

Our School Policies

2024-2025



Bishop's Conservatory Secondary School

FOREWORD

Our school aims to provide a stimulating and pleasant learning environment which is not only conducive to the main goal of learning but also to strengthening desirable behaviour that will help these young persons mature into self-disciplined and self-reliant individuals, capable of behaving appropriately in any situation.

The aim of this *School Policies Handbook* is to create a balance between the rights and responsibilities of the individual and the group. Moreover, it informs students, staff and parents/guardians of behaviour expectations at school.

We envisage our school as a place:

- where students and staff members are valued, and their talents and abilities recognised and further developed;
- where each person recognises and shoulders his/her own responsibility in implementing agreed standards of conduct;
- where good communication is maintained at all levels and parental and local community involvement is encouraged;
- that embraces all students, staff members and parents, and thus a sense of belonging is fostered.

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1. Commitments

The SLT pledges to:

- make known and explain to students, parents and staff the *School Policies Handbook*
- support all staff members to maintain appropriate and effective behaviour management
- encourage and promote an environment built on Catholic values
- recognise and respect the rights of students, teachers and parents/guardians alike
- always serve as an effective role model for students, in all circumstances.

Teachers and LSEs pledge to:

- work with students so that they understand the objectives of the subject and what they are expected to learn
- help students realise the importance of being responsible for themselves and for others
- accept, understand and respect diversity and differences among students
- help all students to achieve
- promote Catholic values
- assist students to understand and obey the rules of the school
- be aware of and enforce consistently and fairly the rules and policies of the school

Parents/Guardians pledge to:

- send the students to school regularly, on time, in full uniform, and prepared to undertake the tasks expected of them by the school
- understand, respect and support the school rules and policies, and ensure that their children do likewise
- ensure that the school has their updated contact details, namely, address, mobile, other contact numbers and an active email address. The school's main channel of communication is online
- give their daughters healthy snacks and drinks
- enter from the main Secondary School entrance when they come to school, go to the reception desk and ask for assistance
- refrain from sending their daughter to school if unwell
- reply to any communication pertaining to their daughter sent from the school
- check and keep themselves up to date via the school's online communication – *MySchool*
- cooperate with School staff in solving behavioural problems
- attend meetings that are organised specifically for parents
- foster respect for the rights and property of others
- assume financial responsibility for any damage incurred by their children to property of the school, or that belonging to any third parties
- inform the school if their daughter will not be attending school (refer to Attendance Policy, Section 7, Page 17).

Students pledge to:

- attend all classes daily and on time
- be clean and neat, and in full uniform
- refrain from chewing gum on school premises unless otherwise prescribed by professionals
- conduct themselves in an orderly, safe and responsible manner
- be prepared for class assignments and activities, with appropriate working materials
- respect other people and their property
- refrain from using abusive language and behaviour
- be responsible for their own work
- abide by rules and regulations of the school and of individual classroom teachers

- accept, understand, and respect diversity and differences among fellow students and ALL members of staff
- express feelings and needs in constructive, socially appropriate ways
- take care of and be responsible for their classroom
- bring all needed items and books to school
- resolve differences through acceptable, peaceful methods such as dialogue and compromise.

Behaviour in relation to educators and school authorities:

- Students should respect themselves, their schoolmates, and members of staff – Senior Leadership Team, Administration Team, Teachers, LSEs, Technicians, Maintenance Department, Receptionist and Cleaners - ALWAYS and in ALL situations.
- It is a sign of courtesy to greet a member of staff/administration when they enter the school and class.
- Thanking the teacher for the lesson shows courtesy and appreciation for the teacher’s professional input. Students are expected to respect the above practices.

2. Behaviour Points System

In order to help students mature and become responsible persons, they must be made aware that every action, behaviour, and decision carries a consequence. Parents/guardians and students can check on behaviour issues through *MySchool*.

As from scholastic year 2024-2025, our school shall be adopting a new behaviour policy system designed on a points basis. Exemplary behaviour as well as mild, moderate and serious misconduct shall be recorded on *MySchool*.

