

Davitt College Code of Behaviour

The Code of Behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave and learn well.

The Code of Behaviour addresses the following:

- The standards of behaviour expected in the school
- The plan for promoting positive behaviour
- The ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- The plan for implementing the Code of Behaviour
- School procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion

Scope

In accordance with relevant education legislation, i.e., the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 and the Education Act, 1998 our Code of Behaviour was drawn up in consultation with the Principal, the Teachers, the Board of Management, the Students and the Parents/Guardians of Davitt College. This Code is subject to continuous review to ensure its effectiveness.

This Code of Behaviour outlines our expectations regarding general readiness to learn and behave appropriately. It is addressed to both students and parents. In accordance with section 20 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 parents of children intending to register as students in Davitt College are provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour prior to the child being registered as a student. In accordance with s. 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 parents are required to acknowledge in writing that they have received a copy of this Code of Behaviour and are familiar with its provisions.

Parents/Guardians are expected to make every effort to ensure that their children comply with this Code of Behaviour and are also required to acknowledge this commitment in writing.

Order and discipline ensure effective teaching and learning and thus enable students to reach their full potential. It is the Policy of Davitt College to encourage and

acknowledge positive behaviour and to develop qualities such as respect, responsibility and leadership, thus preparing students to participate fully as good citizens in society.

Relationship to our Ethos, Mission, Vision and Aims:

Our School

Davitt College is a co-educational, multi-denominational second level school under the auspices of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board. It is situated in the town of Castlebar, County Mayo.

Our School Ethos and Mission Statement

Davitt College aims to provide a caring community which, in partnership with parents/guardians, enhances the educational, emotional, physical, and spiritual development of its students and facilitates them in reaching their full potential.

Vision

Davitt College provides a comprehensive education, which promotes the personal, social, academic, spiritual, and vocational development of its students, preparing them for their roles as responsible members of society. This all takes place in the context of an ethos based on mutual respect between staff and students.

Aims:

- To maintain high standards in all areas of school life.
- To uphold high educational attainment and good relationships.
- To maintain a positive climate where mutual respect and co-operation are fostered throughout the school community.
- To ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other additional educational needs are identified and provided for.
- To ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices.
- To promote the moral, spiritual, social, and personal development of students.

Rationale:

Davitt College promotes a positive approach to discipline in the classroom and in the school generally. This positive approach emphasises encouragement and praise. In such a climate, it is expected that the relationships between students and between students and staff are based on mutual respect, trust, caring and consideration for others resulting in a highly motivated learning environment. Our priority in Davitt College is to ensure a

safe, positive and supportive educational environment for all. Consequently, high expectations will be communicated to and required from all members of the school community. The foundations of our Code of Positive Behaviour are care, respect, positivity and personal responsibility.

Objectives of the Code of Behaviour:

The objectives of our Code of Behaviour are:

- a) To foster an atmosphere in the school which promotes the holistic development of the student, and which allows right relationships to flourish.
- b) To create a safe and secure learning environment for all students by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the school community.
- c) To nurture self-discipline, reflection and self-evaluation and encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.
- d) To have effective procedures in place which will allow for the day to day running of the school and which meet the demands of current legislation.
- e) To help young people develop into mature and responsible participating citizens.

1.1 The Promotion of Good Behaviour:

In Davitt College, we are proactive in promoting positive behaviour and preventing inappropriate behaviour.

1. Teachers set high expectations for student behaviour, have good class routines, give positive feedback/referrals about behaviour, and model the behaviour that is expected from students. Teachers recognise the importance of developing mutually respectful relationships that balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, fairness and consistency.

2. Students are clear on the contents of the code and the standards expected of them. The Student Council was involved in the formulation of the Code of Behaviour. A full copy is to be found on Vsware. An edited version is given to each student in their journal.

3. Reference to the Code of Behaviour is made during the taught curriculum. School rules and the reasons for them are discussed as part of SPHE, CSPE, Tutor time.

4. Positive behaviour is acknowledged through positive referrals, notes in the Journal, end of term Reports, affirmation of good behaviour through classroom visits by Class Tutors, Year Heads, Deputy Principal and Principal and the Term and Annual Awards ceremony.

5. Parental cooperation is considered fundamental to the implementation of the school's code. A First year Parents night for Parents/Guardians of new students takes place at the beginning of the school year. At this meeting, the values underlying the Code of Behaviour are explained. It is accepted that Parents/Guardians acknowledge agreement of the Code of Behaviour and that they will make every effort to ensure that their child complies with every aspect of the Code.

