



Notre Dame School
& St Boniface's College

Behaviour for Learning and Conduct Policy

Named Persons:

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Category: Statutory

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Our Mission Statement:

Cultivating excellence

Growing as people and schools

Rooted in the love of Christ

Educating for life

Introduction to this policy:

Teaching children and young people to behave well is a vital preparation for adult life. As adults we moderate our own needs and desires in order to fit into and play a full part in wider society. Schools play an important part, as do parents and carers, in such formation, as we cultivate goodness in every student.

The Catholic Church teaches that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our role as schools is to work in partnership with families to raise young people who are respectful, compassionate, considerate of others, and in all ways ready to live life to the full. In order to do our job as educators, we rely on the support of parents and carers to ensure that the children we greet each morning are ready to learn. We, as schools, can never replace the vital formative role of parents.

As a Catholic school, we believe that behaviour is not simply a matter of discipline but is fundamental to the moral and spiritual formation of every young person. Informed by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching including the dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity and rooted in the development of virtue, our approach seeks to nurture habits of the heart and will that lead to human flourishing. Catholic virtues such as wisdom, courage, self-control, and fairness are not only celebrated but intentionally formed through our daily routines, relationships, and expectations. Each behavioural choice becomes an opportunity for growth in virtue, guiding students to become people of integrity who live out their God-given vocation in service to others. Our behaviour policy is therefore a framework for formation, helping students to grow in character and become faithful stewards of their gifts, builders of community, and witnesses to the Gospel.

In asking for a place in one of our schools, parents and carers agree to support our policies. Our policies apply to all children and young people as an organisation cannot have one rule for some and another for others. As with any human organisation, our work is relational. Relational work is complex, involving different perspectives and needs. The school will apply this policy as it sees fit within its own context, utilising the freedoms and permissions that it is granted in Law. In the exercise of its legal rights, the school will always seek to reflect its Catholic, Christian identity and mission, rooted in the love of Christ.

1. Aims

This policy covers Notre Dame School and St Boniface's Catholic College. It informs all stakeholders about the approach of our secondary schools to ensuring an orderly and safe learning environment in which all can thrive and succeed.

This policy:

- Articulates the high expectations that our schools have of *all* students for good conduct and behaviour.
- Defines what we consider to be desirable and also unacceptable conduct and behaviour.

- Explains how the schools will recognise positive behaviour and sanction poor conduct and behaviour.
- Summarises the roles and responsibilities of different people in our school communities regarding behaviour management.

Our approach to behaviour in this policy is grounded in the core principles of **Catholic Social Teaching (CST)**:

- **Human Dignity:** Every behavioural issue is an opportunity to affirm the student's worth and capacity for change.
- **The Common Good:** Behaviour should promote the flourishing of all, not just the individual.
- **Solidarity:** We stand with those who struggle and are committed to walking with them.
- **Subsidiarity:** Behavioural concerns are addressed at the most immediate level, empowering students to take ownership of their actions.

These principles are embedded in our responses to both positive and negative behaviour.

Inspired by the Gospel, we believe that no student is beyond redemption.

- Restorative practices must reflect our belief in **the power of reconciliation** (2 Corinthians 5:18).
- Every student must be given opportunities to start again, just as Christ offers us mercy (Luke 15:11–32).
- Behavioural consequences should include **the possibility of grace**, encouraging personal reflection and renewal.

Whenever appropriate, students should be supported in restoring damaged relationships and rejoining the school community with dignity. We recognise that due to harm done, the seriousness of an offence, or signs indicating that a student will not be reformed, it is sometimes necessary for them to leave our schools in order to have a fresh start elsewhere.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

We ensure that our Behaviour for Learning Policy reflects our statutory rights and responsibilities as a school, and follows the latest guidance documents from the Department for Education. Please see Appendix 1 for further clarification.

The government supports schools to ensure a safe and well-ordered learning environment that enables all students to flourish. It will never be acceptable for an individual student to disrupt or otherwise negatively affect the learning and/or safety of others, be they students or staff.

All staff have the right to undertake their role in safety, and the schools and Plymouth CAST will act to ensure that its staff are supported to do their jobs without fear or any negative infringement of their professional role. For further information please see our school policies: 'Communication' and 'Mutual Respect'; and the Trust policy 'Unreasonable behaviour'.

All school staff have delegated authority from the Head of School to appropriately administer this policy.

3. Behaviour and Conduct

Plymouth CAST as a Trust expects all schools to deliver the highest possible quality of educational experience for all children and young people. For students to make the most of the educational opportunities open to them it is vital that they attend school every day. Positive engagement with school is expected from all members of our community, and the school will seek to remove all barriers that prevent a child from accessing their learning entitlement.

Parents and carers play a key part in ensuring that their child attends school every day.

Schools can support with the development of virtue in children and young people, but they cannot replace the day to day formation of good behaviour in children by their parents or carers. CAST and the Local CAST Board adopt the teaching of the Catholic Church that parents are the primary educators of their children. Parents choose our school for their child's education and are expected to support school staff implementing our rules in ensuring a consistent experience of standards for young people as they grow.

School rules may be different to rules applied at home. Parents and Carers accept school rules, and the school's approach to implementing its rules by virtue of asking for/accepting a place for their child in our schools. The schools acknowledge the rights of the parent to move their child to a different school if they prefer the rules and educational approaches elsewhere.

Governors have directed the SLT that no individual student has the right to disrupt the school life, learning, progress or wellbeing of other students; and that school staff have the right to expect full compliance with their instructions by students by virtue of the student continuing to be a member of the school community.

Governors expect school leaders to secure consistently high standards of behaviour, so that all students are proud of our school, and secure for themselves the very best outcomes from their education. All members of staff have the authority to assist in the securing of good behaviour in our schools.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. The Local CAST Board

The Local CAST Board of Governors is responsible for approving this behaviour policy and monitoring its effectiveness, holding the Heads of School to account for its implementation.

4.2. The Head of School

The Head of each School is responsible for implementing and keeping under review this behaviour policy in their school's context.

The Head of School will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with poor behaviour. They will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied with intelligent consistency.

