

# Virginia College

## Code of Behaviour 2019-20

**Scope of Policy:** This code applies to students of Virginia and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours. This policy has been drawn up as an interim policy and will be reviewed in consultation with all the school partners, including Board of Management, Staff, Parents and Students. This policy is in line with National Educational Welfare Board guidelines.

### **Relationship to school's mission, vision and aims:**

This policy has been developed in line with the mission of our school which has at its core, the care of the student. The school strives to provide a safe secure learning environment for the development of our students. Our school code of behaviour is based on respect for oneself, for others and our environment, so that a positive and cooperative school atmosphere prevails.

### **Rationale**

Many people work together in our school each day and therefore a high level of courtesy and consideration for others is necessary. Behaviour which is ill mannered, annoying, dangerous or disruptive cannot be allowed. Our code is one that is based on respect for oneself, for others and our environment, so that a positive and cooperative school atmosphere prevails.

### **Goals/Objectives**

The aims of our code of behaviour are:

- To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour
- To create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning
- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among students, staff and parents
- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour
- 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
- To help students mature into responsible and participating citizens
- To allow for the appropriate involvement of all school personnel
- To ensure understanding by the parents, students, staff and management of the Code of Behaviour and the reasons for it
- To outline the strategies to be used to prevent poor behaviour and the ways in which positive behaviour is acknowledged
- To outline the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions that will be used in response to negative behaviour
- To outline the interventions to be used when a student repeatedly misbehaves

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The school climate and atmosphere are created by the actions and the behaviour of everyone in the school. Our school acknowledges the contribution of all members of the school community. Each member has responsibility for the promotion of good behaviour and a role in strengthening positive relationships of respect and trust. The school expects that students will, at all times do their best to uphold the code of behaviour of our school. See section 8.4 of the NEWB guidelines for more information on the roles and responsibilities of adults within the school environment.

## **Parents/Guardians**

The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour and expects them to support the code and encourage their sons/daughters to uphold it.

## **Teachers**

The quality of relationships between teachers and students is a powerful influence on behaviour in the school. The code fosters relationships of trust between students and teachers. The school acknowledges the role of teachers in the development and operation of the Code of Behaviour. The school recognises that a teacher's main focus is in the area of teaching and learning, but that they also have a pivotal role to play in behaviour management. That pivotal role forms a core element of this code. We have teachers assigned to each class and year group with special responsibilities for operating the code. Subject Teachers, Class Tutors, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellors, Learning Support Teachers, Psychological Services, Other Agencies, Pastoral Care team, Deputy Principal and Principal all have specific roles to play in upholding the code.

## **Other Staff**

The school acknowledges the contribution of ancillary staff in the day to day running of the school. They too have a part to play in the successful operation of our Code of Behaviour. In particular they have a responsibility to report incidents of misbehaviour and examples of positive behaviour they witness.

## **Board of Management**

All policies are developed with the authority of the Board of Management and must be approved by its members and formally approved and confirmed by Cavan and Monaghan ETB, before becoming official school policy. While members of the Board of Management are not involved in the day to day procedures, they are the body to whom parents and students over 18 may appeal in cases of suspension or expulsion. The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings both with students and with each other, since their example is a powerful source of learning for students. Parents/Guardians are expected to model the standards that the students are asked to respect. The ways in which parents and teachers interact provides students with a model of good working relationships.

## **School Rules**

School Rules apply whenever you are wearing the school uniform, when representing the school or when engaged in any school activity. School rules describe in simple terms how to behave in order to learn well and to develop into mature and responsible adults They are there to safeguard students' right to learn and teachers' right to teach in a caring, safe and respectful environment. Therefore ...

