



## **DISCIPLINE CODE**

The discipline code stresses the importance of learning self-discipline and growing in responsible decision-making. Students are taught to recognize that consequences are inherent in their choices, including consequences for inappropriate behavior and violating school rules. Notre Dame School of Bethlehem strives to motivate children to develop proper Christian attitudes toward discipline, which leads to the teaching of responsibility to God, self, and others.

Rules and regulations help to ensure the efficient running of any organization. In a Catholic school where Christian attitudes are taught and lived, administrators, faculty, and staff appeal to each student's sense of justice and encourage students to understand that their actions may affect themselves and others within the school community.

Families are asked to support the school's policies, in principle and practice. Students need to accept responsibility for their actions and follow the rules and regulations to mature and become young adults.

Any procedure contained within this handbook is strictly intended to provide students and their families with a framework for resolving various situations that may arise from time to time; however, such procedures are not designed to follow a precise formula. Notre Dame School of Bethlehem reserves the right to change, alter, remove, or amend any procedure, policy, or regulation contained

within this handbook at any time, at the discretion of the administration, whenever such changes are deemed necessary, without prior notice or cause.

## ACADEMIC OFFENSES

Offense	Points
1. Incomplete or missing homework or assignment -----	1
2. Other -----	1

**Please note that repeated academic offenses may result in mandatory attendance of Homework Hour at the cost of seven dollars per day.**

## BEHAVIORAL OFFENSES: LEVEL I

Offense	Points
1. Unsigned demerit or paper -----	1
2. Unsigned test -----	1
3. Misbehavior [including violations of classroom rules] -----	1
4. Tardiness to class -----	1
5. Gum chewing -----	1
6. Loitering -----	1
7. Dress code violation [including Dress Down attire] -----	1
8. Uncovered textbook -----	1
9. Markings on books [other than required information] -----	1
10. Other -----	1

## BEHAVIORAL OFFENSES: LEVEL II

Offense	Points
1. Improper language -----	2
2. Inappropriate gestures -----	2
3. Repeated misbehavior [including violations of classroom rules] -----	2
4. Classroom interruption -----	2
5. Vandalism [minor damage] -----	2
6. Dress code violation -----	2
7. Throwing objects or food -----	2
8. Failure to return a library book or pay a fine [after 2 <sup>nd</sup> notice] -----	2
9. Other -----	2

## BEHAVIORAL OFFENSES: LEVEL III

Offense	Points
1. Forging a signature -----	3
2. Disrespect -----	3
3. Absence from the class, cafeteria, or recess [without proper authorization] -----	3
4. Harassment or threat -----	3

5.	Act affecting the safety of others -----	3
6.	Disobedience -----	3
7.	Lying -----	3
8.	Possession of inappropriate materials -----	3
9.	Visiting inappropriate websites -----	3
10.	Aiding & abetting a Level III Offense -----	3
11.	Dress code violation-----	3
12.	Other -----	3

### **BEHAVIORAL OFFENSES: LEVEL IV**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Points</b>
1. Cheating -----	4
2. Plagiarism-----	4
3. Unexcused absence from detention -----	4
4. Vandalism [significant damage]-----	4
5. Insubordinate or abusive language -----	4
6. Misuse of conventional materials for harmful purpose-----	4
7. Misbehavior on a field trip -----	4
8. Fighting -----	4
9. Aiding & abetting a Level IV offense -----	4
10. Misuse of school technology [failure to comply with <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i> ]---	4
11. Other -----	4

### **BEHAVIORAL OFFENSES: LEVEL V**

**The following infractions are considered severe matters. Each offense will be dealt with individually in accordance with the Diocese of Allentown’s Crisis Manual. Any Level V offense will result in four or more behavioral points, automatic detention, and suspension or expulsion.**

<b>Offense</b>
1. Possession of a controlled substance [drugs or alcohol]
2. Possession of contraband
3. Possession or use of tobacco products, matches, or lighters
4. Fighting or any action resulting in physical injury
5. Possession of a weapon of any kind [including, but not limited to, knives or other dangerous instruments]
6. Leaving school property without permission
7. Committing a crime on school property; affecting the safety or well-being of the school community
8. Aiding and abetting a Level V offense
9. Other

## DEMERIT POINTS

An accumulation of four **academic points** will result in after-school detention. If a student accumulates eight academic points, he or she will be placed on social suspension. After that, an accumulation of four more academic points will result in additional detention and continued social suspension.