Parents are encouraged to maintain regular contact with the school through the Student Journal, VSWARE Parents App, telephone contact, Parent-Teacher meetings, Open Nights and Partnership Nights. They are also welcome to visit the school on other occasions, **by appointment only**, to discuss their child's progress. They can support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour.

1.2 Behaviour Expectations

1. Students will treat themselves, all school staff, fellow students, visitors to the school and people with whom they visit with respect at all times and including out of school hours, they will have consideration for the rights and feelings of others.
2. Students will cooperate with and follow the guidance of all staff members.
Students will cooperate with and be kind to each other.
3. Students will attend school every day, remain for the full school day and if absent, the school will be notified of the reason for the absence. The school is legally obliged to keep a record of all absences and to inform the NEWB at the appropriate time.

4. Students will do their homework and participate fully in class. They will listen to each other and their teachers and will not disrupt any class. Students will take responsibility for their learning and do their best at all times.
5. Students are not permitted to use mobile phones during the day without permission from a teacher.
7. Students will be on time for school and class.
8. Students will show respect for all property and equipment in the school and on the school premises. Students will not throw litter and will assist with keeping the school clean and tidy.
9. Students will dress in accordance with the school correct uniform.
10. Students must behave in an appropriate manner in school, coming to and from school and on all school outings and occasions. The Code of Behaviour applies to students whether they are on school property and/or engaged in a school activity or not.
11. Loitering in toilets, corridors or on the School Grounds is strictly forbidden.

The Terms of the Code of Behaviour

2.1 Attendance:

Attendance at school enables students to achieve their academic potential, to develop a sense of belonging to the school community and to benefit from all school activities.

(a) The School Timetable is as follows:

- (i) First Class starts at 8.55 a.m.
- (ii) Breaks 10.55a.m .to 11.10a.m. /11.25a.m. to 11.40 a.m.
- (iii) Lunch from 1.10 p.m. to 1.45 p.m.
- (iv) Last class finishes at 3.45 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 1.10pm on Friday.

(b) Students are required to be in attendance at school on every school day. Parents/Guardians are obliged to inform the school if a student is absent from

school and the reason for the absence. This also applies to absence for part of a school day. This should be done by a Parent /Guardian submitting an absence note for a student on the VShare Parent App in advance, alternatively a student may bring a note signed by parent/guardian to the Tutor/Year Head before classes begin.

- (c) The School records the fact of absence and the reasons given for absence by students. It notifies the N.E.W.B. of same in accordance with s.18 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 when a student is absent for 20 days or more in any given academic year. Official roll call is taken during the first class in the morning and the first class after lunch break. Each individual subject teacher also takes a roll call.
- (d) Parents/Guardians are requested to submit daily absences on Vshare Parents App, or in writing or by contacting the school.
- (e) Unexplained absence, whether from a scheduled class or from the School, is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour
- (f) Where a student's attendance record gives cause for concern Parents/Guardians will be invited to review same with the School authorities.
- (g) First and Second Year students may not normally leave the School Grounds during school hours. **First and Second Year Students who wish to go home at lunch break must submit a written request signed by a Parent/Guardian at the beginning of the school year.**
- (h)
 - **For ALL students from 1st to 6th year:** Parents/Guardians who wish for students to leave the School Grounds during school hours other than at lunch break must enter details on the Parent Vshare App. Students leaving school in accordance with this procedure will be collected by their Parent/Guardian and

‘sign-out’ at school reception office, and ‘sign-in’ on their return to school, if they return on the day in question.

- In exceptions where there may be difficulties using the Parent Vsware App, a student may present a written request signed by a Parent/Guardian to the Tutor, Year Head or Deputy Principal. Students leaving school in accordance with this procedure will be collected by their Parent/Guardian and ‘sign-out’ at school reception office, and ‘signin’ on their return to school, if they return on the day in question.
 - **Students over the age of 18 years:** Parents/Guardians who wish for students to leave the School Grounds during school hours other than at lunch break must enter details on the Parent Vsware App. The student must present to the school reception office to ‘sign out’. A text message will be sent to the Parent/Guardian to confirm that their son/daughter has presented to the office and has left the school building. The student must present to the school reception office and ‘sign-in’ on their return to school, if they return on the day in question. Students will not be permitted to leave the school grounds unless the permission is entered on the Parent VSware App. The School does not bear responsibility for students who leave the School Grounds in accordance with this procedure for the period during which the Student is absent from school, i.e. the period between the time at which the Student signs the appropriate Record Book on leaving the School Grounds and the time at which the Student signs the appropriate Record Book on arriving back to the School.
- (i) Failure to comply with the above procedure for leaving the School Grounds during school hours other than at lunch break is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour
- (j) **Good attendance and punctuality is recognised at the Term and Annual awards ceremony** and attendance in general may be addressed in school reports and references.
- (k)