### **We expect**

1. That you come to school every day and arrive on time
2. That you come to school in full uniform, clean and tidy
3. That you have respect for people and property
4. That you do your best in class and at your homework
5. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects
6. That you act in an appropriate manner around the school

### **School Rules Explained**

#### **1. That you come to school every day and arrive on time. This means:**

- That you are in the school at 8.45am daily
- That you attend school every day unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- 'Mitching' is regarded as being a particularly serious transgression of the rules
- That if you miss school you bring a note in your School Diary from your parent/guardian on your return to school and present it to your Class Tutor.
- That if you are unavoidably late, you bring a note from your parent/guardian and get your School Diary signed at the office
- That if you are sick during the school day and need to leave the school, a parent (or authorised adult) must collect you from the school office
- That if you must leave school during the day you must get the parental note signed by the year head prior to signing out at the office
- That you proceed to all classes without delay and arrive on time
- That you do not go to the toilets/lockers between or during classes without your teachers' permission
- That you behave yourself on your way to and from school
- That you behave on the school buses

#### **Because**

- Time missed is hard to make up
- The school is entitled to an explanation for your absence
- It is expected that a late arrival to school be explained out of courtesy
- Arriving late for class wastes your time, the teacher's time and class time
- Going to the toilets/lockers during or between classes disrupts learning
- The school rules apply on your way to and from school

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the daily timetable and to co-operate with its implementation. The efficiency of Virginia College as a learning environment is largely dependent on attendance and punctuality. The College therefore expects the following of each student:

- All students must be present for Tutor Class at 9.00am having all the necessary books and equipment for all the timetabled classes.
- A record of attendance is carried out each morning and by subject teachers for each class.
- Any student who has been absent from school must have a note in their school journal explaining the reason for his/her absence which must be signed by a parent/guardian.
- This note must be given to the class tutor on the student's return to school.
- If a student is absent for a total of 20 days from school, the Education Welfare Board may be notified by the school.
- Dental and medical appointments should be made outside school time where possible
- The school cannot approve of students being withdrawn from school for holidays or non-medical reasons during the school year.
- The safety and welfare of our students is a primary concern. Virginia College considers unauthorised absence from school as a breach of school discipline. Parents/Guardians will be notified and sanctions will be applied.
- Rewards are issued for students with perfect attendance each term and year. Certification is also issued for students with a number of years' good attendance.

## **2. That you come to school in full uniform, clean and tidy. This means:**

- You wear the full school uniform in school at all times except when otherwise directed by the school
- You are required to bring and to wear the specified sports gear for participation in timetabled P.E. classes, sports training and sports competitions. Junior students may wear their official PE uniform on the day of timetabled PE.
- Only school uniform jacket to be worn. Non-uniform jackets, fleeces or hoodies must not be worn on the way to school or during school time.
- Smoking and Vaping is forbidden anytime you are wearing the school uniform, when representing the school or when engaged in any school activity.
- Jewellery is limited to two rings, one discrete studded earring in the lower lobe of each ear and a wristwatch. No facial piercing allowed.
- Excessive make-up is not allowed

## Because

- You should wear your uniform with pride, be dressed suitably for school activities and be a good ambassador when representing the school
- Hair style/colour should be in keeping with a dress code suitable for school
- Hats and scarves can be a distraction and a danger in class
- Smoking is unhealthy. Students should always be good ambassadors of their school
- Facial piercings can be dangerous
- Wearing excessive jewellery can be dangerous in the context of health and safety.
- Excessive make-up can cause discolouration of school uniform and can be damaging to certain skin conditions.

### **3. That you have respect for people and for property. This means:**

- Being helpful and treating other students, all staff and visitors to the school with good manners and respect
- Respecting the instructions of your teachers and staff
- Any form of bullying is unacceptable
- That you should proceed in an orderly fashion around the corridors and across the school yard.
- That you don't use offensive or abusive language
- That you use the litter bins in classrooms, in social areas and in the school grounds
- That you respect the school property and the property of other people
- Report any accidental damage you may have caused or seen to the main office

## Because

- Like you, other students are entitled to good manners and respect.
- Staff are entitled to your respect and co-operation
- Bullying causes fear, hurt and misery
- Rough behaviour can lead to accident or injury.
- Offensive or abusive language shows disrespect and can cause hurt
- Keeping the school environment pleasant and litter free is everyone's responsibility
- You would expect the same respect for your property
- The school authorities might have no other way of knowing if damage is caused to property or equipment