An accumulation of four **behavioral points** will result in after-school detention. If a student accumulates eight behavioral points, he or she will be placed on social suspension. After that, an accumulation of four more behavioral points will result in additional detention and continued social suspension.

Behavioral guidelines continue to be in effect in the event of a substitute teacher.

The accumulation of both academic and behavioral points will be tracked throughout the year [see Yearly Accumulated Academic or Behavioral Points].

Accumulated academic and behavioral Points will influence Effort & Conduct grades respectively on a student's report card.

## YEARLY ACCUMULATED ACADEMIC OR BEHAVIORAL POINTS & EARN BACK PROGRAM

If a student accumulates **eight academic or eight behavioral points**, he or she will be placed on social suspension and lose the privilege to participate in special programs and go on field trips. A mandatory parent conference may be scheduled, and an individualized action plan may be created. If the terms of this action plan are not met or additional points are accumulated, a probation or expulsion conference may be scheduled. At the administration's discretion, the student may not be readmitted to the classroom until this conference has occurred.

A student will be allowed to earn back academic or behavioral demerit points by completing a contract with either the teacher who issued the demerit or the principal; the contract terms will be at the teacher's or principal's discretion. This program aims to enable a student to take a proactive approach to his or her responsibilities before reaching eight academic points. A student will not be permitted to earn back points while he or she is continuing to accrue points for the same infraction.

## TRIMESTER REQUIREMENTS

All students must meet individual discipline requirements before trimester or yearly report cards are distributed or diplomas are granted. These requirements

include detentions or the satisfaction of all terms detailed in an individual discipline plan.

## **LATENESS POLICY**

Students are expected to be on time for school. Arrival after 8:05 a.m. is considered tardy, and the student must report to the office accompanied by a parent or guardian to obtain a late slip. Five unexcused late slips in a trimester will result in detention. The administration will review repeated lateness to determine whether a parent conference is needed to explore concerns. Reasons for excused tardiness include a doctor's or dentist's appointment, and a doctor's or dentist's note is required as proof. Unexcused tardiness is defined as being late for any other reason.

## **BULLYING POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Notre Dame School of Bethlehem created a policy on bullying to support the school's commitment and mission to provide a safe environment where students can grow spiritually, morally, and emotionally. It applies to all students, parents, faculty, staff, and adults on the campus, whether while attending school, employed by the school, working as a contractor, volunteering in any capacity, or merely visiting for a portion of the day.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Notre Dame School of Bethlehem believes that all people have dignity because they are created in the image and likeness of God. As a Catholic Christian community, we are called to reflect the values of Jesus Christ in His regard and respect for all people. In this way, Notre Dame builds up the Body of Christ to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for every member of its community.

**Any form of bullying directed toward any member of our school community by another member of the community is contrary to these Christian values and is not acceptable at any time.**

The school will provide an ongoing and age-appropriate anti-bullying and social skills education, *Second Step*, for all students, as well as educate faculty, staff, and parents about these same topics to promote the prevention of bullying behaviors within our school community. The *Second Step* program is a universal, classroom-based program designed to increase students' success and decrease problem behaviors by promoting social-emotional competence and self-regulation. It teaches skills that strengthen students' abilities to learn, have

empathy, manage emotions, and solve problems. The *Second Step* program targets key risk and protective factors linked to various problem behaviors. Equipping students with *Second Step* skills helps to create a safer, more respectful learning environment that promotes success.

The school will provide ways for individuals to report incidents of bullying or other negative social behaviors of concern and treat seriously any reports of these behaviors or circumstances. Such statements will be reviewed and investigated promptly, confidentially, and thoroughly. Consequences will be applied according to the school's discipline code and, in some cases, may result in suspension or expulsion from the school, depending upon the nature of the infraction.

## **PREVENTION & EDUCATION**

Bullying prevention begins with the opportunity for all school community members to communicate about their concerns or issues. Learning to distinguish between regular social ups and downs, negative social behaviors like meanness or rudeness, and actual bullying is essential in this process. Bullying does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict. The definitions that follow provide a framework for common understanding.

**Bullying** when a student or group of students continuously attempts to take power over another student. Bullying can involve students who adopt the roles of target, bully, bully-follower, or bystander.

**Physical Bullying** continuously using physical force to hurt another student by behaviors that may include, but are not limited to, intimidating, pushing, shoving, hitting, punching, kicking, pinching, spitting, getting in the way of, or holding. It is also physical bullying to interfere with another student's belongings, to take or break possessions, or to demand or steal money.