4.3. Staff

Staff are called not only to implement the behaviour policy but to witness to the Gospel in their interactions with students demonstrating patience, compassion, integrity, and moral leadership rooted in Christ. Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy with intelligent consistency, taking account of the known needs of identified students.
- Maintaining and improving their own relational behaviour management approaches which include trauma-informed and restorative practice
- Promoting and modelling positive behaviour.
- Wherever possible, de-escalating incidents.
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of particular students.
- Listening to students' perspectives of reported incidents.
- Recording behaviour incidents.
- Keeping parents and carers informed of behaviour concerns.

The Heads of School along with the senior leadership team will support staff in responding to behaviour incidents.

4.4. Parents and Carers

Parents and Carers are expected to:

- Accept the school's behaviour policy and the disciplinary authority of all school staff.
- Accept and commit to the Home-School agreement for the duration of their child's place in the school.
- Support their child in adhering to the school rules. Parents have chosen our school for the education of their child, and must ensure that their child cooperates with staff, engaging positively and respectfully with our educational processes, for the good of all in our school community.
- Monitor their child's behaviour online, and their use of social media.
- Send their child to school each day punctually, wearing all aspects of the correct uniform, fed, rested, equipped and ready to learn.
- Inform the school promptly of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour.
- Attend meetings with school staff, if requested, to discuss their child's behaviour.
- (If their child is suspended from the school), to ensure that the child is not found in a public place during school hours in the first five days of suspension and to attend a reintegration meeting with the school at the end of a suspension. Suspension is a serious consequence, and the child must know this from both the school and the parent/carers.
- Ensure that their child takes responsibility for online behaviour and form their child's understanding of the safe use of technology
- Ensure their child is not carrying items designated by the schools as prohibited to or from school
- Ensure their child does not have vape and vaping paraphernalia (including possession, sharing or using)

Parents/carers have access to behaviour data for their child in real time through ClassCharts and can reinforce the expectations of our schools, fostering consistent approaches to behaviour management.

As a Catholic school, we affirm the teaching of the Church that parents are the first and most important educators of their children. The partnership between home and school is a sacred trust, and the consistent formation of children in virtue and respectful behaviour requires mutual support. Parents and carers are expected not only to support the school's rules and sanctions, but also to model behaviour that reflects Gospel values such as respect for authority, truthfulness, compassion, and forgiveness. In all communications and interactions with staff, governors, and other families, parents are called to uphold the dignity of every person and to act as role models of courteous and constructive dialogue. The school will take seriously any instances where parental behaviour undermines the mission, safety, or moral integrity of

the school community. Where a breakdown in parental conduct occurs, the school reserves the right to address this formally and involve governors or external authorities where necessary. We are committed to working in a spirit of mutual respect, and we ask all parents to join us in building a community rooted in love, justice, and peace.

In situations where a student’s behaviour is deemed unmanageable, unsafe, or significantly disruptive to the learning environment, parents and carers are expected to respond promptly to urgent communication from the school. This may include attending the school at short notice to support staff in resolving the situation, collecting their child early if necessary, or participating in an immediate planning or reintegration meeting. Timely parental cooperation is essential to ensure the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of all members of our school community.

5. Student behaviour and conduct for learning

Clear expectations are vital in ensuring that students know and understand the boundaries within which they should operate.

Our expectations of all students:

	Classroom expectations	Out of lesson expectations
Committed	<p>You arrive on time to school and lessons wearing the correct uniform, with the correct equipment (including PE kit)</p> <p>You show an excellent level of effort, without disrupting the learning of any other students.</p> <p>You are presenting your school work to the highest standards.</p>	<p>You complete homework on time and to a good standard.</p> <p>You are an active member of the school. Positive and engaged.</p> <p>You organise yourself and your equipment ready for learning the following day.</p>
Respectful	<p>You meet and greet your teacher at the classroom door.</p> <p>You are polite, courteous and respectful to everyone in the school community.</p> <p>You listen to others and respond positively.</p>	<p>You are caring for the school environment</p> <p>You are respectful to others in the wider community.</p> <p>You are an upstander and promote positive behaviour.</p>
Safe	<p>You work with others to resolve issues.</p> <p>You are taking responsibility for your own behaviour.</p> <p>You are in the right place at the right time.</p>	<p>You are moving around the school in a calm manner.</p> <p>You are being a positive ambassador when travelling to and from school, and when on school trips.</p> <p>You represent the school well when in the community.</p>

5.1 Praise, Recognition and Rewards

Our praise and recognition system is rooted in the understanding that we all have a God-given potential to live life to the full. It is designed as a virtue-based system to celebrate the success of all our students as they grow *as people*. It is underpinned by the belief that the recognition of the deepening of each student's character, and their attitude to work is fundamental to establishing and reinforcing appropriate conduct and work patterns.

Virtuous behaviour refers to actions and attitudes that reflect high moral standards and good character. It is grounded in Gospel principles and involves consistently choosing to do what is right, even when it is difficult or when no one is watching. Virtuous behaviour is also evident in being polite to staff and peers, helping others in need, resisting peer pressure to engage in negative behaviour, and contributing positively to the school community. The Virtues that make up our reward system are: **Wisdom**: using good judgement in learning and asking thoughtful questions. **Justice**: Treating others fairly and standing up for what is right. **Courage**: Showing bravery in tackling challenging work or social situations to seek what is fair and just. **Self-control**: resisting distractions and temptations to become involved in negative behaviour.

Overall, virtuous behaviour reflects a commitment to doing good, fostering positive relationships, and creating a respectful, supportive environment where everyone can thrive.

Verbal praise and positive recognition is used by all staff in our schools to routinely create and reinforce positive relationships. Students are recognised and acknowledged for doing the right things and doing things right. Every student is encouraged to be the best version of themselves. Our entire rewards system is built around, and supports the development of, growth in character and virtue.

5.2 Achievement Virtue-based positive points

At the heart of our approach to behaviour is the intentional formation of virtue. In the Catholic tradition, virtue is understood not merely as good behaviour but as the development of habits that lead to moral excellence and human flourishing. We recognise and seek to cultivate the cardinal virtues of **wisdom, courage, self-control, and justice**, alongside the theological virtues of **faith, hope, and charity**. These are nurtured through daily routines, relationships, and reflective practice. Every behavioural choice is an opportunity to grow in virtue, and our praise and sanctions aim to guide students towards becoming people of integrity, resilience, and compassion and ready to live out their vocation in service to God and others. Staff are encouraged to notice, identify and affirm students not only for compliance or effort but for demonstrable growth in these virtues. In doing so, we seek to celebrate what is good and inspire all students to become the best version of themselves in the light of Christ.

