



2.4.1. DISCIPLINE

JANUARY 2011

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

As a Coptic Orthodox College we desire to apply the Teachings and the commandments of Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ into our lives. Therefore our school discipline policy reflects the Teachings and the Commandments of Our Lord and Our God.

As a school community we need to refer back to the Ten Commandments in order to ensure that we are truly applying the Teachings of Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ who has entrusted us with this task and responsibility.

The Ten Commandments were not given just for the days of Moses the Prophet, nor for the olden times only, but they are for all generations. *“Until heaven and earth pass away not one letter from God’s commandments will pass”*. (Matthew 5:18)

Contemplation of the Ten Commandments by H.H. Pope Shenouda III

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III also teaches us the following in relation to the Ten Commandments:

- The Commandments are a covenant between God and man.
- The two tablets on which the Commandments were written were called “The tablets of the covenant”.
- To show how important they are, it is sufficient to know that they were spoken by God (Ex. 20:1) and written with His Finger on the two tablets and given to Moses (Deut 9:10).
- The number ten is a symbol of perfection. So, the Ten Commandments are a symbol of the whole Law.
- The First Tablet contained four commandments relating to man’s relationship with God.
- The Second Tablet contained the remaining six Commandments relating to men’s relationship with each other.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Exodus Chapter 20:1 – 17

And God spoke all these words, saying:

1. “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.”

2. “You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

3. “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

4. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

5. “Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”

6. “You shall not murder.”

7. “You shall not commit adultery.”

8. “You shall not steal.”

9. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.”

10. “You shall not covet your neighbour’s house, you shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbour’s.”

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The College's Position of Corporal Punishment:

It must be noted that the College does not condone or use Corporal Punishment and the college will not accept any excuse for the use of such punishment.

1. College Contract:

Enrolment contract (refer to appendix A) to be agreed to and signed by parents and students prior to initial enrolment/re-enrolment each year.

Consequences for not signing contract

Students may be removed from classes and prohibited from taking part in the school program.

2. Attendance

Attendance is compulsory for all students enrolled at the College.

2.1. Absences

Parents must notify the college by telephone by 9.00 a.m. on the day of the absence and/or via the diary or a separate note, the day the student returns to school following an absence.

2.2 Rolls

Primary rolls - taken by classroom/specialist teachers both a.m. and p.m..

Secondary rolls - Two school rolls (a.m. and p.m.) are taken each day. Each teacher also marks the roll in every class that they teach.

2.3 Early departures

Primary: Parents are required to come to the office and sign students out. The College Receptionist will ring the classroom teacher and students will be sent to the office.

Secondary: Students must have written parental permission to leave the College grounds during school hours. A note must be signed by the Coordinator. Students are issued with an official school slip to be presented at the office. Student must sign the "Leave Book" in the General Office, upon departure and again if they return to the College, on the same day. A record is made by the Office in the student's diary. Random checks are often made with parents by Coordinators, to verify signed notes presented by students.

Consequences for unexplained absences

Parents of students who are experiencing difficulty keeping up with the required class-work because of a high level of absences will be contacted by their classroom teachers/

Level Coordinator to clarify the cause of the absence. Problems arising from this are to be referred to the Student Welfare Coordinator for further remedial action.

2.4 Lateness

Late to school:

Students sign into “Late Arrival” booklet in the front office. Lateness is also recorded in the student’s diary with a Lateness sticker.

Consequences for lateness to school

Consistent lateness to school will be reported to parents by the year level Coordinator.

Late to class or Chapel:

Punctuality is required at all times.

Consequences for lateness to class or Chapel

Primary School: Three verbal warnings

When a student is consistently late to class or chapel, parents will be contacted by the classroom teacher. If the child still continues to be late, up to three lunch time detentions will be given followed by an after school detention.

Secondary School: On each occasion that a student is more than 5 minutes late to class, it is recorded in their diary. When a student has three recorded instances of lateness to a class or chapel in a term, an after- school detention will be issued (refer to Section 8).

3. School Diaries

The College diary is used for:

1. Study and test details,
2. Homework,
3. Communication between parent and teacher on a regular basis, and
4. Reasons for:
 - a. Leaving/being out of the classroom during school time,
 - b. Absences from school.

All entries into the diary are to remain as a record of student performance and should NOT be removed. Ideally parents should sight and sign their son/daughter’s diary on a weekly basis.