2.2 Punctuality:

Being on time for class encourages self-discipline and is an expected habit both in the workplace and in personal relationships. Late arrivals at school or class inconvenience both teachers and students.

- (a) Students must be punctual. Late arrival is a breach of this Code of Behaviour.
- (b) Students arriving late during first class must go to class and they will be marked late.
- (c) Students arriving late after first class must report to the school office and sign in.
- (d) If a student arrives at a class after the time at which that class is scheduled to start, the student will be regarded as late, irrespective of what time the student arrived on the school grounds.
- (e) Parents must enter details for lateness on The Parent Vsware App or present a signed explanation to the Tutor or Year Head.

The School opens at **8.00 a.m.** and closes at **4.30 p.m.**

The School does not accept liability for students arriving at the School Grounds before the School opens or remaining on the School Grounds after the School closes unless such students are participating in an official school activity.

2.3 The School Journal:

Each student is provided with a journal.

The School Journal is used as a means of communication between the School and parent/guardian, in addition to the recording of assigned homework by students.

The journal should be brought to all classes, be available to all members of staff and should be kept neat and tidy at all times by each student.

The School Journal should be signed by a Parent/Guardian each week. Parents/Guardians should also check the School Journal daily and ensure that assigned homework has been completed.

2.4 Academic work:

Good work habits enable the student to contribute to the class and to be successful.

Students are expected to be prepared for, and to work in, each class. They should have the necessary textbooks and class materials, should complete homework on time and be prepared and present for all tests and examinations. The assignment of homework should be recorded by students in their school journal. If homework is not presented, a student is required to have a note of explanation from a parent / guardian. When no homework is presented in class and no parental comment is given, the teacher will record this information.

Students should submit academic work which is their own and is not copied from other sources.

Academic achievement, Effort and Dedication is recognised at the Term and Annual awards ceremony and attendance in general may be addressed in school reports and references.

2.5 Property:

General

- (a) Each student is responsible for his or her own property. Student's property should be clearly marked with name and contact details.
- (b) Interference of any kind with another person's property including property belonging to the School is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. Interference includes but is not limited to theft.
- (c) Students should not bring valuable or irreplaceable items or large sums of money to school except where absolutely necessary. The School does not accept liability for property or money lost, stolen or damaged while on the School Grounds.
- (d) Parents/Guardians may be required by the School to pay for the repair or replacement of property damaged by students.

- (e) Deliberate damage to property or vandalism is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. Parents/Guardians of students responsible will be required to pay for the repair or replacement of property damaged deliberately or vandalised as appropriate in addition to other sanctions, which may be imposed on students in accordance with this Code of Behaviour.
- (f) Stealing is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. Parents/Guardians of students responsible will be required to pay for the replacement of stolen property in addition to other sanctions, which may be imposed on students in accordance with this Code of Behaviour.
- (g) Incidents of vandalism and theft may be reported to the Garda Síochána.
- (h) **Chewing gum is not allowed in the School** and will be confiscated if brought to school, in addition to any other sanctions, which may be imposed on students concerned in accordance with this Code of Behaviour.
- (i) **Fizzy drinks and high energy drinks are not allowed in the school.**
- (j) The use of mobile telephones is prohibited in the School buildings between the hours of 8:45am to 3:45pm. Mobile telephones used in breach of this rule will be confiscated and returned by the Principal/Deputy Principal, in person, to a Parent/Guardian of the student concerned. Mobile Phone Policy will be implemented.

Lockers

- (a) Students will have access to their lockers during the following times:
- Before the first class in the morning.
 - During morning break.
 - During lunch break.
 - Evenings
 - At other times, with permission of staff.

(b) Students should report damaged lockers immediately. Failure to do so will result in the student concerned being held responsible for the damage.

(c) Students are responsible for all items left in their locker whether such items belong to the student or not.

