

# CODE OF DISCIPLINE

## MISSION STATEMENT

Ursuline College is a school where students are educated in partnership with parents in a Catholic and caring community; where each individual is respected as unique; where ongoing efforts are made to develop every aspect of the person and where each one is prepared to take her place in society as a responsible citizen.

The philosophy of Ursuline education is based on the writings of St Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursuline Congregation. In her writings, St Angela emphasised the following

- q. Personal relationship with God
- q. The holistic education of each individual
- q. The dignity and uniqueness of each person
- q. The importance of courtesy and kindness
- q. The fostering of courage and confidence to live in justice and truth
- q. The encouragement of a caring and respectful attitude towards self, others and the environment.

## ETHOS

Ursuline College tries to enable students to

- q. Be aware of God's unconditional love for them
- q. Know and live their Catholic faith through learning, liturgy, prayer and practice
- q. Be active participants of their community and church
- q. Be aware of others less fortunate than themselves and respond accordingly
- q. Be independent of mind in order to stand up for the truth

Ursuline educators strive that all students would

- q. Be active participants in their own learning
- q. Reach their academic potential
- q. Develop and love their cultural heritage while also appreciating and respecting the cultural differences of others
- q. Develop creativity in their use of leisure
- q. Develop active and enquiring minds, powers of discrimination, self-discipline and leadership skills
- q. Be responsible guardians of our planet.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR

At Ursuline College, we work to help students to develop their gifts and talents as fully as possible. Every effort is made to acknowledge and reward good behaviour and to affirm the positive contribution of students to the life of the school. The school encourages students to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, all of which help in the all-round development of the individual. We appreciate the thoughtfulness,

honesty, caring and graciousness, along with the hard work, self-discipline, enthusiasm and initiative of the students of Ursuline College who enhance the well-being of the school community.

We acknowledge good behaviour and positive participation in school life throughout the school year and at the school's annual Prize-giving ceremony.

### **SAFETY REGULATIONS**

- ü · Students must take reasonable care at all times to ensure their own safety and that of others.
- ü · Students must obey ALL safety instructions given to them by school staff members.
- ü · Students must never behave in a way that endangers the health or the safety of any person in the school.
- ü · Students must not interfere with safety equipment such as fire alarms, fire extinguishers and hose reels. Should any student do so, immediate suspension will result, along with a fine to cover damages.

### **FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY**

In an emergency the ALARM BELL will sound.

If you hear the ALARM, follow the emergency code:

- Ø · Stop what you are doing and switch off any equipment you are using
- Ø · Listen to the instructions of your class teacher
- Ø · Leave the building by designated exit; Council members close doors
- Ø · DO NOT waste time collecting your possessions
- Ø · DO NOT run
- Ø · Make your way quickly and quietly to the designated assembly point on the school grounds
- Ø · Line up quietly and wait for your Council member to take the roll
- Ø · Wait patiently and quietly until you receive further instructions.

## **School Rules and Regulations**

Within the context of the school's Mission statement and stated ethos, school rules have been formulated in order to help students to develop their gifts and talents and to grow in self-discipline and responsibility. They are designed to create a positive and orderly atmosphere where each one is respected and where quality teaching and learning can occur. Respect is at the heart of school regulations at Ursuline College – respect for self, for others and for the school environment. Students are expected to understand and appreciate the wisdom of school rules and to take a positive attitude towards them.

We expect our students to take pride in their school and to realise that each one has a part to play in upholding the school's good name. We expect the highest standards of behaviour from our students at all times and we take very seriously any incidents of unacceptable behaviour that let both students and the school down.

### **Students are expected to:**

- Show respect for themselves, staff members and fellow students at all times.
- Show respect for and pride in the school and its environment.
- Behave well at all times in the school, in the vicinity of the school, on school buses and in town.
- Be courteous and respectful towards members of staff if met outside of school at weekends or during holidays
- Co-operate at all times with school authorities.
- Be punctual and regular in attending school.
- Work to the best of their ability in class, co-operating with teachers at all times.
- Appreciate the rights of other students to a positive learning environment
- Behave respectfully in class so that everyone can learn and make progress.
- Prepare and present homework as required.
- Wear full school uniform to and from school and during the school day.
- Come to class with all the required books and materials.
- Participate positively in the life of the school.