All students must have their diary at school, and in class, everyday. The diary is not a personal journal and is not to be decorated or graffitied.

Consequences for inappropriate diary use:

All students – failure to bring diary to class – Reflection Period/Lunch-time detention as is deemed necessary.

Inadequate use of the diary – Referred to classroom teacher/level coordinator.

Damaged/decorated/graffittied diary – classroom teacher/level coordinator to arrange a replacement diary AND a lunch-time detention.

4. Student Equipment

Students must have the necessary books and equipment. All equipment **MUST** be clearly and permanently labelled.

Students must not bring to school any personal items that are not related to the curriculum, e.g. weapons, personal stereo's – such as iPods and MP3 players, mobile telephones, digital video cameras or cameras/images, knives or such weapons, large amounts of money, magazines, inappropriate newspapers, photographs, card collections, etc..

Consequences for not having necessary equipment:

In the first instance, a note will be entered into the student diary to parents

If a student continues to attend classes without the required item:

- 1. the classroom teacher/level coordinator will ring the parent/guardian,*
- 2. if appropriate, discuss the matter with the Welfare Coordinator,*
- 3. if the situation continues and it is appropriate, relocate the student from the class until the appropriate items are purchased/brought to school.*

Consequences for bringing personal items not permitted at school:

Items will be confiscated IMMEDIATELY and a note will be entered into the student diary or the classroom teacher/level coordinator/Welfare Coordinator/Head of Primary or the Head of Secondary will contact the parent/guardian as soon as is practicable.

Any mobile telephone confiscated will have the SIMM card removed and returned to the student on that day, but the mobile telephone will be confiscated until the end of the term when it will be returned to a parent/guardian.

A consequence for bringing weapons or other inappropriate personal items to school is immediate confiscation of the item, relocation/isolation, suspension or expulsion by the Head of Primary/Head of Secondary.

All other prohibited personal items must be collected by a parent or guardian.

5. Student Conduct

While it is important to encourage positive behaviour with praise, awards and stickers, it is also important that students know the boundaries of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the consequences if they choose not to follow the rules. Please refer to 2.4 Student Management Policy.

It must be noted that the College does not condone or use Corporal Punishment and the college will not accept any excuse for the use of such punishment.

5.1 Classroom Conduct

Behaviour that is deemed distracting or unacceptable will be dealt with by the classroom teacher in the first incident. If the inappropriate behaviour is deemed highly offensive, degrading or distracting then the matter will be directly handled by the Level Coordinator or the Welfare Coordinator as per our 2.4 Student Management Policy.

Consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom.

In the first instance a verbal warning and a note, if it is deemed necessary, will be entered into the student diary to parents.

After three such warnings and the inappropriate behaviour continues:

- 1 the classroom teacher/level coordinator will ring the parent/guardian,*
- 2 if the inappropriate behaviour continues relocate the student from the class and refer the matter to the Level Coordinator/Student Welfare Coordinator for further action according to the Student Management Policy.*

5.2 School yard Conduct

Any student concerns are to be directed to the teachers on yard duty.

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds for any reason.

Equipment retrieval from outside the school grounds must NOT be done by students.

When out in the yard, students must not communicate with people outside the school yard.

5.3 Conduct in the Library

The Library is a facility used by the whole school community for educational purposes. As it is a research, private reading and class area it is important that speaking and other noise is kept to a minimum.

Please refer to 4.3 Library Policy.

5.4 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited.

Consequences for smoking at school.

It will be brought to the attention of the Director/Head of Primary/Head of Secondary. The offending student(s) will be relocated from classes and suspended from school until their parents can be interviewed.

5.5 Vandalism of school or personal property

Misuse of school or personal property, including graffiti, will not be tolerated.

Consequences for vandalism of school or personal property.

It will be brought to the attention of the Director/Head of Primary/Head of Secondary. The offending student(s) will be relocated from classes and suspended from school until their parents can be interviewed.

The responsible student(s) will be required to cover ALL costs of repair/replacement.

5.6 Inappropriate or insulting language or behaviour

Students are to use appropriate language and behaviour at all times. During school hours, unless in a LOTE class, English is to be used. Rudeness/disrespect through the use of language or behaviour to other students, teachers, non teaching staff or visitors will not be tolerated. This offence also covers the use of technology to use inappropriate or insulting language, e.g. mobile telephones, the internet, etc..

Consequences for inappropriate or insulting language or behaviour.