Staff recognise growth in virtue, and record this on school systems. Virtue is more than merely positive behaviour; it signifies growth in Christian character.

Demonstrations of virtuous behaviour are recorded on ClassCharts (see appendix 2 for the categories). Individual progress is reviewed regularly and used as a basis for discussion and recognition. This may include invitations to rewards events throughout the year.

5.3 First attention to best behaviour

We recognise the importance of first attention to virtuous behaviour. We believe in the power of praise and recognition as a primary tool to motivate and encourage students to make positive contributions to school life.

Notre Dame and St Boniface's College believes in rewarding effort, recognising achievement and encouraging students to aspire to exceed our expectations. Rewards are a very powerful tool for staff to use. A student, whose achievements are recognised in any way, whether publicly or in private, is more likely to make a positive impact within the community. We aim to recognise and celebrate academic, sporting, social, cultural and the personal achievements of students.

This also means that we intentionally focus our energy and attention on recognising and reinforcing the good choices students make that reflect the virtues of our Catholic tradition. By celebrating what is good, just, and noble, we encourage students to grow in confidence, character, and self-discipline. This proactive approach helps to build a positive culture in which students are affirmed for living out Gospel values in both word and action. Staff are encouraged to seek and praise virtue in action, knowing that recognition is a powerful force for moral development and community cohesion.

6. Management of poor conduct

Any poor conduct or misbehaviour will be addressed in this policy. This includes low-level behaviour sanctions such as warnings. Conduct viewed by the school as being a serious breach of this behaviour policy will usually result in suspension, or permanent exclusion. Suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff can work in safety and are respected. 'Last resort' means that the usual resources and/or approaches available to the school have been tried and failed. It does not mean multiple chances to try again. The management of serious behaviour issues may involve a multi agency approach such as Social Care and the Police. The school will always cooperate with other agencies if requested, in the resolution of serious issues.

6.1. Poor conduct or misbehaviour is defined as a deliberate breach of the school's behaviour policy. This may include, but is not restricted to:

- Disruption in lessons, in corridors between lessons, and at break and lunchtimes.
- Non-completion of classwork or homework.
- Poor attitude to learning.
- Incorrect uniform.
- Lateness to lessons.
- Internal truancy.
- Use of mobile phone or other communication/recording devices on school premises.
- Misuse of any arrangement made for individual students.

Internal truancy, where a student is present in school but deliberately avoids attending lessons without permission, is considered a serious breach of the Behaviour Policy. This behaviour disrupts learning, poses safeguarding concerns, and undermines the trust between the student and the school. Students found to be internally truant will face sanctions and will be required to catch up on missed work. Repeated internal truancy may lead to parental meetings, monitoring systems, and escalated interventions including parents being called into school with a sense of urgency to support the school in addressing the issue and agreeing on a plan to restore the student's engagement and accountability. Parents are expected to work with the school to prevent repeated incidents of internal truancy.

Please see appendices for further examples.

Serious Incident

A Serious Incident is defined as any significant occurrence or pattern of behaviour that fundamentally breaches the school's core values, poses a risk to the safety and well-being of the school community, or severely disrupts the classroom. This classification includes, but is not limited to, removal from lessons, physical assault, targeted bullying or harassment, the possession of prohibited items, significant damage to property, or persistent defiance that undermines the safety and authority within the setting. Such incidents represent a critical escalation from low-level disruption and require an immediate, formal response to ensure the continued security and integrity of the learning community.

To ensure full compliance with regulatory standards the school maintains a central record of sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour. This log serves as a formal audit trail for inspection purposes. Each entry includes:

- The nature of the offence and the date it occurred.
- The name and year group of the student(s) involved.
- The specific sanction imposed and the staff member responsible.
- Evidence of any follow-up actions or parental notifications.

This central record is monitored regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and pastoral team to identify trends, ensure the consistent application of policy, and assess the effectiveness of interventions. These records are retained securely in accordance with data protection legislation and are made readily available for regulatory inspection to demonstrate the school's commitment to a safe and transparent disciplinary framework.

6.2. Managing consequences of poor conduct

All students have the right to make progress in learning and the schools cannot permit one child to disrupt the learning of others. In addition, students will face consequences if they choose to associate with or encourage students who are not behaving in a way that is supportive of a calm and orderly environment.

Staff will model positive behaviour in keeping with our school virtues, and deal with poor behaviour in a consistent, calm and adult manner. Staff have professional responsibility to follow things through with students and ensure that incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with as privately as possible. School leaders and other staff will work with students to engage with staff in restorative dialogue to allow for reconciliation and rebuild relationships. Such approaches will only be possible, and effective, with the full cooperation of the student, and with the support of parents or carers.

In lessons, the class teacher or LSA will follow the behaviour policy, and sanction those who are preventing their own learning and/or that of the other students in the class. Sanctions, which include restorative approaches to rebuild relationships, are used to moderate and to raise awareness of acceptable behaviours which will enable students to learn and thrive and recognising that each child is an individual made in God's image with their own specific needs and talents. Sanctions will aim to take into account individual student circumstances (if known) using intelligent consistency.

This may mean that similar behaviours between two separate students may be handled differently based on their known context and/or needs. Consistency of approach to young people between staff, parents and carers is the key to ensuring positive behaviour. Staff are expected to recognise and reward more than they sanction and to exemplify clear displays of the virtues and positive standards of behaviour.

Schools are required to log separately particular negative behaviours associated with actions against persons with protected characteristics. These may be reported separately as required in law to external authorities.

All staff are required to uphold the Catholic virtues which are the cornerstone of a positive culture in school and to follow the guidelines for behaviour recovery in the early stages, including de-escalating and modifying behaviour where they can.

6.3. Out of class expectations

Our behaviour policy covers student behaviour when on the school campus, on the way to and from school, on a trip and in any other circumstance that could adversely affect the reputation of the schools, have repercussions for the orderly running of a school and/or pose a threat to another student in one of our schools.

The conduct of children out of school hours, except on school trips or when in uniform, is the responsibility of parents and carers. This includes online activity.

7. Contextual behaviour management

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that all children, including those with a protected characteristic, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern. We take seriously false accusations made against other students and/or staff, and may pursue such instances to the fullest extent possible.