(d) In the interests of maintaining safety and discipline in the School, students may be required to open and empty their locker in accordance with the following procedure:

- i. The student will be requested to **open and empty the locker** in the presence of the Principal/Deputy Principal, another adult nominated by the Principal/Deputy Principal and, if the student requests, another member of school staff .
- ii. If the student **agrees**, the locker will be opened by the Student and its contents examined in the presence of the student and the other persons described above.
- iii. If the student **refuses** to permit the locker to be opened Parents/Guardians of the student concerned will be contacted and asked to come to the School.
- iv. On arriving at the School **Parents/Guardians** will be requested to **consent** to the student's locker being opened and emptied in the presence of the Principal/Deputy Principal, or adult nominated by the Principal/Deputy Principal, the Parents/Guardians and the student.
- v. If **Parents/Guardians consent** to the procedure described above, the locker will be opened and its contents examined in the presence of Principal/Deputy Principal, Parents/Guardians and the student concerned.

- vi. If **Parents/Guardians refuse** to permit the locker to be opened or are unable to attend the School as described above the School may contact the Garda Síochána.
- vii. Failure to comply with a request to open a locker and empty its contents in accordance with the procedure described above is a **serious breach of this Code of Behaviour** by the student concerned.
- viii. Where it is **not practical** to operate this procedure (i.e. where the student concerned is absent from school) the Principal/Deputy Principal accompanied by another member of school staff may open a locker and examine its contents. Prior to doing so the Principal/Deputy Principal will make reasonable efforts to contact the student concerned and his/her Parents/Guardians in order to enable them to attend the School should they so wish, in which case the normal procedure described above will apply.

Stolen property & dangerous items/substances

- (a) A dangerous item/substance is any item/substance which could cause harm or damage to a person or to property/possession of which item/substance is not necessary for a school sanctioned activity.
- (b) Where the School has reasonable grounds for believing that a student has in his/her possession stolen property or a dangerous item/substance the procedure described above in relation to lockers will be applied as regards the student's person and property, i.e. the student will first be requested to voluntarily disclose contents of pockets/schoolbags in the presence of witnesses, failing which Parents/Guardians will be contacted etc.
- (c) Under no circumstances will school staff attempt to effect a search of a student's person.

- (d) Possession on school grounds of a dangerous item/substance is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour. The school may contact the Garda Síochána in these instances.

2.6 Bullying: (Please refer to our Anti-Bullying policy)

Bullying

Conduct which is injurious to the mental and physical well being of others is not conducive to good school morale or to a secure learning environment.

All allegations of bullying will be investigated according to the procedures outlined in the Anti-Bullying policy and appropriate sanctions will be taken where necessary.

2.7 Uniform and Appearance

The school uniform helps promote a sense of belonging to the school community and is a visual symbol of Davitt College. Students wearing the Davitt College uniform should be conscious that they represent the entire school community and as such, their behaviour should reflect our ethos and code.

Students should maintain a neat and tidy appearance.

- (a) Students must wear the complete School Uniform at all times during school hours and official school functions. Students may not be allowed to attend class until they are in full uniform.
- (b) Parents will be notified in advance of 'non-uniform' days or occasions on which students are not required to wear the School Uniform.
- (c) The School Uniform is outlined in the General Information.

Appearance

- (a) Students must be neat and tidy in appearance. This also applies if students are given permission not to wear school uniform (e.g. non-uniform days, school tours or other extra-curricular activities connected with the school).

(b) The following specific provisions apply to student's appearance:

- Inappropriate hairstyles as deemed by management are not permitted.
- Inappropriate piercings are not permitted – as decided by Management.
Health & Safety regulations must be complied with.

General

(a) Failure to comply with the above rules concerning the School Uniform and students' appearance is a breach of this Code of Behaviour. Davitt College Incorrect Uniform Procedure will be followed.

(b) The School reserves the right to decide whether any aspect of a student's appearance is in non-compliance with this Code of Behaviour.

2.8 Substance Use: (Please refer to the Substance Use policy)

(a) Smoking and Vaping is forbidden on the School Grounds. Smoking and Vaping on the School Grounds at any time is a serious breach of this Code of Behaviour.

(b) The School has a zero-tolerance approach to incidents of substance abuse. Possession, use or distribution of harmful or illegal substances including alcohol and tobacco will not be tolerated at *any* time and under *any* circumstances and may lead to suspension or expulsion in accordance with this Code of Behaviour. The Garda Síochána may be contacted.

(c) The School has a comprehensive Substance Use Policy in place. It is the responsibility of all students and their Parents/Guardians to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the Substance Use Policy.