Students start the scholastic year with 0 points. Points shall be deducted for every infraction, according to the criteria included below:

Mild (1 point)

- Mobile phone not switched off before being deposited in box
- Late arrival to school
- Copying of HW
- Missing HW
- Not handing in consent form on time
- Missing textbooks/notes/forms/deadlines
- Incorrect uniform items / wearing make-up / jewellery / artificial and long nails
- Deliberately refusing to take part during lessons
- Incorrect use of computer or sciences’ lab equipment
- Incorrect use of class computers
- Not sticking to the class seating plan
- Loitering and/or running between lessons
- Littering
- Other (any issue not included in the list above)

Medium (3 points)

- Late arrival to school (more than 5 times)
- Repeatedly copying and/or missing HW
- Use of rude/foul language and/or blaspheming

- Damaging of computer labs, sciences' labs, any class equipment
- Damaging of school premises
- Any form of cheating
- Incorrect uniform items / wearing make-up / jewellery / artificial and long nails
- Repetitive loitering and/or running between lessons
- Disrespectful behaviour during school outings
- Unsafe conduct – endangering one's and others' lives
- Other (any significant issue not included in the list above)

Serious (6 points)

- Late arrival to school (more than 10 times)
- Absconding from school
- Bullying (verbal & physical)
- Violent conduct
- Possession of prohibited items including mobile/cigarettes/vapes/illegal substances
- Giving false testimony
- Disrespecting superiors
- Theft
- Misuse of school cashless cards
- Copying during exams
- Unsafe conduct – endangering one's and others' lives
- Other (any issue not included in the list above)

The following are the consequences according to the points deducted:

20 points - Student stays 2 hours after school.

30 points - Student attends school wearing the uniform on a day when no students are at school. Parents/guardians are requested to come to school for a meeting with the SLT.

40 points - Community work.

50 points - Student is suspended for a day.

Exemplary behaviour shall be recognised in the following manner:

Throughout the year, educators will identify students who demonstrate the following:

- Exceptional academic improvement
- Outstanding leadership skills
- Very good team spirit
- Appreciation and respect towards the school community
- Care for the school environment
- Consideration for others' needs and concern against bullying
- Significant empathy towards others
- Consistent participation in school activities, such as the school choir, the school council and Eko-Skola.

Students who receive this recognition three or more times during the scholastic year shall be celebrated at the end of the year.

This recognition is given as an encouragement for continuous exemplary behaviour over and above the expected norms of behaviour. It is important to note that rewards are not given when a student carries out her normal duties.

Members of the SLT, teachers, LSEs, technicians and administrative staff are responsible for the implementation of this behaviour policy.

3. Policies

3.1. School Outings and other out-of-school behaviour

Our school is committed to ensure that students always act as positive school ambassadors, even when not on school premises. Therefore, it is expected that students:

- Behave appropriately on their way to and from school, whichever means they may use to travel
- Behave in a desirable way (as instructed by teachers and LSEs) on educational visits or when visiting other educational institutions
- Do not threaten the health, safety or welfare of other students, staff, volunteers and members of the public in any way when out of school and wearing the school uniform
- Do not block the passageway leading to the school entrance
- Do not take their mobile phones to outings, unless stated in the consent form
- Do not take photos of any other person without permission of that person
- Do not publish pictures/photos or/and videos taken during school outings on any form of social media or websites
- Hand in the consent form before/on time
- Wear the expected items of uniform as stated in the consent form given

Educational outings, field trips, live-ins and seminars are authorised by the school and are effectively an extension of the classroom contributing to the achievement of the educational goals. Therefore, students are expected to attend these activities and parents are expected to encourage attendance. The school shall notify the parents about the activity to obtain their consent. Parental consent is required, and students cannot be sent on out-of-school activities without a consent form duly signed by the parent. If a student forgets to bring back the signed consent form, she will not be allowed to participate in the outing.

If a student does not attend such activities, they will be considered absent, unless a valid reason for their absence is given in advance, in writing, to the school Administration. Acceptance of such notes is at the discretion of the Administration. Students may be asked to produce a medical certificate. Kindly note that participation in these activities is included in the Secondary School Certificate & Profile.

3.2. Personal Belongings

- Any object that can cause harm is prohibited.
- Valuable items: Students are responsible for their own property and should not bring valuables or excessive amounts of cash to school.
- Medicine cannot be carried in the school bag or left in the locker. Generic painkillers are available from the Secretary's office. Parents are contacted before medicine is provided. Students prescribed with medicine which needs to be taken during school hours are to bring the medicine and leave it at the Secretary's office, together with a note from the parents.