When there are concerns for a child's welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies. We will ensure concerns are discussed with parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that by doing so would be contrary to the child's welfare. The Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy underpins and guides our safeguarding procedures and protocols. In most instances, the conduct of pupils towards each other will be covered by our behaviour policy. However, some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. Our school recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. This is known as child-on-child abuse.

School aims to reduce the likelihood of child-on-child abuse through:

- the established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness.
- high expectations of behaviour.
- clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops pupils' understanding of healthy
- relationships, acceptable behaviour, consent and keeping themselves safe.
- systems for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, valued and believed

7.1. Recognising the impact of SEND on behaviour

The schools recognise that some students' behaviour may be impacted by a special educational need or disability (SEND). When incidents of misbehaviour arise, staff will consider them in relation to a student's SEND, although recognising that not every incident of misbehaviour will be connected to their SEND. Decisions on whether a student's SEND had an impact on an incident of misbehaviour will be made on a case by case basis by those in authority in each school. When in doubt, the Head of School will consult the SENDCO. When dealing with misbehaviour from students with SEND, especially where their SEND affects their behaviour, the Head of School will balance their legal duties when making decisions about enforcing the behaviour policy.

The legal duties include:

- Taking reasonable steps to avoid causing any substantial disadvantage to a disabled student caused by the school's policies or practices (Equality Act 2010).
- Using our best endeavours to meet the needs of students with SEND (Children and Families Act 2014).
- If a student has an education, health and care plan (EHCP), the provisions set out in that plan must be secured and the school must cooperate with the local authority and other bodies.

Any preventative measure will take into account the specific circumstances and requirements of the student concerned, and also the resources of the school to serve the needs of individuals over the many.

7.2. Adapting sanctions for students with SEND

We will have reasonable and proportionate expectations of all of our students. SEND is not an excuse for poor behaviour but may require specific and bespoke reasonable adjustments to allow learners with SEND to access the curriculum, and support. All reasonable adjustments are agreed by members of SLT, and the SENDco. For more information about SEND see the SEND Policy.

When considering a behavioural sanction for a student with SEND, School staff will take into account:

- Whether the student was unable to understand the rule or instruction
- Whether the student was unable to act differently at the time as a result of their SEND
- Whether any aggression shown is due to their particular SEND. All instances of aggression towards staff or other students will be taken seriously and may result in serious sanctions, including permanent exclusion being invoked. When determining the course of action, the SEND need will be considered within such a review.

If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', it may be unlawful for the school to sanction the student for the behaviour. The Head of School will then assess if it is appropriate to use a sanction and if so, whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to the sanction. The use of intelligent consistency will ensure sanctions remain fair and proportionate, while allowing reasonable adjustments for students and SEND. 'Reasonable adjustment' does not exempt a student from sanctions for poor behaviour or conduct that is chosen and/or deliberate, and/or which is not associated with their specified SEND need.

Considering whether a student displaying challenging behaviour may have unidentified SEND The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO) will triangulate information from teaching staff, pastoral Staff, Learning Support Assistants and parents / carers to evaluate a student who exhibits challenging behaviour to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs.

When acute needs are identified in a student, school staff will liaise with external agencies and plan support programmes for that child. School staff will work with parents to create the plan and review it on a regular basis. Our schools are mainstream schools that need to use all available resources to support a full range of students' needs throughout the academic year. They will always make decisions about the allocation of their resources in good faith, and in the light of information available at the time.

The school is committed to "intelligent consistency" in its approach to behaviour. While we maintain high expectations for all students, we fully recognise our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. We are dedicated to ensuring that students with SEND are not placed at a substantial disadvantage by our behaviour systems.

(a) Understanding Barriers to Meeting Expectations

The school recognises that for some students, their SEND may be a significant contributing factor to their behaviour. We do not view a student's SEND as a justification for behaviour that compromises safety; rather, we see it as a potential barrier to meeting expectations that requires specific, proactive support. Our approach focuses on:

- Identification: Determining whether a specific behaviour is a direct manifestation of a student's disability or an indicator of an unmet need.
- Explicit Instruction: Proactively teaching the expected behaviours through adapted support and intervention strategies, such as social stories, visual cues, or sensory regulation breaks.

(b) Reasonable Adjustments in Practice

Before any sanction is applied (particularly serious sanctions such as classroom removal, suspension, or permanent exclusion) staff will consider whether a reasonable adjustment is required to avoid discrimination. This includes:

- Individualised Assessment: Ensuring sanctions are proportionate, taking into account the student's age, developmental stage, and any specific SEND.
- Proactive Modification: Adjusting the delivery of a sanction to ensure it is accessible (e.g., holding a detention in a small, quiet supervised room rather than a large hall to avoid sensory overload).
- Documented Support: Utilising Individual SEND Support Plans or Pastoral Support Plans to clearly outline the specific adjustments made to the behaviour policy for students with complex needs.

(c) Oversight and the Prevention of Discrimination

In accordance with DfE Behaviour in Schools (2024) guidance, the Senior Leadership Team and the SENDCo regularly monitor behaviour data to ensure students with SEND are not disproportionately impacted by the school's disciplinary framework. We fulfill our Public Sector Equality Duty by:

- Anticipating Disadvantage: Periodically reviewing policy "triggers" that may inadvertently penalise students with specific conditions (e.g., ADHD, Autism, or SEMH needs).
- Early Intervention: Engaging with external agencies and the local authority at the first indication that a student's behaviour pattern may stem from an underlying, unidentified need.
- Statutory Reviews: Before any decision regarding permanent exclusion is made, the school will conduct a formal review to determine if the behaviour was a direct manifestation of the student's disability and confirm that all reasonable adjustments were exhausted.

7.3. Students with an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

The provisions set out in the EHC plan must be secured and the Head of School will cooperate with the local authority and other bodies. If school staff have a concern about a student with an EHC plan's behaviour, the Head of School will make contact with the local authority to discuss the issues. If appropriate, the Head of School may request an emergency review of the EHC plan.

7.4. Safeguarding and behaviour management

The school recognises that changes in behaviour may be an indicator that a student is in need of help or protection. The Head of School will consider whether a student's behaviour may be linked to them suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this may be the case, the school will follow the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, and consider whether pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate.

7.5. Dealing with the behaviours that are seen and heard in lessons

Staff can only respond to the behaviours that are seen and/or heard by them at any particular time. This may mean that students are given warnings for responding to a peer or event that may have distracted them.