2.9 Mobile Phones:

(Please refer to the Mobile Phone policy)

2.10 School grounds

Cars and bicycle:

A student who drives to school may not park their car on the school grounds. The car park is for the sole use of staff and visitors by arrangement only.

A student who cycles may lock their bike at the bike racks provided. The school takes no responsibility for damage caused.

(a) Littering on the School grounds is a breach of this Code of Behaviour

(b) Students are not permitted on the School Grounds except when attending school or an activity organised by the School. Students otherwise on the School Grounds are trespassers within the meaning of the Occupiers Liability Act 1995 and are in breach of this Code of Behaviour.

2.11 Disciplinary Procedures:

The procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour and behaviour expectations are referred to as our 'system of referral'. The premise of the system of referral is to de-escalate behaviour issues and to encourage positive behaviours. The basic principle is that the more serious incidents are brought to the attention and addressed by members of Middle and Senior Management. The staff involved in reporting an incident are informed of outcomes.

2.12 Disciplinary Sanctions:

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change of behaviour by:

- Helping students to learn their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others.
- Helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.

- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour.
- Signal to other students and to staff that their well-being is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- Prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- Keep the student, or other students and staff safe.
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Where the Code of Behaviour has been breached the following strategies will apply:

(a) Reasoning with the student by subject teacher/staff member and advice on how to improve.

(b) Prescribing additional work.

(c) Service to the school community (eg. picking up litter, removing graffiti/chewing gum).

(d) Placing on report – academic report, attendance, punctuality and behaviour report. This may be on a weekly or daily basis, depending on the offending behaviour and requires a comment from teachers. It is then returned to the Year Head.

(e) Loss of privileges such as membership of the student council panel, the right to go on school trips, membership of school teams, attendance at evening activities run by the school.

Misbehaviour may merit a Referral –

Teacher should assign the Referral to the Class Tutor.

The Class Tutor will then speak to the student and may use one or more of the sanctions listed above or may put the student on one day Lunch Time Detention after consulting the Year Head.

Teacher in charge of Detention to be informed by the Year Head and recorded in the students behaviour file.

Work to be assigned during detention period.

Phones to be placed on teacher desk during detention.

Repercussions for failing to present to an assigned detention

Year Heads, in consultation with Senior Management, place students on after school detention, (repeated pattern of behaviours and more than 3 referrals).

Any further Referrals – Year Head will address with student.

Sanctions may include: -

- Reprimand.

- Letter of Apology to be written by student.

- Notification to Parents.

- Removal from class and placed under the care of a Senior Staff member.

- Loss of privileges e.g. withdrawal from school events.

- Student may be placed On Report at the discretion of the Year Head to monitor behaviour/attendance.

- Referral to Counsellor, Pastoral Care team, Behavioural Support Team.

Any further Referrals or very serious breaches of School Rules may warrant the following sanctions:

- After school Detention

- Letter to Parents/Guardians.

- Meeting with Parents/Guardians

- Suspension.

- Referral to Principal with written file.

- Referral to Board of Management.

- Expulsion

Immediate suspension may be incurred for certain offences as set out in the Suspensions Policy and Procedures.

Teachers or Year Heads may also refer students to members of the Pastoral Care Team for help and advice.

Written records and/or incident report forms as appropriate will be kept in relation to breaches of the Code and measures taken in response to same.

Where a student's behaviour warrants it: -

Parents/Guardians will be requested to come to the school to meet with school staff which may include senior and/or middle management. Parents/Guardians will be given as much notification in advance of this meeting as is reasonably possible.

School Management will notify Parents/Guardians of their concerns.

The sanctions described above may be implemented at any stage in this process.

3.0 Suspension:

Suspension is defined as requiring the student to absent themselves from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.

Please refer to Suspensions Policy and Procedures for full details.

3.1 Expulsion

Please refer to Expulsion Policy and Procedures.

3.2 Bringing a concern about a behaviour matter:

We foster an openness to dialogue with Parents/Guardians. When concerns arise, Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the School with the intention of resolving the matter.

3.3 Monitoring:

“The Code of Behaviour will be reviewed regularly. Ongoing reviews and evaluation take cognisance of changing information, changing society, legislation, ministerial/government instructions, developments in the school based programmes and feedback from students, staff, parents/guardians and the Board of Management/ETB”.

This Policy was approved by Board of Management on

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22/6/2023

Lower 5 Reel
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