- Students must always carry their purse/wallet with them everywhere and ensure that the school card is kept safely. The school card should be used **only** by its owner.
- Mobile phones and other electronic devices should not be brought to school unless the student needs them. If students bring them to school, they are to be switched off and left in the designated baskets on entering the school. At the end of the school day, mobile phones and other electronic devices will be picked up from the reception area.
- Students using mobile phones for health-related issues are kindly asked to keep the phone in their satchel.
- Moreover, the school does not hold itself responsible if any electronic device, money or valuable is stolen, misplaced or damaged.
- Random spot checks may take place to check that the students are not in possession of any prohibited items. If such items are found, a serious warning may be issued, and the item is confiscated.
- Students who get recording devices with them for projects or school activities will need to ask permission from the teacher concerned. Any photos taken or clips recorded cannot in any way be posted on any social networking website, such as Facebook and Instagram. If this happens, a serious warning may be issued, and the material posted would need to be deleted immediately.

3.3. School Day and Assembly

- The school gate opens at 7:30am and closes at 7:55am. Late students will be noted down. Points are deducted when students are frequently late.
- Students shall proceed to the Open Ground. The Morning Prayer starts at 8:00am every day. Every Tuesday and Thursday a whole school Assembly will be held from 8:00am to 8:10am.
- Form time takes place after the Assembly, in the respective home classes. During this time, the Form Teacher takes the attendance.
- School day ends at 2:20pm.
- Students are to enter and exit the school only through the secondary school entrance.

3.4. Punctuality

- Whenever students come late to school, they are to report to the Administration.
- Parents are informed of the student's lack of punctuality and further action can be taken.
- Students should not linger in corridors and shall proceed quickly to their next lesson. All students should be present at the beginning of each lesson. If students are late for lessons, points will be deducted. Attendance shall be taken during every lesson.

3.5. Start of Lessons

- Once the lesson starts, students are not allowed to leave the class without permission.
- Students cannot go to the bathroom between lessons. They should wait for the teacher of the next lesson and ask for permission.
- Students are expected to behave well in-between lessons, and to move quickly in an orderly manner when changing classes. They are to wait quietly for the teacher.
- No eating or drinking takes place during lessons, unless permission is given by the teacher.
- No running in corridors or shouting is allowed on the school premises.

- Whenever a student needs to miss or is going to be late for a lesson, she must present a note written by her parent/guardian to the school Administration justifying her absence. The note will be signed by a member of the Administration, only if permission is granted. It is up to the Administration to grant permission. The student will then give the note to the school Secretary who will inform concerned teachers via *MySchool*.

3.6. Counselling and Guidance

- The services of the school Counsellor and Guidance teachers are available for all students. These services are intended to help students. Thus, parents need not feel preoccupied when their daughter benefits from these services.
- When members of staff notice repeated misbehaviour, a referral might be made to the Guidance teacher. The aim of this is to understand the student's behaviour and help her deal with their issues.
- If a member of staff feels that a student needs support, they will refer to the Guidance teachers accordingly.
- If a student wishes to make an appointment with the Counsellor, they are to request a meeting through the Guidance teachers. The Guidance teacher will give an appointment sheet to the student. If a student would like to make an appointment with the Guidance teacher, they are to request a meeting directly from the Guidance teachers' office during break time.
- It is the student's responsibility to remember an appointment date. When a student misses an appointment, she will have to ask for another one.
- Before the session, the student needs to inform the teacher/s whose lessons will be missed so as to be excused from that lesson.

3.7. Property

- Students are expected to respect school property.
- Students have an important role to play in ensuring that the physical environment is kept clean and attractive.
- Any damage caused on the school premises will have to be paid by the student.
- Students must not waste school resources. Therefore, they should be responsible to switch off lights and fans when the room is not occupied; not to waste tissue paper in the bathrooms and not to leave water taps open.

3.8. Break Time

- As soon as the bell rings for break, the Prefect is encouraged to switch off the lights.
- During the break, students will leave their class and then proceed to the ground as indicated in their timetable.
- If a student needs to go back to her classroom during the break, she is to ask for permission from the break supervisor.

3.9. Tuck Shop and Dining Area Rules

- Students cannot buy anything during and between lessons.

- Littering is strictly forbidden. Students are to use the bins provided to throw away any waste. Clean paper, plastic, glass and metal should be deposited in the appropriate recycle bins.
- To ensure food hygiene standards, students are not allowed in the kitchenette.

