nurse, in consultation with the Housemasters.
- Students who feel ill must report to the Health Centre and may not leave without the permission of the Nurse.
- No student may occupy a bed in the Health Centre unless admitted by the Nurse.
- All medical information must be made available to the Nurse.
- All medical, physio, dental etc. appointments must be made through the Nurse, with parental permission.

### **Lockers**

It is the responsibility of the student to secure his locker. All valuable items should be either handed over to the Housemaster or notified to him. The school authorities reserve the right to search all lockers without notice or without a stated cause.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF ACTIONS THAT VIOLATE THIS CODE**

In accordance with St Benedict's injunction to the Abbot that he must 'adapt himself to a variety of characters', (*Rule 2:31*), the school seeks to implement a fair and consistent, though suitably flexible, system of rewards and sanctions. While actions that violate this Code may lead to sanctions, all are reminded that as St Benedict makes clear, the purpose of punishment is to bring about reform, and we take as our starting point his advice to the Abbot that he 'must hate faults but love the brothers' (*Rule 64:11*), and that he must deal with those who are guilty of misdeeds 'so that they may be healed' (*Rule 30:3*). The healing of the harm done by bad behaviour, by and to the individuals concerned, and reconciliation with others are therefore at the heart of the school's attitude to behaviour and discipline.

Breaches of the school's Code of Conduct may lead to some or all of the following consequences (the list is not exhaustive)

- Expression of contrition to the offended person.
- Restitution.
- Detention.
- Set tasks that are considered to be corrective.
- Internal suspension.
- Appearing before the Disciplinary Committee (Headmaster and two others, at which the student's rights are protected by an advisor from among the current staff)
- Suspension from school.

Suspension, including internal suspension, is the prerogative of the Headmaster and will be recorded permanently in the student's record. Appeals against suspensions should be lodged in writing with the Headmaster by a parent/guardian within seven days of the date upon which the parent/guardian is notified of the decision.

School exclusions will be handled in accordance with the school's Suspensions and Expulsions Policy. A student may be excluded permanently if the safety of others is endangered or behaviour is such as to seriously hinder the progress of others. Permanent exclusion can only be by decision of the Board of Management. Parents/guardians may attend the discussion. The decision, given in writing, may be appealed by parents/guardians (or the student if over 18 years old) to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills within 42 days of the parent/guardian being notified (see *DES circular M48/01*).

### ***Consequences of Irresponsibility Towards Self or Others***

The Teachers, Housemasters and Study Supervisors may:

- Issue verbal warnings.
- Issue Yellow or Red cards.
- Require a student to attend Special Studies for a fixed period of time.
- Give constructive lines or require a reflective essay.
- Require additional homework of the student.
- Inform the Deputy Principal or the Director of Boarding.

Where there is a clear Health and Safety risk to the student or teacher or where it is clear that a student has obstructed a lesson to the extent that teaching and learning for other students cannot progress, a student may be removed from the classroom or Study trench to a supervised location. Such exclusion from class or Study may be appropriate in order to ensure the learning of other students and to help the individual student to recognise and learn about the impact and consequences of his behaviour.

Additionally, the Headmaster or Director of Boarding may 'gate' a student.

### ***Sanctions and Supportive Interventions***

In seeking to build a supportive and nurturing environment for everyone in Glenstal Abbey School, school staff will endeavour at all times to encourage, note and reward positive behaviour. Any staff member may issue a White Card to a student whose behaviour on a particular occasion or over a period of time is particularly praiseworthy or reflective of the values enshrined in this Code.

Regrettably, when student behaviour does not reflect the values enshrined in this Code, sanctions of various kinds may be necessary, bearing in mind St Benedict's injunction to 'exalt mercy above judgment' (*Rule 64:10*). An important framework of sanctions is provided by the school's system of Yellow and Red Cards:

2 Yellow Cards = single detention

1 Red Card = single detention

Any extra Red or Yellow Cards = double detention

Students placed on detention should note that detention takes precedence over all other school/home activities. Other than in exceptional circumstances, no student will be excused detention or any part of it. Failure to attend detention may lead to further sanctions.