In such cases, staff will not ask questions nor investigate the entirety of each event as to do so would compromise the flow of the lesson for all students – teaching and learning must be prioritised. Students are urged to raise their hand to speak to the staff member at an appropriate time in cases where a peer may be repeatedly distracting them.

Staff members will always endeavour to ensure that seating plans minimise the potential for disruption and that instruction, resources and circulated support promote and maintain student engagement.

8. Investigating incidents

Schools are centres of education, and their employees work towards this end. School staff are primarily focused on learning and personal formation, and are unable to extensively investigate when something goes wrong.

The schools do not have the resources or expertise of the Police. In forming a view of what has gone wrong, the school will use the legal test of **balance of probabilities**. This is where the school views that it is more likely that something has happened than that it has not. This is often referred to as the 51% test. If, following an investigation, there is deemed to be a probability of 51% or more that a child has carried out an action we will use this to inform our decision. This is a lower threshold than used by Law Courts, and aims for swift action in response to a situation.

The schools will support Police investigations when necessary.

School staff will listen to, but will not engage in argument or debate with parents/carers regarding its course of action in response to its assessments made on the balance of probability.

The schools are unable to investigate or sanction behaviours online, at weekends, during school holidays, and other occasions when a child is not in school, and comes under the authority and supervision of their parents or carers. Online behaviour that affects the reputation of the school and/or affects the school or individuals adversely may be sanctioned by the full suite of school behaviour measures outlines in this policy, at the discretion of the Head of School

Investigating other events where staff feel that a reported incident of poor behaviour requires deeper investigation, they may employ the use of:

- CCTV
- Student and staff statements
- Student IT account screening
- Searches

The outcomes of the investigation will support staff to make informed decisions relating to the potential application of sanctions. Schools do not have a legal obligation to have or use CCTV.

9. Stepped consequences

Staff will deal with any students who are not behaving in a way that is upholding the Catholic virtues in a consistent, calm and adult manner. Staff will take personal responsibility to follow things through with students and ensure that incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with privately. School staff will work with students to engage with staff in restorative dialogue seeking reconciliation to rebuild relationships.

In lessons, the class teacher will follow the procedures below with any student whose conduct is below our standards and is therefore hindering their own learning and/or that of the other students in the class. Teachers will give one clear **warning**, reminding the student of expectations. If the behaviour continues, the student will be **removed** from the lesson and placed in the removal room or designated removal area. The removal will automatically result in a one-hour after-school detention. This simplified process allows staff to act decisively while maintaining fairness and clarity for students.

Warning	A clear, calm reminder to the student that their behaviour is not meeting expectations.
Removal	Instruction to students to leave the lesson and sent to the removal room or designated removal area.

The automatic consequence of removal from lessons will be a detention to be held after school for one hour.

Students who persistently do not meet our expectations will be monitored by the Subject Leader or their Year Leader, as appropriate to individual cases. A Behaviour Contract may be used. This is a signed document which is completed collectively and lays out the support available to the student to correct their behaviour, as well as the expectations of conduct going forward and the commitment of all parties to achieve this.

Students for whom there are significant concerns will be offered appropriate support to manage and modify their behaviour and may be referred to work with our Pastoral Team and/or external professionals. This might include a mentor or an Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Young Devon counsellor, a school nurse or

our local PCSO. Students requiring more intense support will be raised at our termly Support Panel meeting and a multi-agency process, which may include the EHAT framework, will be adopted. Should a parent not wish for specific support to take place, this will be logged. In the spirit of Catholic education, intelligent consistency enables us to uphold justice and mercy in our care for each student.

9.1. Detentions and removal from normal circulation:

The schools can issue detentions at breaks/lunchtimes and after school. They do not currently set weekend detentions. Detentions may be set for behaviours outside of school. We may remove from circulation students who fail to meet expectations in lessons or social time during the school day (break and lunch) for a period of time. The period of time will be determined by the school, as it seeks to reduce the negative impact of behaviour on others.

9.2. Setting detentions

Detention: what the Law allows:

Teachers can issue detentions to students (aged under 18). The times outside normal school hours when detentions can be given (the 'permitted day of detention') include:

- any school day where the student does not have permission to be absent;
- weekends - except the weekend preceding or following the half term break;
- non-teaching days – usually referred to as training days.

Detentions outside school hours:

Staff should not issue a detention where they know that doing so would compromise a child's safety. When ensuring that a detention outside school hours is reasonable, staff issuing the detention should consider the following:

- Whether the detention is likely to put the student at risk
- Whether the student has known caring responsibilities which mean that the detention is unreasonable
- Whether the parents ought to be specifically informed of the detention
- Whether suitable travel arrangements can be made by the parent for the student. It does not matter if making these arrangements is inconvenient for the parents

All detentions are logged on ClassCharts and are visible for both students and parents to see on the ClassCharts app. Parental consent is not required for detentions. For one-hour (or upscaled two-hour detentions), staff will contact parents/carers to inform them of the issue and the sanction.

Where a student fails to attend a detention, this is classed as defiance and an escalation is put in place. 30-minute detentions are upscaled to one hour, one-hour detentions to two hours and two hours to Reset. Students, parents/carers and staff are informed of this by email through ClassCharts.

9.3. Categories of detentions:

Subject detentions: Subject detentions provide space and time for a student to catch up on missing work, or to repair the relationship with a member of staff that they have damaged through their actions or inactions.

Behaviour detentions: Behaviour detentions provide space and time for a student to reflect on their behaviour for learning or conduct. They respond to behaviour during social or lesson times, including before or after school. Detentions signal to a child that they are not meeting our expectations. Behaviour detentions may run for short periods, such as a break or lunchtime, or for one or two hours for students who have been removed from a lesson or have significantly breached the Behaviour Policy in the view of the school. Behaviour detentions can also be used when a student is persistently late to school and/or lessons.

Reset: *Internal seclusions provide a longer period of time for a student to reflect, and to be supported in improving their behaviour.* Students will work in the internal reset room and not attend normal timetable lessons.

External Reset: *External resets provide a greater opportunity for a student to reflect, and to modify their behaviour before they are allowed to rejoin the main school community.* Where Reset has been used but not had the desired effect or where Reset has not been successfully completed, the Head of School has the legal right to direct a student to be educated elsewhere. External resets are time limited to a maximum of five school days. This will be reviewed by SLT daily. Students will complete the work set. B code will be used for registration purposes. As part of reintegrating the student back into ordinary mainstream classroom there will be a review of the impact of intervention.