### **4. That you do your best in class and at your homework. This means:**

- That you listen in class to your teachers and other Support Staff
- That you contribute to class and participate in class to the best of your ability
- That you do not interfere with teaching and learning
- That you don't disturb the class
- That you sit in your assigned seat in an orderly manner

- That you do your homework each night, written and oral and to an acceptable standard. Leaving books at home or in the locker is considered as non-presentation of homework
- That you always have your School journal with you and take down your homework in it
- That you get your journal signed by your parent/guardian each week
- That if you need to leave your classroom, you must get permission from your teacher with a note of explanation in your school journal
- If you are required by another teacher, that teacher must note this in your School Journal and you must present this note to your timetabled teacher at the start of the class
- That you help keep your classrooms tidy

**Because**

- The teacher is trying to help you
- Disturbing the class is unfair to others who wish to learn
- Homework is a back-up to the work done in class
- Your School Journal helps you remember what you have to do
- Getting your School Journal signed lets your parents see how you are getting on
- Getting your School Journal signed to leave the classroom helps keep a record of your time missed and lets other teachers know that you have permission to be out of class
- It is important to take responsibility for tidying up after ourselves.

**5. That you come in properly prepared for your subjects. This means:**

- That you have the proper pens, books and copies required for each class
- That you bring in any special materials and equipment needed for class
- All bags, books and Student Diary be kept in good condition and free of graffiti.
- That you are responsible for your own property

**Because**

- It only wastes time if you haven't got your pens, books etc.
- It is impossible to do the subject without the materials/equipment needed
- Graffiti can offend.
- Neatness helps students stay organised. Label clearly each item of personal property

## **6. That you act in an appropriate manner around the school. This means:**

- You proceed quickly and quietly to each class, taking the shortest route
- You wait quietly for your teacher while lining up outside the classroom
- You should walk in the school and you should avoid pushing or jostling other students. You should avoid loud and unruly behaviour both inside and outside classrooms. Running or messing in the corridor can lead to accidents or injury. Sanctions will be applied to students who misbehave in the corridor
- You go to your locker only before class begins in the morning, at small break time, at lunchtime and at the end of the school day. Students must maintain the provided lock on their locker at all times. The school will not accept responsibility for lost or stolen items. Students are expected to keep their lockers clean and tidy
- You should avoid loitering in the toilets during break times or at any other times
- That eating and drinking is allowed only in the canteen area and only at specified times. Students are expected to be respectful and polite to canteen staff.
- Taking your break in the manner and area specified and obeying the instructions of the teacher on duty
- That you don't break, damage or deface school property
- That you must report to a teacher should you notice graffiti or damage to school property and especially if you notice graffiti on your own desk or chair
- That chewing gum is totally forbidden in the school building and grounds
- That you do not bring cigarettes, e-cigarettes, lighters or matches to school
- That there is an absolute ban on knives, lasers and any type of offensive weapons
- That the use of mobile phones is not permitted on school grounds at any time. Therefore, in the event that you require a phone for use after school, it should be powered off during the school day.
- That you leave all electronic devices at home.
- That the production, display or circulation e.g. via Facebook and internet, of written words, pictures or other materials which may intimidate, embarrass or erode the reputation of another person is totally unacceptable.
- Alcohol and illegal substances are totally forbidden

### **Because**

- Orderly behaviour helps to run the school smoothly
- Going to the locker during or between classes detracts from learning and disrupts others.
- Loitering in toilets leads to congestion
- Specified times and places for eating/drinking helps to keep the school clean and pleasant
- Obeying break time rules and teachers' instructions is safer and helps with supervision
- Others have to use the school property and repairs and replacements are expensive
- Everyone is responsible for helping to keep the school environment pleasant
- Chewing gum destroys flooring, school furniture, tarmac etc. It is a possible health hazard
- Smoking/Vaping on the school premises is prohibited by law, and besides, it is unhealthy and dangerous

- The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices is disruptive during school time
- Matches and lighters are dangerous. Also, this makes it easier not to be tempted to smoke
- Knives, lasers etc. are banned for very obvious reasons
- Substance abuse is dangerous, unhealthy, addictive and illegal. It can cause misery and in the longer term may even destroy a young person's life

### **Boundaries**

The College boundaries are clearly defined and each student is made aware of the restrictions that apply. 'Boundaries' is taken to mean interior and exterior limits of access for students. Virginia College boundaries are there for the safety and protection of the student body. The college has a responsibility for the students in its care, and so must be aware of where students are at all times. A regular breach of the College boundaries will be deemed as a serious breach of the College Code of Behaviour. Lough Ramor and the lake road are considered out of bounds – including any time before or after normal class when students are in uniform.