3.10. Use of Bathrooms

- During lessons, teachers may allow one student at a time to use the bathroom.
- Should students need to use the bathroom frequently, a written consent needs to be given to the SLT who will then inform the relevant staff members.
- Toilet paper and disposable hand towels need to be used with caution. Students caught wasting these resources shall face negative consequences.

3.11. Lockers

Lockers are school property. They must be kept clean and used responsibly. Furthermore, any damage must be paid for by the student.

- If a student forgets the locker key, she may request the spare key from the school Secretary. If this is repeated more than twice, she has to pay a penalty.
- A student's locker can be searched whenever the school Administration deems it necessary. Any material which goes against school rules and regulations shall be confiscated.
- Anything kept in the locker remains the responsibility of the student.
- Items not related to school material cannot be kept in the locker.
- If a student loses the key, she has to pay for the replacement of the key barrel.
- Students are not allowed to use their lockers during lessons.
- Students are not allowed to decorate their locker with stickers, permanent decorations or writings/drawings with marker.

Usage of Lockers:

1. Students should be very careful to take home all books and copybooks needed in order to do their homework or to study.
2. Teachers will not accept any excuses related to students' forgetting their books or copybooks in the locker or forgetting the locker key.
3. Students should not leave dirty clothes, perishable food, or dangerous objects in the locker.
4. Students cannot hire lockers in pairs or groups.
5. The school Administration is not responsible if objects are damaged or stolen from the locker.
6. Students are not allowed to use lockers during lessons.

More information regarding lockers:

1. At the beginning of the scholastic year, students pay €15 each for locker usage and shall be given the locker key during the first week of school.
2. At the end of the scholastic year, the locker key is returned, and the student is given €5, only if the locker is still in good condition.
3. If the locker suffers damage, the deposit will be lost.
4. If damage exceeds €5, the student has to pay a suitable amount for the repairs.

3.12. School bags

The school gives priority to the problem of heavy school bags and endorses the need to educate and inform parents, students and all members of staff on this subject.

Indeed, it is highly recommended that backpacks are used correctly, to distribute the weight of the load among some of the body's strongest muscles and avoid injury to muscles and joints. Therefore, backpacks should have the following features:

- two wide padded shoulder straps
- a firm-padded back
- waist straps
- be of lightweight but sturdy material.

The bag should ideally have different compartments, and the straps buckled tightly with heavy books placed closest to the centre of the bag. When carrying a backpack, bending should be done by using both knees, not over the waist. Students are also encouraged to carry out back strengthening exercises, even during PE lessons, which help to build up the back muscles involved in carrying the backpack.

It is important to point out as well that wheeled carriers are not allowed as these constitute a hazard to students during transportation especially up and down stairs and buses, and these tend to be excessively heavy even when empty. One-strap bags and one-strap carrying style bags are to be avoided as well.

Ideally, the weight of the schoolbag and contents should not exceed 10% of the student's body weight. The weight of the bag should never exceed 20% of the student's total body weight. For those who might be unaware, the school follows a textbook based timetable. Therefore, in order to decrease the load carried by students, recommendations include:

- Managing well the use of lockers, where students check the contents of their bags and remove unnecessary material.
- The students leave at home unnecessary items, like for example, over-filled pencil cases with unneeded stationery.
- Where possible, students make use of e-versions of textbooks at home, eliminating the need to take these books back home from school. Dictionaries and bibles, for example, are ideally to be left in the lockers and at home the students make use of online ones.
- Adopting a filing system where students will only be required to carry the relevant few pages to and from school, hence avoiding the daily carrying of heavy files.
- Seeing that the packs have now been divided into thinner booklets, the student needs to see that the right booklet is brought to class.
- Should a student encounter any difficulty in this regard, she is to seek help from the guidance teachers.

3.13. Dress Code

Our school uniform specifically identifies our students, thus enabling them to acquire a sense of identity and belonging. Students' appearance reflects our school image and has a significant impact on the way it is viewed by others, including the general public. Hence, our school expects students to wear the school uniform (as described below) during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when engaging in any out-of-school activities.

Students who come to school not wearing the full uniform need to bring a written note from their parent/guardian explaining their reasons. **If students fail to bring the note, points will be**

deducted accordingly. Parents may be called in to bring whatever is necessary for the student's uniform to be complete.

