

HARTSTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

CHARTER OF BEHAVIOUR

**Revised May 2017
Revised March 2020
Ratified by BOM 09/03/2020
Amended June 2021**

INTRODUCTION

The Charter of Behaviour for students of Hartstown Community School has been devised in conjunction with students, parents and staff and has been informed by the following documents:

- **Education Act, 1998**
- **Education (welfare) Act, 2000**
- **Equal Status Act, 2000**
- **Teaching Council Act, 2001**
- **Safety Health & Welfare at Work Act 1989**
- **Convention on the rights of the child (1992)**
- **Article 42 of the Constitution**
- **Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011)**
- **Relevant circulars issued by the Department of Education and skills**
- **As a Community School, in common with all Community and Comprehensive Schools, we are guided by the Deed of Trust under which these schools were established.**

Aims

Our Charter of Behaviour recognises the importance of creating and maintaining a positive and open climate in our school, where policies and practices are fair and consistent and in line with current legislation, and where our students can develop in a safe and supportive environment. We aim to develop in our students' resilience, self-confidence and independence as well as empathy and consideration towards others. We aim to foster a sense of pride in themselves, in their community and in their school. As an inclusive school, we emphasise respect for ourselves, others and the value of diversity.

CHARTER OF BEHAVIOUR - PUPIL GUIDELINES

The principles underlining the guidelines for students are drawn from the mission statement of our school and include:

- Creating and maintaining a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- Creating a positive and safe environment in which optimum teaching and learning can take place.
- Encouraging students to take active responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.
- Building positive relationships based on mutual respect and support among our school community
- Ensuring our high expectations of behaviour are communicated effectively to students and their commitment to these encouraged.
- Recognising that each member of our school community is unique and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Our individual differences enrich and enhance our community. Each person's contribution is valued and welcomed.



This is the underlying spirit of our Charter of Behaviour. It serves to ensure that all members of our school community can flourish and develop and that optimum teaching and learning can occur in a safe and nurturing environment. The creation and maintenance of a safe and nurturing environment is dependent on co-operation between all parties involved in our school community - pupils, parents/guardians, teaching staff and SNA's, ancillary staff, and Board of Management. We expect all members of our community to commit to principles of tolerance, consideration and respect for others and to recognise the right of others to work and learn in a supportive environment without disruption.

ATTENDANCE

Consistent and regular attendance is vital to educational progress. The support of Parents/Guardians is of central importance in encouraging students to achieve consistent school attendance. All absences must be explained by a note in the school journal when the student returns following an absence. We request that absence notes include a reason and that absences are kept to a minimum to ensure continuity in a student's education. Under the Education Welfare Act 2000 the school is required by law to notify Tulsa when a pupil accumulates 20 or more days absence and is under 16 years. The relevant Education Welfare Officer assigned by Tulsa may make contact with the parents/guardians of that pupil. Students leaving school during the school day should have an explanatory note from a parent or guardian. Having received permission from the Deputy Principal, Year Head or Tutor they should sign out in the front office.

PUNCTUALITY

Students should be in school by 8.23 each morning (Monday to Friday) and by 12.27 in the afternoon (Monday to Thursday- Half Day Friday). Assembly begins at 8.28 and afternoon classes begin at 12.32. Students are expected to move promptly from class to class during the school day. Any authorised delay on school business will be accompanied by a note from the relevant teacher. Tuition on school day ends at 3.26 p.m. Monday to Thursday and at 12.20 on Friday. Students who are late for school should have a written explanation from a parent/guardian. They are required to sign in at the front office and receive a late stamp in their journal to allow entry to class. This late stamp should be shown to parents/guardians, signed by them and returned the next day.

CLASSWORK AND HOMEWORK

Students should come prepared for class with all books, copies, pencils/pens and equipment required. Homework should be completed to an acceptable standard. All homework for the following day should be written into the school journal. Students should have their journal with them at all times and must present it whenever requested by any member of staff. Parents are required to check and sign the school journal at least once a week as it is a vital communication link between home and school. Results from class tests given during term are written into the school journal and should be signed by Parents.

GENERAL BEHAVIOUR

Students are expected to display good manners and to treat others with respect and consideration both in school and on their journey to and from school. Students using bicycles or E-scooters should dismount at the gate and walk their bicycles or E-scooters to the designated bicycle rack. Cycling or the use of E-Scooters is not allowed in the school grounds.

Pupils are asked to walk in the school building and to keep to the left-hand side of the corridor to facilitate safe and comfortable movement between classes. Students should not bring glass bottles to school.