The Assistant Principals may place a student on Yellow Report. A student on Yellow Report must report each morning to the relevant Assistant Principal and be given a report sheet to be signed by the teachers of each of his classes that day. The student shall report to the relevant Assistant Principal at the end of class time to review the report sheet and reflect on learning and behaviour during class. This system is intended to support students to improve their behaviour so that teaching and learning can operate to the profit of all students.

The Deputy Principal may place a student on Red Report if he has not succeeded in amending his behaviour while on Yellow Report. A student on Red Report must report each morning to the Deputy Principal and be given a report sheet to be signed by the teachers of each of his classes that day. The student shall report to the Deputy Principal at the end of class time to review the report sheet and reflect on learning and behaviour during class. This system is intended to further support students to improve their behaviour so that teaching and learning can operate to the profit of all students. The escalation from Yellow to Red Report shall be at the discretion of the Deputy Principal in consultation with the Headmaster and Assistant Principals.

A similar system of Yellow and Red report shall operate in the houses, whereby a student on Yellow Report shall report to his Housemaster and a student on Red Report shall report to the Director of Boarding in a fashion similar to the Yellow and Red Reports for class.

The Headmaster may place a student on Headmaster's Report if that student has not succeeded in amending his behaviour while on Red Report. A student on Headmaster's Report must report each morning to the Headmaster and be given a report sheet to be signed by the teachers of each of his classes and the supervisors of both evening Study periods that day, along with his Housemaster. The student shall report to the Headmaster at the end of the day at a mutually agreed time to review the report sheet and reflect on learning and behaviour during class and in the house. This system is intended to further support students to improve their behaviour so that teaching and learning in both house and class can operate to the profit of all students. The escalation from Red to Headmaster's Report shall be at the discretion of the Headmaster in consultation with the Deputy Principal. The parents of a student on Headmaster's Report shall be contacted by the Headmaster to discuss the serious behavioural issues concerning the student.

The card and detention system will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually.

## **SAFETY**

### ***Absences from School***

Trips away from school for visits or other purposes may be undertaken only if the express permission of the student's Housemaster, the Director of Boarding or of the Headmaster has been received. Requests for permission for weekend overnight absences should be directed to the relevant Housemaster. Any request for absence which will result in the student missing class must be submitted to the Headmaster for approval.

Hitching lifts on the avenue is not allowed and no student may travel in a car driven by another student. Students may go to Murroe and the area bounded by the Ring, provided that they are back in time for Study. Boys may not go beyond the gates of the estate after 5.30 pm.

Students will not be permitted to leave school outside of the published term dates without a written or e-mailed request from parents to the Headmaster. Such requests should be made in advance and should set out the exceptional grounds justifying such a request.

Students wishing to leave the school by taxi must:

1. Get permission from their Housemaster.
2. Book the taxi through the School Administrator (during office hours), or through the Housemaster (outside of office hours).

***Suspicious visitors***

All unknown visitors should be avoided, and a member of staff should be informed should they behave suspiciously.

***Fire Precautions***

Fire notices, fire extinguishers, fire escape doors and corridors, notices relating to fire safety, smoke detectors and emergency lighting are there to save life. To interfere with them in any way is a serious offence.

In the event of discovering a fire, a student should raise the alarm at once and inform a member of staff. When the fire alarm sounds all students must leave the building by the nearest exit and go to their assembly point in the Sports Hall and line up in silence until all present have been counted. Students should not re-enter school buildings until told that it is safe to do so by a member of staff.

**CONCLUSION**

Good conduct is essential in the school and will be rewarded with a happy, safe environment for all; 'that in all things God may be glorified' (*Rule 57:9*).

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel and published on the school website. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

This policy has been made available to school personnel and published on the school website.

**Signed**   
Chairperson of Board of Management

**Signed**   
Headmaster

**Date** 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016

*Date of next review:* October 2016