Students either come to school in their formal uniform or wearing the PE kit, according to the time table. Students cannot mix items from the formal uniform with the PE kit. Students are only allowed to wear the PE kit when they have the PE lessons.

Formal Uniform

- White shirt – either long or short-sleeved
- Blue skort or trousers. Skort needs to be knee length.
- Scarf (Foulard)
- Jade long-sleeved V-neck pullover (during colder days)
- School Jacket with the school logo (during colder days)
- Navy blue snood (optional, during colder days)
- Black shoes. It should be **ALL black**
- Black or dark navy-blue socks
- If tights are worn, they need to be navy blue
- Students' underwear should not be visible

During colder days, students are allowed to wear a white polo neck underneath the white shirt. The scarf (foulard) is a compulsory uniform item and should be worn with the formal uniform.

PE Kit

- The school track suit with the Jade T-shirt underneath
- During warm weather, students may wear the skort with the PE T-shirt
- White running shoes
- White socks

During colder days, students are allowed to wear a white or navy-blue polo neck underneath the T-shirt. When students wear the polo neck, they need to keep their tracksuit jacket on.



Art, Design and Technology, Chemistry and Biology students in Forms 3 to 5 need to wear a lab coat as part of their school uniform during practical sessions. All Home Economics students must wear an apron and a bandana during practical sessions.

For health and safety reasons please note the following rules about jewellery, hair, nails and make-up.

Jewellery:

- Students are allowed to wear **ONE pair** of stud earrings at the bottom of the ear lobe
- A watch may be worn
- Bracelets, necklaces, and rings **are not permitted** for safety reasons
- Any jewellery that is against our policy **will be confiscated**

Hair:

To promote health hygiene and cleanliness, hair is to be kept tidy and pulled back if long.
No dyed hair or highlights are allowed.

Nails and make-up:

- **Any form of nail polish, gel and gelish are strictly forbidden.**
- If students come to school with gel or gelish nails, points will be deducted as per points system. They shall be asked to have them professionally removed before they can attend school.
- Nails must be kept short and clean.
- If a student comes to school wearing nail polish, she will be sent to the Secretary's Office to remove the polish against a fee of €1.
- Make-up is not allowed. If students come to school wearing make-up, they may be asked to pay €1 and have it removed at the Secretary's Office.

Students are expected to look smart and to keep their uniforms clean and in good condition, always. Any items that get stained or torn are to be cleaned or replaced immediately. This provision applies to all students, including fifth formers.

Uniform-Free Days

On Uniform-Free days, students are expected to wear clothing **appropriate** for the school environment.

The following are not allowed:

- Ripped jeans / trousers
- Skirts and dresses
- Revealing and see-through clothing
- Crop tops and sleeveless tops
- No sandals and flip flops

The final decision on the suitability of clothes and their compliance to school standards remains at the discretion of the SLT.

3.14. Photocopying Service

Photocopy Service is available during break times only. Service will not be available in the morning. To avoid queuing and waiting, requests for printing can be sent to photocopies@bcss.edu.mt from home and print outs will be ready by the first break of the following day at Ms Melissa. Therefore, if work is needed for one of the first 3 lessons, it should be sent early enough to be picked up the previous day.

3.15. School Card – Cashless system

At our school we have invested in a cashless system. Students will be using their school card to make any purchases at school. This includes buying from the canteen, the stationery shop and to pay for any photocopies/prints. Students are to ensure that they have enough money to be able to make their purchases without the need to postpone payments. Preferably school cards are topped up online from home. In case of emergency or difficulty in topping up, one can then top-up at school with cash.

4. Assessment Policy

Assessment

“Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process providing students and their parents with continuous, timely and qualitative feedback about children’s progress, giving teachers information about their practice and providing school and colleges with information about their curriculum planning, learning and teaching.” National Curriculum Framework, 2012

Purpose of an Assessment Policy

An assessment policy is intended to provide all stakeholders with a clear overview of why, how, and what we assess at our school.

Why do we assess?

To Identify what students, know and what they need to learn next

To Inform teachers’ planning and inform parents

To Measure progress

To Evaluate effectiveness of teaching methods and interventions

To Motivate teachers and students

To Comply with national requirements and align the school with national standards and aim to exceed them.

Types of assessment used at our school

At school, we use three main types of assessment: continuous assessment, school-based summative and national standardised summative such as SEC for VET Hospitality.

Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment forms part of the daily classroom routine for teachers as a means of monitoring student progress and to provide feedback to students. Continuous Assessment at our school may include, amongst other tasks, homework, questioning, teacher observation of student performance, presentations, discussions, and quizzes.

Forms 1 and 2

Continuous Assessment is used in our Reporting system for Form 1 and Form 2. This implies that reporting places greater emphasis on the effort a student makes throughout the year, rather than giving importance to an exam session. This makes it more student friendly and helps students, educators, and parents alike to obtain a more realistic picture of a child’s strengths and weaknesses in any given learning area. The following helps in giving a better understanding of what the marks per subject in Term reports represent. Two term reports are issued throughout the year - in February and in July.

Forms 3 and 4

Several practical, differentiated, and applied exercises across all Learning Outcomes per subject, shall be selected to form part of the SBA, the continuous mark of which shall be communicated to Matsec at the end of Form 5.

Continuous assessment provides parents with a broad picture of their daughter's strengths and areas for improvement. This information is available to them throughout the year on their *MySchool* account and specific detailed progress comments are given to parents in Parents' Days/Evenings and also in the two reports given during the year.

The July Report:

The overall mark is composed of the following:

Form 1 and Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5
30% Continuous Assessment	10% School-Based Assessment	10% School-Based Assessment	15% School-Based Assessment
70% Annual Exam	90% Annual Exam	90% Annual Exam	85% Annual Exam

Form 5

Assessment in Form 5 mainly takes the form of graded tasks and an annual exam. Students in Forms 3 - 5 are prepared for the national SEC examinations which they sit for at the end of Form 5 or at the end of Forms 3, 4 and 5 in the case of Hospitality which is a vocational subject.

Progress of students in terms of the summative assessment described above is available to parents throughout the year on the school online platform *MySchool*. Two term reports are issued throughout the year - in February and in July.

The continuous assessment and exam mark are included in this report. In some cases, a breakdown of the exam mark is included.

Feedback for Annual Exams

Once papers are corrected, all students are given their Exam papers to review in class. These exam papers provide an important formative feedback opportunity not only for the students but also for their teachers. During the feedback, students are encouraged to reflect on the areas in which they need to improve. Students are given time to view their paper in a quiet classroom environment, whilst the teacher gives individual one-to-one feedback, commenting constructively on their work. In this way, it is possible for students to clearly see what areas they have successfully achieved and the areas they need to work on.

Homework, classwork and other assignments

- Any given task is an important tool for learning.
- Students need to ensure that all tasks are completed and handed in on time.
- If a student finds difficulties in completing assigned tasks, it is their responsibility to ask for support from teachers, LSEs, and Guidance teachers, in order to be able to hand in work on time.

Consequences of incomplete work

Consequences will be determined by the professional judgement of the teacher or SLT, who may take into consideration the following factors:

The age of the student, previous occurrences, the student's academic history and other personal circumstances.

Taking into consideration the above, the following general procedure is observed:

- Teaching staff issue a verbal warning to the student when a task is not completed by the due date. The missing task is to be handed to the teacher on the following day/lesson as determined by the teacher concerned.
- Should the completed task not be handed in as requested, the teacher will deduct points depending on the frequency of this mishap. Parents can check points through the *MySchool* platform.
- Whenever deemed necessary, parents might be called in for a meeting to discuss solutions to help the student hand in work on time. Students may also be referred to the Guidance teachers for support.

Here are a few suggestions that might help students be more organised in their work:

- Write down your homework immediately in your school diary.
- Be sure you clearly understand all assigned work.
- Be assertive and ask questions, if necessary, to be certain you understand the task.
- Set aside a regular time for studying.
- Find a quiet, well-lit study area. Switch off the Internet/mobile phone if you are easily distracted.
- Work on homework independently whenever possible so that it reflects YOUR ability.
- Produce good quality and neat work.
- Make sure your homework is done according to the given instructions and completed on time.

