



# **Code of Conduct**

**Version 3.0**

**September 2019**

## Document Version Control

Version	Date	Description
1.0	January 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
3.0	September 2019	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**

Glenstal Abbey School is committed to maintaining the highest safeguarding standards and practice. We wish to create and maintain an environment where:

- young people are listened to, given a sense of security and belonging, and kept as safe as possible
- parents are supported and encouraged
- staff are supported and protected

Safeguarding practice in the school is regulated by the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, published by the Department of Education and Skills in 2017. These procedures take account of the Children First Act (2015) and the updated *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017). School authorities and school personnel are required to adhere to these revised procedures in dealing with allegations or suspicions of child abuse.

The school is committed to preventing the abuse of any student. Should a student feel that he has been the object of any of 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
- 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

### ***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. All students need to be aware that unauthorised borrowing is considered as 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 and/or Principal. 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 in the school and its immediate environs, including the avenues, and also in Murroe. 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 classrooms or the refectories. 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.

The school's Substance Abuse Policy makes it clear that Glenstal Abbey School will not tolerate substance abuse. No student has permission to smoke anywhere on the school campus. Students may not consume alcohol on school property, and may not purchase or consume alcohol during their free time at school, on school outings or at school functions. Unauthorised consumption or possession of alcohol is a very serious offence which may lead to suspension or expulsion, following the process outlined in the school's Discipline, Suspensions & Expulsions Policy.

### **RULES FOR SPECIFIC PLACES**

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

The following areas are out of bounds, unless accompanied by an authorised adult:

- The Monastery, Guesthouse and Art School buildings
- The farmyard, farm buildings and fields
- All houses on the grounds
- The Staff Room, Marking Room, Photocopying Room, Sitting Room and Staff Toilets
- The school roofs
- The lakes
- The school kitchens

#### **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.

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

The classroom is a place of learning. The classroom occupies a central part of the students' life in Glenstal Abbey School. 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.

All students must:

- Arrive in the classroom on time
- Bring all books and equipment required for all of the classes up to the next break in the timetable
- Not eat in classrooms
- Respect and not deface the fabric of the classroom, eg furniture, equipment, charts etc
- Walk, not run, indoors
- Behave in a polite and courteous manner towards all staff
- Ensure that their clothes are clean, tidy and neat at all times
  - Collared shirts must be worn in class. Polo shirts are acceptable
  - The following are considered unacceptable: Jeans, Shorts, Sweatpants, Tracksuits, Tee-shirts, Sandals without socks, Slippers, Sliders, Flip-flops and any garments whose design, cut or decoration is likely to offend
  - Students may not dress in sportswear for class even if participating in an activity later in the school day where classroom attire is not required
- Attend 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, make every effort to catch up on the missed material and complete any missed homework
- Keep text books and study copies neat

- Pay positive and active attention to the teacher and respond promptly to any instructions from the teacher
- Complete all learning tasks requested by the teacher, especially homework
- Not hinder 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 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 must arrive promptly for Study
- Students must sit where directed
- Conversation during Study is prohibited
- Eating is not permitted during Study
- Drinking, of water only, is permitted only from non-spill bottles
- No phones or earphones/headphones are permitted; laptops or tablets are permitted only for work purposes, with prior permission from the Principal
- No watching of movies or playing games at any time
- Study spaces must be tidied before the end of Second Study

### **Mobile phones**

The school's Mobile Phone Policy permits the use of mobile phones by students, including access to a filtered student wifi network at designated times only. Students in 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Year may not use mobile phones at all during the school day and must surrender their devices to Housemasters at the times posted in each house. Mobile phones may not be used during class, meals or Study; at Morning Assembly or in the church; or after lights-out. Failure to comply with this rule will lead to confiscation. Mobile devices must not be used to access inappropriate material online. Use of mobile devices to engage in any kind of bullying behaviour is a very serious offence which may lead to suspension or expulsion, following the investigation process outlined in the school's Discipline, Suspensions & Expulsions Policy.

### **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. 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.
- Hats or caps and sports gear – including slippers, sliders, flip-flops, shorts and vest-tops - may not be worn in refectories.

### **Health Centre**

- Good behaviour and quietness is to be the norm in the Health Centre
- No student may go to bed in the Health Centre unless admitted by the Nurse
- Once admitted to the Health Centre, no student may discharge himself or leave with a parent/guardian without the Nurse's knowledge and approval
- 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, holding in balance its responsibility to uphold the rights and dignity of all parties. 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 and/or a mediated 'restorative practice' meeting
- Restitution
- 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
- Set tasks that are considered to be corrective
- Appearing before a Disciplinary Committee, constituted by the Headmaster or Principal for that purpose (at which the student's rights are protected by an advocate from among the current staff)
- Suspension from school – Suspension is the prerogative of the Headmaster/Principal and will be recorded permanently in the student's record. Appeals against suspensions should be lodged in writing with the Principal by a parent/guardian within seven days of the date upon which the parent/guardian is notified of the decision

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 and is governed by the school's Suspensions and Expulsions Policy.

## **SAFETY**

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

Outside of scheduled breaks, students must always sign out before leaving the school premises. Students may never leave the school premises without permission.

Requests for permission for weekend overnight absences after classes end 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.

Where family or medical circumstances cause a student's return to school to be delayed, notification of the delay should be emailed to [attendance@glenstal.com](mailto:attendance@glenstal.com), and in the case of full boarders, also to the relevant Housemaster.

After-school absences for external engagements such as sporting or musical activities or tuition should be agreed in advance with the Headmaster or Principal and notified to the relevant Housemaster.

Hitching lifts on the avenue is not allowed. Boys may not go beyond the gates of the estate after 5.30 pm.

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***

Students should not engage with unknown visitors they encounter on the grounds, and a member of staff should be informed should they behave suspiciously. Students should inform a member of staff if they encounter an unknown adult inside the school who is not displaying a Visitor badge.

### ***Fire Precautions***

Fire notices, fire extinguishers, fire escape doors and corridors, notices relating to fire safety, smoke detectors and emergency lighting are there to protect 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 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

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

**Signed** *Alec Gabbett*

*Chairperson of Board of Management*

**Signed** *Carmel Honan*

*Principal*

**Date** 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019

*Date of next review:* October 2020