### **Students travelling by bus or car**

Students travelling to the college by bus are not allowed get off or on buses up town in the morning or afternoon respectively. Students who travel to school by bus are expected to travel home by bus. Students who travel to school by bus must enter and remain on the school grounds once dropped off at the school.

Permission to do otherwise must be accompanied by an explanatory parental note **together with signed** approval from the Deputy Principal or Principal.

Parents delivering or collecting students by car are expected to drop or collect students at the school gate before 8:45am.

### **School Trips/Games/Activities**

Students of Virginia College undertake many school outings during the year. The College will ensure that safe methods of transport are used.

- Students must conduct themselves in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour and refrain from any anti-social behaviour.
- All instructions issued by teachers/supervisors/organisers etc. must be followed.

### **Sport**

Participation in sport is a pivotal aspect of school life in Virginia College. Students are required to be punctual for PE classes or sports games, both home and away. Students must wear the appropriate PE uniform when participating in PE classes or playing competitive matches and must wear the College uniform when attending away matches.

Students supporting teams must behave in a manner that reflects positively on Virginia College. Offensive songs, chants and provocative actions do not form part of providing vocal support for the College's teams, and will not be tolerated

## Mobile Phones

For health and safety reasons the use of mobile phones is banned within the school grounds and buildings at all times. Note: The term 'phone' in this policy denotes mobile phones, iPods, MP3, MP4 players and any similar portable electronic devices.

If a student is found using a mobile phone, a parent/guardian must collect the phone at the school for a first offence. Any subsequent offence will result in the confiscation of the phone for two weeks, which must then be collected by a parent/guardian. Mobile phones can only be collected by a parent/guardian immediately after school hours.

Where a student is seen by a member of staff using a phone but refuses to hand it over, an investigation will take place and pending the outcome of the investigation, the student may receive an automatic suspension. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss or theft of a mobile phone or any electronic device in school. Neither will the school undertake an investigation should a loss or thefts occur.

## Personal Relationships

- Students' personal relationships should not be displayed publicly in the college environment, for example; holding hands, kissing, hugging etc.

## Preventative Measures

In Virginia College students will be encouraged in their efforts to uphold the Code of Behaviour by use of the following measures:

- (a) The Code of Behaviour will be published on the school website and a summarised version is published in the Student Journal. Students and their parents are asked to read it and to sign their agreement with the content when registering. By doing so they acknowledge their support and co-operation with it. This is to ensure that parents and students understand what our rules are, why they must be adhered to and what procedures will be followed if the rules are not upheld.
- (b) Aspects of the code are explained at the information meeting held each year for parents of incoming First Years. Parents are encouraged to contact their son/daughter's Tutor or Year Head if they wish to raise a concern about a behavioural matter. Parents are invited to get involved in the Parents' Association or to avail themselves of the meetings organised by the association.
- (c) At the start of each school year, the Code of Behaviour is explained to all students. This is done to give students the opportunity to think and talk about behaviour, learning and rules so that they can understand what the Code of Behaviour means for them.
- (d) The Code of Behaviour is published in the Teachers' Handbook. At the beginning of the school year teachers are brought through the main aspects of the implementation of the code. This is done to promote consistency of practice.
- (e) We recognise in Virginia College that effective teaching and learning are closely linked to good behaviour. When students are engaged and motivated to learn, it is more likely that their behaviour will be positive. Teachers are encouraged to participate in continuous professional development. Within school, staff development includes

exploring different teaching methods such as Assessment for Learning and differentiation. Regular Subject Department meetings address curriculum needs and promote collegiality among staff.

