

## **DISCIPLINE**

1. It is an aim of Belfast Royal Academy to instil in pupils a respect for themselves and for others, enabling them to make a positive contribution both to the life of the school and to society at large. The maintenance of good discipline in school allows pupils to make their contribution confidently and in an ordered environment.
2. In such an environment the development of the pupil's self-discipline is of central importance. A sense of common purpose shared by all members of the school community will encourage pupils to recognise the need for discipline. They will accept and adhere to the school rules, conducting themselves in a responsible way because they understand the value of decent standards of behaviour. In this context, the example and influence of Senior Prefects, of Prefects and other senior pupils play a significant role.
3. The fostering of good standards of discipline informs all aspects of school life. Where there is a tendency to misbehave the best deterrent is not the severity of the punishment, but the probability of being caught. It is part of the responsibility of every member of staff to be vigilant and to seek to ensure that acceptable standards are maintained, dealing promptly and appropriately with incidents of misconduct in whatever context they occur. The arrangements which follow do not inhibit the scope for informal procedures which may often be effective in diminishing or solving disciplinary problems.
4. Where a significant breach of discipline has occurred, members of staff may judge it necessary to refer the matter to the Head of Year who will, in some circumstances, bring it to the attention of a Head of Department, a senior member of staff, a Vice Principal or the Headmaster. Parents will be informed when serious disciplinary problems arise, and may be asked to come to school for discussions.
5. Heads of Year, who have close contact with pupils, their parents and members of staff, provide a clearly identifiable channel of communication in dealing with matters of discipline. They will be guided by the conviction that the essential basis of discipline is not fear, but respect and goodwill, developed through sustained involvement with the pupil.
6. On those occasions where a punishment is deemed necessary it will most often take the form of a detention, either at lunchtime, after school on a Friday or on a Saturday morning. When the usual disciplinary resources and sanctions of the school have been exhausted, or in other circumstances of unusual gravity, the Headmaster may suspend a pupil. The Board of Governors may extend this suspension or ultimately exclude the pupil.
7. While sanctions (ranging from temporary withdrawal of good opinion to permanent exclusion) are clearly established, the primary concern in all matters of discipline is not to punish, but to develop in pupils an understanding of the necessity to sustain good standards.