9.4. Suspension

Suspension will be issued according to the current CAST policy on Exclusions. Any suspensions will be authorised by the Head of School, or a Deputy Headteacher in the absence of the Head of School. Suspensions are an extremely serious sanction and will not be used lightly. Suspensions may be issued for behaviours outside of school, as set out in the scope of this policy above,

The student, and their parents/carers are expected to attend a formal reintegration meeting following the suspension. At these meetings strategies to support the student will be discussed.

Suspension is a serious sanction issued in strict accordance with the **DfE statutory guidance: 'School suspensions and permanent exclusions' (updated August 2024)**. Suspensions are authorised by the Headteacher and are used as a last resort in response to serious or persistent breaches of this policy.

- **Cancellation of Suspensions:** In line with the 2024 guidance, the Headteacher may cancel a suspension that has not yet begun. If a suspension is cancelled, the school will notify the parents, the governing board, and the Local Authority without delay. If the student has a social worker or is Looked After, their social worker and/or Virtual School will also be notified.
- **Reintegration:** A reintegration meeting will be held following any suspension. While the student's return to school is not contingent on the parents attending this meeting, the school expects parental engagement to support the student's successful return to the classroom.
- **Remote Access:** Governors' meetings and Independent Review Panels may be held via remote access if requested by parents, provided the technology allows all participants to hear and see clearly.

9.5. Formal review panels

For students who persistently choose not to engage with the efforts of staff and/or other professionals to improve their conduct, the Assistant Headteacher in charge of Behaviour or other members of the SLT may convene a Senior Leadership Panel to meet with the student and their parents/carers to complete and sign a Behaviour Contract. A Behaviour Contract is a signed document which is completed collectively and lays out the support available to the student to correct their behaviour, as well as the expectations of behaviour going forward and the commitment of all parties to achieve this. For any student who breaks their Behaviour Contract and, as such, may jeopardise their place at Notre Dame and St Boniface's College. Decisions around serious sanctions such as exclusion will be guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and recognising the dignity of every person, the need for justice and accountability, and the commitment to the common good of the whole school community.

The Head of School may convene a Governor Panel to meet with the student and their parents/carers where a student is at serious risk of permanent exclusion in a final attempt to encourage them to modify their conduct. Please note, this stage will be followed unless the breach of the Behaviour Contract is severe enough to warrant more immediate action. Notre Dame and St Boniface's College work closely with other schools in the city and consequently managed moves, or similar shorter-term packages, may be used to give a student a fresh start in a different environment, if all other interventions have not succeeded in improving a student's behaviour. In addition, we may refer students to alternative provision at ACE Schools or other providers as appropriate.

The Head of School has the legal right to direct a student to study in another school for a specified duration.

9.6. Permanent Exclusion

Permanent Exclusion is the most serious sanction available to a school, and will be rarely used. However, a student may be permanently excluded for an extremely serious "one off" incident such as serious violence, threat of violence to staff, serious bullying or supplying drugs, or for repeated breaches of the school's behaviour policy. A permanent exclusion, and associated processes, will be managed in accordance with the current CAST policy on Exclusions. Repeated breaches of this behaviour policy are also grounds that may be considered when issuing a permanent exclusion. In all instances, the Head of School will take into account the needs of the individual, but also their impact on the learning of others and/or the good order of or safety in the school.

9.7 Removal from Classrooms and Internal Reset

In accordance with the latest **DfE guidance (Feb 2024)**, the school treats the removal of a student from a classroom as a serious sanction. While removal automatically results in a one-hour after-school detention to address the breach of conduct, the school is committed to ensuring that the period of removal remains a constructive educational experience.

Students placed in the **Internal Reset** room or a designated removal area will be provided with **meaningful and continued learning**. Staff will ensure that students have access to curriculum-aligned work that allows them to maintain their educational progress while separated from their peer group. The environment will be quiet, supervised, and conducive to academic focus.

Removal and internal reset is a **time-limited intervention** designed to allow for reflection and the restoration of a calm learning environment. The length of time a student spends in Reset will be proportional to the incident and will be reviewed daily by the **Pastoral Team** and **SLT** to ensure the intervention is successful in enabling the student to return to ordinary mainstream provision at the earliest opportunity.

The school will ensure **same-day parental contact** is made whenever a student is removed from a lesson or placed in Internal Reset. This is primarily facilitated through **ClassCharts**, with follow-up communication from staff as necessary.

All removals and resets are recorded centrally. This data is monitored weekly by the **Senior Leadership Team** to evaluate:

- **Frequency and duration:** Identifying students who are repeatedly removed to provide targeted pastoral or SEND support.
- **Equality Impacts:** Monitoring for any disproportionate impact on specific groups, such as students with SEND or those with protected characteristics, to ensure "intelligent consistency" and the fulfillment of legal duties under the **Equality Act 2010**.

10. Bullying

The schools are part of the Anti-Bullying Alliance. The schools adopt a **zero-tolerance** of bullying.

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is;

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Type of bullying	Definition
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting others
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, discriminatory gestures
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, threats.
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites
Prejudice-based	Targeting someone based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other protected characteristics

All bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying, will be treated as a safeguarding concern where it causes significant harm to a student's wellbeing or safety. We monitor and respond firmly to **prejudice-based bullying**, including bullying related to race, religion, disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. This includes any comments, jokes, actions, or online activity that demean or exclude others on the basis of protected characteristics.

Serious cases will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and external agencies may be involved where appropriate. Bullying concerns can be reported by students, parents, or staff to any trusted adult in school. All reported allegations will be recorded and investigated promptly, sensitively, and proportionately. Outcomes will be communicated to those involved.

Support will be provided to both the targeted student and the student responsible for the bullying, with a focus on reconciliation, accountability, and restorative justice. As a Catholic school, we believe in the possibility of change and the dignity of every person. Where bullying has occurred, we seek both justice and

mercy and helping the student responsible to reflect, make amends, and grow in empathy through restorative practice and pastoral guidance.

The school promotes an anti-bullying culture through PSHE lessons, tutor programmes, assemblies, and a clear focus on Catholic virtues such as compassion, respect, and justice. We actively encourage students to be **upstanders**, not bystanders, and to seek help when they witness or experience bullying.