5. Exam Procedures

1. Students need to be at school 15 minutes before the exam starts.
2. The venue will be noted on the notice board in the foyer area.
3. School bags, pencil cases, notes, notebooks and any other unnecessary items are not to be left near or on the desk. Only necessary stationery items and calculators (when needed) are allowed.
4. When instructed to enter the room, students must do so in a quiet and orderly manner.
5. Students cannot go to the bathroom within the first 30 minutes of the exam.
6. Apart from the oral exams, students can only leave the exam room once the time for the exam is over.
7. Action will be taken if anyone is caught talking or copying during the exam.
8. No additional time will be allowed for students arriving late for the examination.
9. If a student is sick/absent for an exam, the exam cannot be repeated, even when the exam is an oral/listening exam that may take place out of exam period.
10. During exam week, students who are sick and miss an exam need to present a medical certificate, even if sick for one day. Failure to provide a medical certificate will result in student being marked Absent on the Term Report.

6. Bullying

Our students' social and emotional well-being lies at the heart of our school ethos. Many-a-time all aggressive or mean behaviour is called bullying. However, the definition of bullying clearly explains that this is not the case:

Bullying behaviours are those behaviours which are repeated over time by an individual or a group and which are intentionally hurtful in a direct or indirect manner against a person who has difficulty defending himself or herself.

Whichever definition of bullying is used, all contain a similarity in that the behaviour is repeated, aggressive, and intended to gain power. The school does not tolerate any kind of bullying behaviour and is committed to take appropriate action whenever necessary. Our students are also taught by the school care team and their PSCD teachers on how to seek help when required. All reported events are followed by the care team and the SLT. Members of staff are very attentive to irregular behaviour observed during school hours and appropriate action is taken accordingly.

7. Attendance Policy

Procedure to be followed when absent

When a student does not come to school she is marked as absent. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to write a note or e-mail explaining the reason for the absence. If a note is written, it needs to be presented to the school Secretary on the first day the student returns to school. Absent days need to be clearly stated on the note. If the parent/guardian opts to send an email, the e-mail should be sent every day the student is absent unless the number of days absent is stated on the first email sent. All attendance emails are to be sent on attendance@bcss.edu.mt

- If a note or e-mail is not presented, the student will automatically remain marked as absent. If the reason given for the student's absence is accepted by the school Administration, she shall be marked as excused.
- If the student is sick and visits a doctor, the note can be replaced by a medical certificate.
- When a student is sick for more than three days in a month, their absence must be covered by a medical certificate which needs to be presented to the school not more than three days after the student returns to school. If the student is sick for more than 5 consecutive school days, the medical certificate must be handed in on the first day the student returns to school.
- One medical certificate can never cover separate dates of absence.
- Record of attendance is shown on *MySchool*.
- If a student is sick for an exam, she needs to present a medical certificate, even if absent for one day.
- Unjustified repeated absenteeism will be reported to the concerned authorities and hefty fines may apply.

School should not be missed without valid reasons. If this is unavoidable, the following steps need to be followed:

- If the student has a medical appointment or needs to be excused during school hours, parents/guardians should inform the Head of School by note or e-mail, as explained above, as soon as they get to know the appointment date.

- If the Administration decides that the explanation given is reasonable, the student will be marked as ‘Excused’. Reasons can include family health issues, hospital visits, bereavement, and funerals.
- Travelling abroad during term time shall only be excused when presenting the following reasons, namely, health-related matters, a wedding, or a funeral. An explanatory letter written and signed by parent/guardian, together with a copy of the flight tickets, needs to be presented to the Head of School for approval.
- When a student has been absent for 9 days in a month without any justification, the school social worker may be sent to the family.

8. Leaving School

- If a student needs to leave the school during school hours and is authorised by the Administration, **a family member over the age of 18 needs to come and pick up the student concerned. Students are not allowed to leave the premises unaccompanied.** When the family member comes to pick up the student, they must sign on the ‘Leaving School Early Form’ at the Receptionist’s desk.
- Students are not allowed to leave the school premises without previously obtaining permission from the Head of School/ Assistant Head of School.

9. Conclusion

It is the intention of the school to strive to render this document as effective as possible. It is however very evident that the implementation of this policy is almost entirely dependent on determination, good will, and co-operation amongst all stakeholders. The school is confident that the objectives set by this Policy are achievable and will greatly contribute to the holistic development of our students and our learning community. Notwithstanding all this, policies will be implemented using our discretion and common sense and taking into consideration the individual student and what could possibly be motivating the student’s behaviour. Above all, Christian values shall necessarily guide our judgement, decisions and the implementation of policies.

Note: This policy document is a result of a collective contribution of all staff members during Staff Development Sessions 2013 – 2014 (amended in September 2017, May 2018, September 2019, September 2021, September 2022, June 2023, September 2024).