- 1 ***First Offence*** - in the first instance a verbal warning and a note will be entered into the student diary to parents unless the language/behaviour is considered extreme then the matter is to be referred immediately to the Level Coordinator/Student Welfare Coordinator/Head of Primary or the Head of Secondary as per 2.4 Student Management Policy.
- 2 ***Second Offence*** – Referral to the Level Coordinator, parents contacted and a detention will be issued.
- 3 ***Third Offence*** – Immediate referral to the Level Coordinator, Student Welfare Coordinator and the Head of Primary/head of Secondary..

Appropriate follow up may include suspension or Saturday detention at ANY level if it is felt necessary by the Head of Primary/Head of Secondary.

5.7 Bullying/Fighting – Please refer to 6.8 Bullying

Bullying and fighting, including ‘play fighting’ will not be tolerated and will be dealt with by the Student Welfare Coordinator or the relevant Deputy Principal..

This offence also covers student(s) planning to engage in such a fight, e.g. using the internet to threaten, bully or arrange a ‘time or place’ to conduct a fight.

Consequences for Bullying/Fighting.

An incident report will be filled out by the students involved and given to the Student Welfare Coordinator and the relevant Deputy Principal and the students involved may be suspended immediately.

5.8 Theft

The 8th Commandment clearly forbids stealing/theft. The act of theft/stealing is complete, irrespective of the value of the item stolen/taken.

Consequences for Theft.

An incident report will be filled out by the students involved and given to the Student Welfare Coordinator, Head of Primary or Head of Secondary and the student(s) involved will be suspended immediately.

The offending student will make reparation to the victim.

5.9 Chewing Gum

Students are not permitted to bring chewing gum to school.

Consequences of Chewing Gum.

In the first instance, the gum needs to be disposed of; any other gum will be confiscated. Repeat offenders will be processed according to 2.4 Student Management Policy.

6. Completion of Set Work

All St. Mary's students are expected to participate and complete all set academic, sporting tasks, etc. to the best of their ability. Students are expected to complete tasks and meet set deadlines. It is a student's responsibility to approach a teacher if work is not understood, or if tasks have been missed due to absences, etc.. Please refer to 4.4 Homework Policy.

Consequences for non-completion of set work.

The penalties for late submission or non-completion of work will be clearly outlined by the classroom teacher in the task instructions.

A student may be required to:

- a. complete the work in school time,*
- b. undertake/repeat the exercise/activity after hours,*

ANY work that hasn't been submitted or is considered to be of an unsatisfactory standard by the teacher.

If the student continues not to complete set work, including examinations, or continually hands work in that is sub-standard, then the relevant Deputy Principal may consider the progression of the student to the next year level, i.e. the student may be asked to 'stay down' to complete the unsuccessful year.

7. School Facilities

7.1 School Lockers – a fee is charged at the beginning of each year for the hire of lockers.

Students are to take all necessary books/equipment to each class and will not be allowed to leave class to visit their locker.

Consequences for being out of class without a diary note.

The student will be issued with a lunchtime detention.

7.2 Telephones – There is a pay telephone available outside the General Office for student use. Mobile telephones are banned at ALL times.

Consequences for having a mobile telephone – see Section 4 of this Policy.

7.3 Student Vehicles – Students with a motor-car/motorcycle licence and access to a vehicle are not permitted to drive other students to or from the college.

8. Detentions/Suspensions:

School staff sometimes find it necessary to issue detentions for continuing misbehaviours. It is important that parents note these punishments and honour the Schools' Discipline Policy by assisting their child to attend when required. Detentions are not issued lightly.

8.1 Detentions - Primary School

Detentions are conducted during lunchtimes. Notification slips are given to students on the day prior to the detention as a courtesy to parents.

After three lunchtime detentions are issued, the student will be given an after-school detention on the following Monday. If a student accrues three after-school detentions in a term, he/she will be referred to the Deputy Principal (Primary) for possible suspension.

8.2 Detentions - Secondary School

Detentions are conducted on Wednesday after-school from 3:15pm to 4:00pm. At least three days notice will be given via a notification slip, which must be signed by a parent.

8.3 Suspensions

Only the relevant Deputy Principal has the authority to suspend a student.

In all circumstances that warrant a suspension the following will occur:

- (a) the incident will be placed on the student's permanent record, and
- (b) the student(s) will not be allowed to return to school until an interview is conducted with their parent/guardian with the relevant Deputy Principal and/or their delegate.

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