As a Catholic school, we believe every person is made in the image and likeness of God and possesses infinite dignity. We are committed not only to **protecting those who are harmed**, but also to **redeeming those who cause harm**. In line with Gospel values, our approach combines justice with mercy and offering opportunities for **reconciliation**, **forgiveness**, and **personal growth** through restorative conversations and formation in virtue.

In resolving instances of bullying it is sometimes the case that modification of conduct/behaviour is required by *both* parties.

11. Malicious or Unsubstantiated Allegations, and deliberate misrepresentation

Malicious or defamatory allegations whether made online or other means can wreak havoc in a person's personal and professional life. Allegations made against a member of staff by a student will usually be reported to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.

Where a student and/or their family makes an accusation against a member of staff and that accusation is considered to have been malicious, the Head of School will discipline the student in accordance with this policy as a serious incident. Depending on the seriousness of the allegation, the school may inform the Police. Additionally the member of staff's professional organisation may initiate legal proceedings against those who made and/or spread the false accusation(s).

Where a student has made an allegation against a member of the school community that is determined to be unfounded or malicious, sanctions may be used up to and including permanent exclusion, and prosecution. This is in line with current government recommendations.

The decision on how to proceed should be dealt with sensitively and according to circumstances. In order not to deter genuine allegations from being made by students, the student found to have made a malicious accusation should be offered confidentiality and may (according to the circumstances)

- Receive counselling to help identify the reasons why they made the allegation
- Be referred to their Head of Year or another Senior member of staff
- Be referred to Social Care (as stated in paragraph 193 of DFE Keeping Children Safe in Education)
- Face serious consequences including internal and external reset and/or suspension (amount of staff time spent on investigation may be taken into account when considering severity of consequence, including permanent exclusion)
- Face criminal proceedings.

Where a student deliberately misrepresents a situation, either in school, or to parents, in the view of the school, a further sanction will be imposed to reflect time wasted for staff investigating, or fielding unnecessary or unwarranted complaints.

12. Use of reasonable force

At times, school staff may need to use reasonable force in order to prevent harm to themselves, the student, or others. In line with the Department for Education's most recent guidance (*Use of Reasonable Force* –

Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, 2022), all members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force. This includes support staff, and extends to those temporarily in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on school trips.

Reasonable force means using no more force than is necessary and is always a last resort when other de-escalation strategies have not succeeded. It may be used to prevent a student from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from seriously disrupting the learning environment. For example, it may be necessary to guide a student to safety, break up a fight, or prevent a student from leaving a supervised area.

The decision to physically intervene is down to the **professional judgement** of the staff member involved and should always take into account the individual circumstances of the incident, including the student's age, level of understanding, and known needs. Their decision will be informed by their reading of a 'live' situation, and they must act in the interests of preventing harm to themselves, a student and/or other students. Any use of force must uphold the **inherent dignity of the student**, reflect our commitment to trauma-informed and restorative practice, and seek ultimately to protect the common good of the school community.

All incidents involving the use of reasonable force will be recorded, reported to a member of the School Leadership Team, and communicated to parents or carers.

13. Power to search

School staff may search a student if they have reasonable suspicion that a student has any forbidden items. Staff will always try to obtain the student's cooperation before searching them. If the student does not cooperate, the member of staff may still search them if there is a risk of serious harm to the student themselves or to others. The school may involve the Police in searching students or their possessions.

Please see Appendix 4 for a non-exhaustive list of forbidden items in school and searching electronic devices.

14. Confiscation

As with other sanctions, the power of confiscation must be applied in a reasonable and proportionate way. The aim pursued in confiscating property is maintaining an environment conducive to learning. Any items, such as chewing gum, or foodstuffs, found in students' possession will be confiscated and either retained or disposed of. In keeping with our Catholic values, all searches will be carried out with a deep respect for the dignity of the child. We seek not only to enforce rules, but to support students in growing in responsibility, self-awareness, and trust.

We will also confiscate any item which is prohibited, harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to students after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

All staff have the right to confiscate any prohibited item, electronic devices and associated items, clothing that is not school uniform including jewellery.

Such items will be confiscated, labelled and stored in a safe place. If the item is not illegal or prohibited the item will be returned to the student at the end of the school day.

The school is not liable for loss of or damage to confiscated items. The law protects members of staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss of, or damage to, any item they have confiscated provided they acted lawfully.

Exceptions to the above include material that is inappropriate or illegal for a child. Material should be referred to the Year Leader or a member of the SLT who will decide on the most appropriate action to take. A student might reasonably be asked to turn out their pockets or to hand over an item and the school might use its legal power to discipline if the student unreasonably refuses to cooperate.

Searching and screening students is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Certain items might be requested to be submitted to the Police.

15. Training

Behaviour training is required as part of our new staff induction, and is part of the ongoing training of staff.

Opportunities for whole school training are provided, as well as specific strategies to use with individual students which will be disseminated by Pastoral leads or the SENDCOs in consultation with our Educational Psychologist.

15.1. Monitoring arrangements

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the Head of School and Local CAST Board every 3 years as a minimum, but reserve the right to modify this policy at short notice in order to address emerging situations or trends. At each review, the policy will be approved by the Local CAST Board. This policy may be updated within three years as the needs of the school determine.

15.2 Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Exclusions policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Anti-bullying policy

Appendices follow on subsequent pages

Appendix 1

Legislation and statutory requirements

We ensure that our Behaviour for Learning and Conduct Policy follows the latest guidance documents from the Department for Education. Governmental policy and direction is also incorporated into the current Ofsted inspection framework, which secures accountability from schools.

This policy is also formed in consultation with the Trust's model behaviour policy.

All Headteachers are required by Law (Education Act, 2006) to establish standards and processes aimed at:

- promoting self discipline and proper regard for authority among pupils,
- encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils,
- securing that the standard of behaviour of pupils is acceptable,
- securing that pupils complete any tasks reasonably assigned to them in connection with their education, and

otherwise regulating the conduct of pupils.