- (f) If a student is in breach of a rule, he/she may be asked to explain (orally or in writing) the rule he/she has breached, to describe what effect this breach has had on members of the school community, and how he/she could act differently in the future to avoid being in breach of the rule. This is done to develop the student's sensitivity and consideration for others and to assist them in upholding school rules in future. The principles of Restorative Justice are also applied where possible. Students are encouraged to speak to their Tutor or Year Head if they wish to raise a concern about a behavioural matter.
- (g) School rules and the reason for them are discussed as part of the school's pastoral care programme or as part of SPHE. The notion of tolerance for others, self – control, a sense of fairness and the principles of natural justice are also discussed as part of the Religious Education programme in the school
- (h) Issues such as Bullying, Racism, Sexism, Harassment, Violence, Substance Misuse are discussed with the students during their time in our school, using current legislation, current affairs and outside speakers. This is to help the students better understand these issues so that they can base their thinking, understanding and action on factual information and in the line with the values espoused in our school.
- (i) The school's Anti-Bullying policy, which will be published on the school website and of which a summarised version is published in the Student Journal, sets out the actions taken in relation to alleged breaches of the policy.

#### **Students with Additional Educational Needs:**

- Subject teachers, resource teachers and special needs assistants should check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that students with additional educational needs can understand. This understanding needs to be checked from time to time especially where a student with additional needs is acting in a way that would usually be seen as being in breach of the rules. Teachers may need support in understanding how best to help a student with special educational needs to conform to the behavioural standards and expectations of the school.

#### **Rewards**

In our school teachers use the following methods to reward students for upholding the code of behaviour:

- Verbal praise of student by teacher privately
- Positive note recorded in the student journal
- Rewards system on VS Ware

- Positive comment regarding the student to tutor or Year head
- Verbal praise of student at assembly
- Leadership role given to students as Prefects and as Student Council members.
- Class outing related to the curriculum
- Brief, positive note or phone call to parents
- Highlight curricular/extra-curricular achievements on notice boards in classrooms and corridors
- Display of student's work around the school
- Highlight curricular/extra-curricular achievements on school website, school newsletter or in local newspaper

### **Students with Additional Educational Needs:**

- Rewards for students with special educational needs should take account of their particular learning styles. For all students and especially those with learning difficulties, a reward will have an impact when it is closely linked in time to the behaviour that is being rewarded.

### **Strategies and Sanctions**

The purpose of these strategies and sanctions is to bring about a change in behaviour. They help students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable and to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

The following strategies and sanctions are used so that our students understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences.

They are scaled to take account of the nature of the incident, the situation leading up to the incident and are implemented by the staff of the school in accordance with our system of referral.

- A reminder or caution to the student
- Interview or talk with the student outlining the expected behaviour
- Alter the seating arrangement or move the student seat
- Carrying out a useful task in school
- Extra appropriate work assignment
- Student to present to the teacher before school or at break with the work complete and/or an apology
- Note in Student Journal
- A fine to cover the cost of repair or replacement
- Removal of privilege
- Consultation with Class Tutor
- Telephone call to parents
- Removal of student from scene of incident while still under supervision

Strategies and sanctions for more serious incidents or for consistent breaches of our code of behaviour include the following. These may be applied but not necessarily in the order listed.

- Giving the student a piece of written work to do in which they have to outline in writing the rule/rules they breached, the effects this breach had on themselves and on other members of the school community and how they can avoid a repeat of this behaviour.
- Withdrawal from class
- Lunchtime detention
- After school detention
- Weekly report
- Behaviour Contract between school, student and parent
- Refer student to Tutor/Year Head/Deputy Principal/Principal
- Telephone call to parents
- Formal letter home
- Meeting with parents
- Suspension from School (see CMETB Suspension and Expulsion policy)

Lunchtime detention is defined as a period of detention of about 20mins duration during lunchtime. After School Detention is defined as a period of detention of 60mins duration after school on a day assigned by the Year Head.