### **Students may not:**

- Leave the school premises without permission at any time during the school day.
- Absent themselves from school for the day when parent/guardians expect them to be present.
- Absent themselves from class without permission.
- Eat or drink in class.
- Take or interfere with the property of others or damage school property.

- Smoke or take alcohol or any non-prescribed drugs on the school premises, during any school-related activity, on school buses, travelling to and from school or in the vicinity of the school or at any time while wearing the school uniform. Failure to respect this will result in suspension: expulsion will be considered should the situation demand it.
- Bring MP3 players/iPods/cameras/recording devices/electrical appliances of any kind to school (except when requested by a teacher for specific subject work). These devices must be locked in lockers at all other times otherwise they will be confiscated for a week should they be found in school. They will be returned only to parents /guardians.

Neither Tippex nor Chewing gum is allowed in school.

The entire school grounds are smoke-free. All members of the school community have the right to work in a smoke-free environment. Smoking is forbidden on the school premises, during the school day, when students are in school uniform or at school events or outings. Smoking is a health issue for all of us, whether active or passive. The issue is not simply a school issue; it is a legal one as well. Should students be found smoking, parents/guardians will be contacted and the student in question suspended.

As a Green School, Ursuline College is committed to ongoing efforts to conserve and protect our natural resources. Respect for and appreciation of the environment is expected from all students. Each one is expected to contribute to a clean and tidy environment inside and outside the school and to be mindful of paper, water and energy usage. Recycling is an ongoing part of the school's Green programme and requires the efforts of everyone in order to be successful. While each one's effort might seem to be small, the whole school effort is significant in terms of conserving our planet's resources.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

It is policy that all students attending Ursuline College wear a uniform. The wearing of school uniform simplifies life for students; it removes the pressure of having to choose what to wear each day and helps students to focus on the learning to be done at school.

Students must wear **full** uniform at all times during school-time, including evening study. Non-uniform items of clothing e.g. scarves/coloured polo-shirts/non-uniform jackets etc may not be worn at any time. Students representing the school must do so in full school uniform, unless informed otherwise.

Ursuline College students are expected to be well-groomed at all times and to take pride in their appearance. Students may not change out of uniform during the school day, except for P.E. classes.

Should students go into town for lunch, they do so in full school uniform and the highest standards of behaviour are expected of them.

School uniform consists of the following:

- q · Navy/green/red tartan skirt with side pocket worn at knee length.
- q · Navy round-necked jumper with green trim and Ursuline crest
- q · Green polo shirt
- q · Official school tracksuit and t-shirt **for P.E. only**. All Junior cycle students must wear school P.E t-shirt. Track-suit may **not** be worn instead of uniform skirt. Parents are asked to support the school in implementing this.
- q · School jacket is compulsory for all students; no other jacket may be worn
- q · Navy knee high socks/tights
- q · Footwear must be black or navy and must be flat. Given that Ursuline College has a number of flights of stairs, shoes other than flat ones are simply not acceptable. This is a Health and Safety issue. Runners/sports shoes may not be worn as part of the school uniform – these are for P.E. and sports only. Pumps/boots may not be worn at any time.
- q · Natural hair colour only is permitted.
- q · Jewellery should be kept to a minimum - a ring and one pair of stud/sleeper earrings only are permitted. No other type of body piercing is allowed under any circumstances.
- q · Make-up may not be worn during the school day unless medically prescribed.

**All articles of clothing must be clearly marked and kept in locked lockers when not in use. Students are responsible for their own belongings.**

## **ROAD SAFETY**

We expect our students to behave in a courteous and responsible manner crossing roads to and from school. Students must respect the rules of the road in particular with regard to pedestrian crossings. They must never act in such a way as to distract or endanger any other road users. Consideration for other road-users makes our roads safer for all.

Students need to take particular care at all times when alighting from buses.