Relevant policies and guidance consulted in drafting this policy:

Behaviour in Schools (DfE, Feb 2024)

Improving Behaviour in Schools (EEF, 2021) – *Latest version (originally published 2019, reissued 2021)*

The Equality Act 2010 - Latest version

Use of Reasonable Force (DfE, July 2013) – *(last updated January 2025)*

Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE, July 2022) – *(last updated July 2023)*

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, March 2016) – *Latest version*

School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (DfE, Sept 2024) – *Statutory guidance currently in force*

School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions (DfE, Sept 2023) – *Statutory guidance currently in force*

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (DfE, Jan 2015) – *Statutory guidance currently in force*

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children (DfE, Sept 2021) – *Latest version*

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025) - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment. This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 2

Our behaviour system seeks the formation of virtue as part of positive character development.

Examples of virtuous behaviour in school could include:

Wisdom:

- Working independently and with effort.
- Using good judgement in learning and asking thoughtful questions
- Acting positively on feedback.
- Demonstrating a love of learning.
- Excellent work.
- Excellent effort.
- Excellent homework.
- Excellent attitude.

Courage:

- Showing bravery in tackling challenging work or social situations to seek what is fair and just.
- Making thoughtful contributions to classroom discussions.
- Answering questions with confidence.
- Showing resilience and not giving up.
- Leading in learning.
- Excellent participation during paired or group work.

Justice:

- Treating others fairly and standing up for what is right.
- Being a positive role model.
- Helping others.
- Showing kind and respectful behaviour during social time.
- Showing kind and respectful behaviour during lesson time.
- Being an upstander (being someone who stands up for what is right and follows the school code of conduct)

Self-control:

- Resisting distractions and temptations to become involved in negative behaviour.
- Improving the environment.
- Being a positive ambassador for the school.
- Excellent contributions to extra-curricular activities
- Positive praise phone call home.
- Excellent attendance.
- Excellent positive mindset.
- Excellent focus and concentration.

Appendix 3

Examples of serious misbehaviour include, but are not restricted to:

- Repeated breaches of the school rules. 'Repetition' means more than once.
- Defiance towards any member of staff
- Any form of bullying.
- Sexual assault, which is any unwanted sexual behaviour that causes humiliation, pain, fear or intimidation.
- Vandalism.
- Theft.
- Fighting.
- Smoking, including vaping.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour.
- Possession of any prohibited items.

Notre Dame and St Boniface's College will firmly address conduct associated with smoking or vaping, which may include:

- A student smoking or vaping in school or on school property
- A student reported to be smoking or vaping in the local community whilst in school uniform
- A student selling smoking or vaping paraphernalia to other students.
- A student being exploited to sell illicit items including smoking materials and/or vapes to fellow students
- A student being given vaping items by a parent as a harm reduction measure compared to smoking
- A student with smoking paraphernalia or vapes in their possession at school

Appendix 4

Forbidden items in school

As a Catholic school, we prohibit any item that undermines the safety, dignity, or wellbeing of others. Students are called to help maintain a peaceful and respectful environment, and the possession of harmful or disrespectful items is inconsistent with that responsibility. Prohibited items include any object that has been adapted to cause harm or concealed to avoid detection, including disguised weapons (e.g. knives hidden in pens or vapes). Items intended to intimidate others, such as imitation weapons, face coverings, balaclavas, or clothing associated with antisocial behaviour or gang identity, are forbidden.

The Education Act 2011 and **Searching, Screening and Confiscation** (DfE, July 2022) – *(last updated July 2023)* grant authorised school staff the power to search suspected students, with or without consent, for weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, fireworks, pornography, anything that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause injury or commit an offence, stolen property or anything banned from the school.

The law enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property as a sanction, so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. The law protects them from liability for damage to, or loss of, any confiscated items provided they have acted lawfully. The Head of School has authorised all members of the School Leadership and Pastoral teams (including Heads of Year) who are Level 3 Safeguarding trained to search for 'prohibited items'. Searches should be conducted by at least one member of the Senior Leadership Team plus another appropriately trained person from those named above. Appropriate training is given to this team of staff about what constitutes prohibited items and how to conduct searches in line with policy.

It is also possible that, if necessary to maintain the safety of students, the Police may be called to undertake searches where items are suspected to be carried by students. Notre Dame and St Boniface's College adheres to the guidance found in the DfE document 'Use of Reasonable Force – advice for school leaders, staff and governing bodies'. Staff will be alleviated from any responsibility if items are damaged or broken.

Banned items include:

- Weapons or any item that could be used, or is intended to be used as a weapon
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs of any class
- Stolen goods
- Tobacco products
- Products containing nicotine
- Vapes
- Products containing any other controlled substance without authorisation or prescription.
- Pornographic images including any such images stored on electronic devices
- Fireworks or bangers
- Anything that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause injury or commit an offence
- Anything banned in the school rules

Searching electronic devices

Where the person conducting the search finds an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules or that they reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property, they may examine any data or files on the device where there is a good reason to do so.

They may also delete data or files if they think there is a good reason to do so, unless they are going to give the device to the police. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone if it has been seized in a lawful 'without consent' search and is prohibited by the school rules or is reasonably suspected of being, or being likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property. The member of staff must have regard to the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State when determining what is a "good reason" for examining or erasing the contents of an electronic device:

In determining a 'good reason' to examine or erase the data or files the staff member should reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules. If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

If a staff member does not find any material that they suspect is evidence in relation to an offence, and decides not to give the device to the police, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete any files or data from the device or to retain the device as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

Searching, Screening and Confiscating

The Head of School has authorised all members of the School Leadership and Pastoral teams (including Year Leaders) who are Level 3 Safeguarding trained to search for 'prohibited items'.

All school staff at Notre Dame and St Boniface's College are legally authorised to search for prohibited items. Our schools have a process in place to respond when smoking or vaping items are identified through searching and screening, or smoking/vaping behaviour is observed, or reported in the school setting or school community. Searching and screening may involve the use of electronic screening devices, or the involvement of external agencies with specialist equipment.

School processes may involve:

- Exploring any safeguarding concerns, mental or physical health concerns, or other potential risk behaviours, such as substance use.
- Exploring how any illicit confiscated items were obtained and reporting any illegal sales.
- Communication with parents or carers about the student's behaviour, the school's policy, and rationale for the screening, searching, confiscation, disposal of the prohibited items, and any suggested onward support.
- Making relevant referrals, or providing advice & signposting to the student and their family.
- Responding to any safety incidents.

To bring a prohibited item into school constitutes a serious misbehaviour

For a student to refuse to cooperate with a search, or who seeks to pervert the school's investigation of matters that it considers to be serious, will be viewed as serious misbehaviour.