When representing the school on educational trips, events, outings etc. or when in school uniform outside of school hours students are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards others.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR

Students should be courteous and respectful towards teachers and their fellow students in class. Each student should ensure that their behaviour contributes to the creation of a focussed and pleasant learning environment for all and shows respect for the teaching and learning process. Confrontations should not occur during class time for the safety and security of all. Any difficulties that arise during class are best dealt with calmly after class. We recognise the importance of the student voice but this must be expressed in a calm manner and with due regard for the rights of other students and teachers.

GENERAL CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Students should arrive punctually and line up outside the room in an orderly manner. They should enter only when told to do so by a teacher. All classes have a class seating plan and students should sit in the seat appointed by the teacher. On arrival in class students should remove jackets/scarves/etc. and take out all books, copies and other material required for class. They should then place their bags under the desks. Journals should be left on the desk throughout the class period and must be given to the teacher when requested. Attendance sheets and report cards should be given to the teacher at the start of the class and collected at the end of the class. When they wish to speak students should indicate this by raising their hand and receive permission from the teacher before speaking, to ensure a calm and focussed learning environment. Students should pay due attention to, and follow instructions from their teacher. Where correction is necessary it should be accepted and followed by students. All homework should be written into journals, completed and presented on time. Bathroom breaks should be noted in journals by the teacher. The journal will be retained by the teacher and returned to the student on their return from a bathroom break. Students should not consume food or drink during class. Water bottles are permitted but should be kept in the student's bag. Mobile phones must be switched off unless, under the direction of the teacher, they are used for class work. Students should not pack up until told to do so by the teacher. Students should leave the classroom neat and tidy and exit in an orderly manner. Detentions of more than 15 minutes should be noted in the journal the day prior to the detention, unless otherwise agreed with parents. Serious disciplinary issues should be recorded on an incident report form and returned to the appropriate year-head. Electronic roll/teacher's records should be completed for each class

DRESS CODE

Full uniform is compulsory for all pupils at all times unless otherwise informed. School shoes must be black leather (no canvas or visible logos). The PE uniform consists of a black Tee shirt with school crest, black leggings or shorts with school crest, and a black with white stripes quarter zip top with the school crest. The P. E. uniform should be worn on the day on which the student has P.E. class.

Runners are not acceptable as footwear except for P.E. or with the provision of a note from a medical doctor. All students must participate in P.E class unless excused by a medical note. Where a student does not bring their correct PE uniform a clean jersey will be provided. Where a student is suffering a mild injury or indisposition, they are encouraged to bring in their PE gear and participate to an appropriate level. Jewellery is limited to one ring per hand, small sleepers or stud earrings and chains worn inside jumpers. Facial jewellery including nose piercings and external lip piercings are not permitted on health and safety grounds. Excessive jewellery will be confiscated and returned after an agreed time period. False nails are not permitted on health and safety grounds. It is recommended that students wear the school jacket so as to reduce the risk of theft. Students wearing jackets with hoods should remove the hood when in the school building. Hoodies are not allowed. Tattoos should normally be covered.

Please note, black shoes must have a leather/hard covering over the instep of the foot. Canvas, plimsolls or soft covered shoes are not acceptable due to health and safety.

Acceptable			
Not acceptable			

Please note, black shoes must have a leather/hard covering over the instep of the foot. Canvas, plimsolls or soft covered shoes are not acceptable due to health and safety.

**The pictures above are to provide a visual example of the appropriate footwear required. The pictures are not a definite list of acceptable shoes.*

HARRASSMENT OR CYBER REFERENCING OF STAFF

The staff of Hartstown Community School are a professional body and are committed to our school community and to achieving the best possible outcomes for our students. Students are asked to respect the boundaries between the professional and personal aspects of staff members' lives. If a situation arises where they encounter teachers outside of school hours, students are expected to behave courteously and respectfully towards them. Harassment or intimidation of teachers when off duty will be taken very seriously and will be dealt with at the discretion of the Board of Management.

Students should not comment on, or make reference to, a member of staff on social media sites or social fora. Students should not circulate or publish, through ICT or other means, material recorded without consent that may undermine, or cause damage to, the professional or personal reputation of another person. Any breach of these rules will be dealt with at the discretion of the board of management. The student concerned may be liable for expulsion.

PROPERTY

The School Management cannot accept responsibility for students' property. For safety and security students should clearly mark all their belongings. Malicious or careless damage to any property or equipment is treated very seriously and may require payment being sought from a student or their parent/guardian. Sanctions may also be imposed. Theft of any kind in the school is considered a serious offence and will be liable to further sanctions. Students who are guilty of theft will be liable to expulsion. In the interest of Health and Safety any interference with the fire alarm/safety equipment will result in serious sanctions.