The Staff car-park is for staff only. Neither parents nor students driving cars may use the staff car park. Pedestrians must use the pathways around the staff car-park: for safety reasons, they may not use the car-park as a short cut.

Students' entry into and exit from the school is through the front gates. The back entrance is for staff and services only.

### **LUNCH-TIME**

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students stay in school at lunch-time. They may bring a packed lunch to school or purchase lunch in school. We strongly encourage students to eat healthily at lunch-time.

Fifth year students organise Clubs for 1<sup>st</sup> years at lunch time. The clubs which are organised in consultation with First Years, will reflect the interests of the First Year group. We encourage all First years to take part in as many clubs as possible. Apart from the obvious enjoyment that students derive from the clubs, clubs also help them to get to know other students; this helps in the settling-in process.

3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Year students may take their lunch in school, either bringing lunch to school or purchasing lunch at school. Should students go into town for lunch, they do so in full uniform and the highest standards of behaviour are expected of them. Students are expected to be polite and courteous wherever they go for lunch. They are expected to queue in a calm and orderly fashion and to be sensitive to the rights of other customers. Students may not loiter outside shops, restaurants or cafes and are expected to be responsible about their litter. Should any student behave inappropriately in town at lunch-time, she will be obliged to stay on the school premises for lunch thereafter.

### **MOBILE PHONES**

There is a phone near the Office for student use. The school prefers that students do not bring mobile phones to school.

Mobile phones, while being a very convenient way of keeping in touch with people, have the potential, if used inappropriately, to cause distress to others. It is within this context that the school's policy on mobile phones has been formulated.

If parents, for safety/security reasons, wish their daughters to carry mobiles to and from school, the school's mobile phone policy must be adhered to and the following procedures followed:

- ü· Courtesy, consideration and respect for others are paramount at all times with regard to the use of mobile phones.
- ü· Phones brought to school must be stored in a locked locker during the school day and switched off at all times.

- ū - Mobile phones cannot be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school or to other people. **Phones may not be used for any purpose (eg phoning, texting, surfing the internet, taking photos, checking the time, taking videos etc) at any time on school grounds.**
- ū - Phones brought to school are entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for loss, theft, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of parents and pupils to ensure that mobile phones are properly and adequately insured as personal property. No school resources will be used to locate a lost/stolen phone.
- ū - In the case of trips, visits, exchanges and other off-site activities, mobile phones may not be used unless specifically permitted by the teacher(s) in charge. Mobile phones may not be brought to study or to detention
- ū - It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or bully another person. Students may not, under any circumstances, take photographs on school premises. Any reference to school, staff members or fellow students made via mobile phone/internet will be treated very seriously and dealt with accordingly. Should any student use a mobile phone in this way, the Garda Síochána may be informed.
- ū - Mobile phones will be temporarily confiscated if students do not comply with the above conditions. The phone may then be collected only by the student's parent/guardian but not on the same day as the phone's confiscation. A second offence will result in the phone being confiscated for a week. Should there be a third offence, the phone will be confiscated for a month.

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

In order that students strive for excellence and work to achieve their potential, they must attend school regularly and on time. The Education Welfare Act (2000) places a legal obligation on schools to monitor student attendance. Where students are absent for more than 20 days, the school is required to report this to the Welfare Board. School and home need to work together to ensure that students gain the maximum benefit from their time at school.

Students spend approximately 63% of the year in school and have plenty of time for holidays, appointments etc outside of school-time. Every day missed impedes a student's academic and all-around progress.

Given that project work has become part of many subjects at both Junior and Leaving Certificate level, it is essential that students are present in school at all times. Deadlines for project work are set down by the Department of Education and Skills each year. Teachers will inform students of these. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they are present to complete project work on time, in this way ensuring that their work reflects their capabilities. The support of parents/guardians in this area is most important.

Parents/guardians must inform the school should their daughter be absent from school.

Absence notes must be written into journals and must be written only by parent/guardian. Parents/guardians must give an explanation for each period of absence from school. Where a student is absent for more than one day, parents/guardians are asked to phone the school immediately explaining the absence. This must be followed up by a written note on the student's return to school.