### **Referrals**

The basic principle of referral system is that the higher up the ladder an incident is dealt with, the more serious it is viewed. The ladder of referral involves all staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour in a day-to-day and practical way. It gives an ownership of the policy to all staff and it is appropriate that they be involved as they operate it on an on-going basis.

If a student has a problem which is contributing to their inability to uphold the Code of Behaviour, then the following referrals may be made:

- Referral to Year Head
- Referral to Guidance Counsellor
- Referral to Learning Support for testing and/or help in behaviour modification.
- Referral to Deputy Principal
- Referral to Principal
- Referral to appropriate outside agency

### **Step 1: The Subject Teacher**

The subject teacher is the frontline source of help for students. As a leader of learning and someone with an established relationship of trust, the subject teacher will have a strong influence with students. Each teacher has the responsibility for managing behaviour in

his/her own classroom and will deal with routine incidents of misbehaviour through classroom management strategies.

The Class Tutor will also advise and guide the student to reflect on disruptive behaviour with a view to changing to more positive behaviours.

More serious offences should be dealt with under Step 2 of our referral system. The role and responsibilities of the Subject Teachers include the following:

- Promoting teaching and learning in a safe and caring environment.
- Giving regular assessments and monitoring progress
- Using the school journal and student database (VShare) as a method of communication with home re: behaviour, work rate, homework, attendance etc.
- Keeping records of any incidents which may occur during class including the student database.
- Each student is equipped with a School Journal, which the Class Tutor signs at the end of each week and parents/guardians are requested to countersign.
- Completing a Referral Sheet in the event of ongoing problems and returning same to the Year Head, having utilised and recorded classroom sanctions already assigned.
- Recording a class attendance for each class, each day on VShare.
- Completing progress and exam reports.
- Implementing school rules throughout the school.
- Contacting parents to discuss areas of concern in their subject area.

## **Step 2: The Year Head**

Each Year Group is assigned a teacher with special responsibility for them. He/she has a pastoral and disciplinary role to play with the class groups that make up this year group. The role and responsibilities of the Year Head include the following:

- Dealing with referral sheets received from subject teachers
- Contacting parents to discuss areas of concern
- Checking student journals/student database on a regular basis
- Ensuring that the student's discipline and academic records are kept up to date in the appropriate files.
- Will assign a student to after school detention and communicate the necessary documentation to parents.
- Monitoring the uniform and hygiene of students and taking appropriate action to ensure everyone conforms to the appropriate dress code.
- Meeting with parents to discuss and resolve any problems or difficulties relating to students. (Parents must contact the school secretary to make an appointment to attend a meeting with the Year Head)

- Attending meetings with the Principal, Deputy Principal. These meetings will focus on different aspects of school life including discipline, behaviour, student problems etc. A range of sanctions/recommendations may be decided at this meeting.
- In the event of a serious breach of the College Code of Behaviour, the Year Head will be a Key Investigator collating the necessary files in relation to the incident. In the event that the Year Head is not in a position to investigate this incident an alternative Year Head or Deputy Principal will carry out this role.

### **Step 3: The Deputy Principal or Principal**

Students whose behaviour has not been modified despite the school's best efforts will be referred by the Year Head to the Deputy Principal / Principal. If the Deputy Principal or Principal decide that a suspension is warranted the procedures in our policy on suspension and expulsion will be followed.

Behaviour Contracts and weekly reports are filed, as are copies of letters sent home and contents of telephone conversations and meetings with parents relating to sanctions and interventions.

### **Expectations for Parents/Guardians**

Registration and admission to Virginia College is conditional on parents/guardians giving a written undertaking that they find this Code of Behaviour acceptable and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance by their son/daughter.

Parents/ Guardians should:

- Provide the school with the necessary contact details where a responsible adult designated by the parent/guardian, may be contacted in case of illness or emergency.
- Inform the school of any changes of contact details such as postal address, email address or phone numbers.
- Inform the school of any trauma/difficulty, which may affect the child's performance or behaviour in school.
- Inform the school if their child is ill or absent for any reason. Note to be written and signed in school journal.
- Inform the Class Tutor/ Year Head if a student has to take prescribed medication during school hours. (Students are not allowed to give fellow students any form of medication).
- Explain the Code of Behaviour to their son/daughter.
- Support the discipline structures within the school in order to maintain a good learning environment for all.
- Ensure that their son/daughter complies with sanctions that may be imposed for breaches of school rules.
- Ensure that their child completes any homework given by subject teachers neatly and to an acceptable standard and complies with the homework policy.