BICYCLE AND E-SCOOTER POLICY

Students are encouraged to walk or cycle to school but do so at their own risk. ***Those using bicycles or E-scooters should enter and exit the school via the Hartstown gate entrance only.*** On Health and Safety grounds students must not ride bicycles or E-scooters when on school property at any time, as this poses a risk to others. Students found cycling or riding on E-scooters on the school grounds may have their bicycles or E-scooters confiscated.

Where cases of loss or damage to students' bicycles or E-scooters occur, the school will investigate such incidences as fully as possible. However, the school accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to students' bicycles or E-scooters. Students should use a lock on their bikes or E-scooters at all times, accessible only by key, which they should keep in their possession. We strongly encourage students who cycle or use E-scooters to wear helmets but this is ultimately the responsibility of the student and their parents. When cycling students should use the designated cycle lane and keep footpaths clear for pedestrian traffic.

SMOKING

Legislation outlaws smoking in the workplace. In all schools smoking is prohibited within the entire school boundary with no exception. This policy applies to all employees, students, parents / guardians of students, consultants, contractors or their agents / representatives and visitors to the school. Smoking in the immediate environment outside the school, while in school uniform, is not allowed. There are serious fines/penalties for breach of this legislation.

We recommend that parents/guardians of students advise them of this legislation. The legislation applies to students and not just to adults. This extends to include e-cigarettes and vaping.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Possession, use or supply of drugs, alcohol or any illegal substances is completely prohibited. Any breach of this regulation will warrant removal from class and the imposition of sanctions. A final decision of the severity of the sanction rests with the Board of Management. The substance abuse policy is available for inspection in the school.

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER DEVICES

We operate a strict Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones. Students and parents must read and sign the student/Parent Acceptance form found in the journal. Mobile phones must be switched off during the school day and will be confiscated if found in use. The confiscated items will only be returned to the pupil or parent/guardian after one week (2 weeks in exceptional cases).

CHEWING-GUM

In the interest of maintaining a clean school environment and preventing damage to school furniture and fittings, chewing gum is prohibited in all areas of the school complex. Students who chew gum will be liable to a cleaning charge of €10 and may be required to carry out cleaning duties.

TIPP-EX AND LARGE MARKERS

The use of Tipp-Ex or other correcting fluids and large markers are not allowed in the school. Non fluid based corrector pens may be used.

SANCTIONS

Where students do not respect the charter of behaviour and where reasonable requests and discussion do not bring about a change in behaviour, it may be necessary to impose sanctions. Sanctions will depend on the seriousness of the breach but may include the following:

- a warning/reprimand by teacher
- a note in school journal to be signed by parents
- An incident report form submitted by the teacher to the year head
- Extra work and/or punishment given by class teacher/tutor/year head
- Detention. Please note that students can be detained for 15 minutes on any day without notice to parents. Longer periods of detention require parents/guardians to be notified the day before on the appropriate page in the journal. This notification should be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher.
- A student may be placed on a report card to monitor work/behaviour in each class period. The report card must be signed each night by a parent/guardian and returned at assembly to the relevant Year Head.
- The pupil may be brought for interview to Principal/ Deputy Principals
- Parents/Guardians may be asked to come to the school to discuss their child's behaviour
- A period of suspension may be imposed
- A report may be forwarded to the Board of Management
- Ultimately-Expulsion from the school.

The decision to expel a student will be made by the Board of Management in accordance with Tulsa guidelines and section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act.

The Board of Management delegates authority for sanctioning suspensions to the principal and Deputy Principals in accordance with Tulsa guidelines.

Serious breaches of the Code of Behaviour may lead to immediate suspension by Principal/ Deputy Principals. In the event of a suspension or expulsion, parents are reminded that they have the right to appeal to the Board of Management, the Education Welfare Board or the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

Note: It is not possible to cover all possible infringements of behaviour and their appropriate sanctions. The Board of Management reserves the right to interpret the Charter of Behaviour and to make the final decision regarding appropriate sanctions.

Parents have the right to appeal decisions made concerning their son/daughter. Where parents have concerns these should be raised in the first instance with the school authorities including the relevant Year Head and Deputy Principal liaising with the Year Head. It is the Policy of the Board of Management to inform parents/guardians of their rights regarding the appeals process.

Acceptance of our school Charter of Behaviour is a condition of attendance at Hartstown Community School. Students and their Parents/Guardians must sign the copy of the Charter of Behaviour in the school journal.

An offer of admission may not be made, or may be withdrawn by Hartstown Community School where the parent or guardian fails to confirm that the Charter of behaviour is acceptable to him or her.

I / We agree that the Hartstown Community School may use images of our son/daughter participating in school activities on

- The School website,
- Official School social media,
- Ezine,
- The School Year Book
- Other school publications.

Signed _____

Parents/Guardians who do not wish to agree to the use of their child's image should inform the school in writing as per the Data Protection Policy