Students must be on time for all classes, particularly in the morning and after lunch. Should a student arrive later than 9.30 in the morning, she must sign in at the Office. Should a student arrive between 8.50 and 9.30, she must go to class immediately and ensure that she has been marked in on the roll.

Students may only sign out from school for necessary appointments when collected by a parent/guardian at the school office. Students must sign in on returning to school.

**It is vitally important that parents/guardians do not write notes for their daughters for anything other than legitimate, unavoidable absences from school.**

## **HOMEWORK JOURNALS**

Every student must have a homework journal. The journal helps students to plan and organise their homework and is also a means of communication between home and school.

Absentee notes must be written into journals and must be written only by parents/guardians. Parents/guardians must give an explanation of each period of absence in the journal.

The school encourages parents/guardians to check the journal from time to time in order to be sure that it contains entries signed only by themselves. The school authorities may, periodically, ask parents/guardians to check the information in the journal.

## **PARENTS**

Parents have a vital role in promoting good behaviour in school and so effective home/school liaison is most important. We ask parents/guardians to support the school fully in all matters and particularly in dealing with their daughter's progress and behaviour.

In instances where parents/guardians fail to support the school in implementing its discipline policy, students lose out and may develop patterns of indiscipline that prevent them from achieving their potential. It can be harder to say 'no' in the short-term but it reaps benefits for all in the medium to long term.

## **SANCTIONS**

Breach of school rules will lead to a graded system of sanctions including community service in the school environment, detention, suspension or expulsion.

Any student who breaches school rules and builds up a number of sanctions may be prohibited from taking part in school outings or tours and may forfeit the opportunity of participation in special programmes i.e. Transition Year.

Abusive language/aggressive behaviour is totally unacceptable. Any incidence of these will result in the removal of the student from class. Contact will be made with home and suspension may be considered. Should students be involved in serious incidents of misbehaviour, lack of respect or lack of discipline where a longer period of suspension is deemed necessary, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management. In extreme cases of indiscipline, expulsion may be recommended to the Board.

With regard to dealing with misbehaviour, the following will apply:

- Verbal warning
- Extra work
- Giving of sanctions, proportionate to the offence
- Communication with parents – note in journal
- Community service in the school community
- Detention
- Loss of privileges e.g. participation in school events or tours
- Communication with parents – formal meeting
- Placing of student 'on report'
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Sanctions for breaches of discipline are as follows:

• Uniform/Wearing of jewellery	4
• Lack of punctuality	2 - 4
• Homework not handed in	4
• Books/copies not brought to class	4
• Eating/drinking in class	4
• Chewing gum	4
• Disrespect to teachers/other adults/fellow students	7- 14
• Disrespect for classroom/school environment	4
• Persistent talking/misbehaviour in class	7
• Missing class	7
• Leaving school without permission	14
• Vandalism	Sanctions + fine
• Graffiti	Sanctions + fine

Students will be required to pay the full cost of any damage done to school equipment or property.

Interference with or damage to fire equipment will result in immediate suspension, along with a fine to pay for repairs.

Year Heads will contact parents in cases of persistent misbehaviour. 14 sanctions will lead to detention. Parents/guardians will be notified of detention through the school journal and are asked to take any incidence of detention seriously. Detention will take place

- On Wednesday afternoons from 3.50 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. or
- On Parent-Teacher meeting days/Staff meeting days.

Parents will be called in to meet the Year Head and Deputy Principal should a student have been in detention twice. Appropriate action will be taken to improve the situation. Should there be no improvement, the matter will be referred to the Principal after which the Board of Management will be consulted.

Students whose behaviour causes ongoing concern to staff may be placed 'on report'. A student 'on report' must meet each of her teachers after every class each day for a written report on work and behaviour. The student then brings her report card home to be signed by parent/guardian. The report card is brought back to the to the office next morning and a new card given out. A student may be 'on report' for a week or longer, depending on progress made by the student. Parents/guardians will be informed if their daughter is placed 'on report'.