- Ensure that their son/daughter takes home their school bag every day.
- Ensure that deadlines for coursework and project work are met and work is submitted.
- Check school journals on a regular basis for correspondence from teachers.
- Check students' results and encourage your son/daughter to achieve to their full potential.
- Contact the office and make an appointment if they wish to meet a member of the staff.
- Attend Parent/Teacher meetings as organised with their son/daughter.

### **Home/School Links**

- The school journal is the first line of contact between subject teachers and parents.
- Parents/Guardians are provided with access details for VS Ware where they can monitor attendance, progress and behaviour records.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the school if they are worried about any aspect of their child's progress in school.
- Constructive information regarding their child's progress and behaviour is made through progress reports and parent/teacher meetings.
- Parents/guardians are informed at an early stage, of any discipline problems that may arise with their child.
- Parents/guardians are informed about school activities by letter, text messages, website, Parents Association meetings etc.
- Awards, graduation, information meetings, class celebrations, open day/evening etc. are held where parents/guardians can attend.

### **Procedures in the event of consistent breaches of the Code of Conduct**

1. A student may be referred to a member of the Student Support Team on the advice of the Class Tutor or Year Head.
2. Detention, withdrawal of privileges from a student or withdrawal from class or Weekly Report or Contract may be used for specific transgressions e.g. poor punctuality, homework not done or unsatisfactory behaviour.
3. If a student isn't wearing the correct uniform, he/she should have a note of explanation, signed by a parent/guardian, in his/her school diary. If the correct uniform is not worn on three occasions the student will receive an appropriate sanction and the parents will be informed. Jackets, coats and jumpers not conforming to the school uniform will be temporarily confiscated and placed in a store near the staffroom.
4. Students who are found using or in possession of a mobile phone on the school premises or its surrounds during the school day will be asked to surrender it until a parent or guardian is available to collect. Repeated offences will incur a penalty of surrender for a minimum period of two weeks.

5. There may be cases of indiscipline that will require the Principal to act independently of the above procedures in order to maintain the safety of a student or staff.
6. The Year Head in consultation with the Senior Management Team will make the final decision if the school is confident enough about the standard of behaviour of a student to take him/her on a school tour, especially an overnight tour.
7. The Principal has the authority to suspend a student for up to three days if this is deemed necessary. This may be extended to five days in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management. Procedures for suspension are set out in the attached CMETB Suspension and Expulsions Policy and Procedures.
8. In the case of a student who continues to misbehave, the student's case may be referred to the Board of Management of Virginia College.
9. The Board of Management may advise the permanent exclusion of a student following the procedures laid out in the attached CMETB Suspension and Expulsions Policy and Procedures
10. All incidents of indiscipline are recorded electronically in the School's Discipline System.
11. The school reserves the right to withdraw a student from an extra-curricular activity or from any other privilege of the school's choice if the said student is in breach of school rules or regulations. A partial refund of fees may occasionally apply.

## **Implementation**

All registered students of the school have a summarised version of the Code of Behaviour in their School Diary. The Code will be published in its entirety on the school website and is also available from the school upon request. All staff have a copy of the code in their Teachers' Handbook.

At the beginning of each year each class is brought through the Code of Behaviour. This is done to give students the opportunity to think and talk about behaviour, learning and rules so that they can understand what the Code of Behaviour means for them. At the beginning of the school year teachers are also brought through the main aspects of the implementation of the code. This is done to promote consistency of practice.

This Code of Behaviour was drawn up in consultation with the parents, students, staff and management of Virginia College. The code is monitored on a regular basis. Aspects of the code are discussed formally at Year Head, Staff, Department and Committee meetings. Teachers are encouraged to communicate concerns and suggestions to the pastoral team.

**This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Virginia College at the meeting of the Board on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and remains under review.**