**Verbal Bullying** continuously directing words to another student with the intention of putting down or humiliating. This behavior includes, but is not limited to, teasing, name-calling, insulting, taunting, sarcasm, put-downs, ridiculing, and threatening. It is also considered verbal bullying when a student continuously uses hostile gestures towards another student, such as making faces, staring, eye-rolling, or giving the evil eye.

**Social or Relational Bullying** continuously influencing other students' friendships and relationships by actions that include, but are not limited to, deliberately leaving them out, spreading gossip or rumor, whispering about them, giving them the silent treatment, ostracizing, or scapegoating. Social or relational bullying also includes continuously writing words or creating cartoons, drawings, or posters about another student to hurt or humiliate that student.

**Cyberbullying** using cell phones, text messages, instant messages, emails, computers, computer networks, web blogs, or postings to bully another student. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, sending threatening or insulting messages by phone or email, posting embarrassing pictures or personal information about others on blogs or social networking sites such as Facebook or Instagram, forwarding to others a private email or text message that was meant for a single individual, or spreading hurtful rumors online with the intent to coerce, intimidate, or harass any person.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

All members of the Notre Dame School of Bethlehem community have the right and responsibility to report incidents of concern regarding negative social behaviors or bullying to ensure a safe environment and develop positive relationships within the school community. Administration, faculty, or staff are not always present to witness incidents or situations of concern and, therefore, can only intervene if informed about them.

Students are encouraged to report bullying concerns to their classroom teacher or another faculty or staff member through a verbal report or written note.

Parents are also encouraged to report any concerns about bullying behaviors to faculty, staff, or the administration.

Faculty and staff will report to the administration all bullying concerns and incidents that come to their attention through either direct observation or reports from others. All statements that teachers share with the administration will be documented.

The administration may also initiate the process to address a concern or observed incident and document the details. Depending upon the concern, their report may be shared with the student's classroom teacher. The administration will maintain records of any information filed during the school year.

## **INTERVENTION PROCEDURES**

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and handled promptly by the administration or faculty. Any incident will be investigated, and appropriate measures will be taken to correct the situation. Upon thorough review of the event, concerns may be addressed within the classroom by the teacher or referred to the administration for further intervention. The goals will be to

maintain safety and order and to identify, teach, and practice the skills needed to prevent any negative behavior from reoccurring. Each incident will be monitored to ensure that repeat offenses do not occur. If a bullying incident should reoccur, disciplinary action will be at the administration's discretion.

In any case of reported bullying, the administration will interview all students involved. This investigation might include speaking with students, parents, faculty, or staff, reviewing school records, or identifying any issues with a parent or within a family. Any student retaliating against another student for reporting bullying will be subject to the appropriate consequences.

Posting on social media, including but not limited to Facebook or Twitter, will result in disciplinary action and possibly expulsion if the content of the posting includes any defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish. Parents should set a positive example of conflict resolution in keeping with Catholic values and refrain from making negative social media posts. Any negative postings about the school community might result in the student being disenrolled, and there will be no reimbursement for tuition or fees.

Consequences for students who bully others will depend upon the results of an investigation. These might include demerits, detention, the loss of school privileges, parent conferences, a behavioral plan, counseling, suspension, or expulsion. Depending upon the severity of the incident, the administration might also report to law enforcement if applicable.

### **CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION SUMMARY**

The above discipline categories might not cover every possible situation. The school's faculty and administration reserve the right to determine inappropriate and unacceptable behavior.

Conduct by students, parents or guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school is grounds for disciplinary action, including, but not limited to the immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where applicable.

The administration reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus conduct if that conduct is associated with teachers, staff, or students of Notre Dame School, where the behavior is contrary to Catholic values or could bring shame, embarrassment, or disruption to the school.

Parents are expected to support school personnel in matters of discipline and comply with disciplinary action. The administration has the final recourse in all



disciplinary situations and could waive any regulations for just cause at their discretion.

Notre Dame School of Bethlehem School strives to cultivate a peaceful and accepting atmosphere. Each morning begins with prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the school's pledge. All contribute to a tone of faith, mutual respect, and compassion. Students are expected to comply with the dress and discipline codes, both of which set the stage for structure, orderliness, and respect. Both codes aid in reducing distractions, keeping behavioral problems to a minimum, and allowing for focused teaching and learning.