



Ashfield College Code of Conduct 2021-22

1 General

- Ashfield College (hereinafter known as “the College”) is a co-educational institute where an ethos of dignity and respect for all members of the school community and conscientious effort in preparation for State Examinations is paramount at all times, both in our physical and online campuses.
- By accepting a place in Ashfield College, (either for our physical or online campus or a blend of both), students and their parents/guardians are agreeing to abide by the Ashfield College Code of Conduct.
- The Ashfield College Code of Conduct applies to both our face-to-face and online environments and blended versions of both.
- Our Code of Conduct also applies whilst making use of the Ashfield College bus.
- Ashfield College strives to provide a warm and welcoming environment, both face-to-face and online, where students and academic staff work positively and harmoniously together. All students have the freedom to do their work and study without having to suffer bullying or intimidation of any kind. Bullying will not be tolerated either in real-time or in any online environment. The College’s Anti-Bullying Policy is rigorously enforced. This policy aims to eliminate all forms of bullying behaviour, to raise awareness of the effects of such behaviour on individuals and the learning environment and to promote a climate in which students feel free to raise complaints of bullying without fear of victimisation.
- All members of the Ashfield College community, staff and students, must be treated with respect at all times.
- Ashfield College staff are to be treated with the utmost respect at all times. This rule applies whether in class, the Study Hall, common areas, at Parent Teacher Meetings or outside the College environs (including online). At all times, we expect students/parents/guardians/visitors to abide by our Dignity in the Workplace policy, affording respect to all staff of Ashfield College. Aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated within the school environs. Anyone who acts in an aggressive manner will be asked to leave the building and An Garda Síochána may be called.
- Ashfield College teachers and staff are contactable to students via their emails. Teachers and staff will check their emails only during working hours. Students are asked not to email teachers and staff outside of normal working hours, or if they do, to be mindful that they will not get a response until the next working day. Students are also asked to ensure that email communications to teachers and staff are respectful in tone and content. Teachers do not access their emails over holidays.
- Ashfield College does not require students to wear a uniform, but it does impose a dress-code. Students are required to dress appropriately in a ‘smart casual’ way. Students are not

permitted to wear items of clothing which may have offensive/inappropriate slogans. The decision of the Principal is final in all matters regarding this dress-code, subject to the right of appeal set out below.

- Attendance in school plays a vital role in academic success. Students who attend Ashfield College are expected to have full attendance. However, if a student becomes ill, a parent must report the absence to Reception by 8.30 a.m. on the morning of the illness, where it will be noted on file. Due to the fact that there is a significant correlation in the literature between attendance and exam success, we treat attendance very seriously in Ashfield College. Should any patterns of poor attendance be observed, this will initially be dealt with by the Year Head. Should attendance issues continue, this will result in a meeting between the Principal and the student and his/her parents. In such a case, this will be treated under our 'Disciplinary Procedures' below. This refers to both face-to-face and online delivery. Issues with attendance may affect a student's progression in to 6th Year. Absences without permission will result in suspension on the occasion of the first and second infringement, and possible expulsion thereafter.
- Students must be punctual for all classes throughout the school day. Lateness will not be tolerated as it affects the learning environment and progression of other students.
- Students and visitors must enter the College through the Sandyford Road entrance only. Students may not exit the building through the back door, nor may they make use of the lift.
- Ashfield College has a strict no-smoking policy. Students are not permitted to smoke anywhere within the College premises or within its vicinity (within 100 meters of Dundrum Retail & Office Park and environs). Smoking on College grounds or within the vicinity of Dundrum Retail & Office Park will result in suspension on the occasion of the first and second infringement, and possible expulsion thereafter. For the avoidance of doubt, smoking or generally loitering within the vicinity of the entrance to the College on Sandyford Road is strictly forbidden, and this prohibition is rigorously enforced by College staff.
- The use of abusive language, threatening gestures or behaviours is strictly forbidden and infringement, in either the face-to-face and/or online campuses, may lead to suspension or expulsion depending on the seriousness of the breach (see 'Disciplinary Procedures' below).
- Consumption of any illegal substance, whether on College premises or its environs, is strictly prohibited. A breach of this prohibition will result in immediate expulsion. The consumption of alcohol is also prohibited on College premises and its immediate environs. Students who are reasonably suspected of breaching this prohibition are obliged to permit the College to search their locker or school/hand bag.
- The College's Study Hall is of pivotal importance to our students' success and must be respected as a place for silent, focused learning at all times. (Please refer to specific Study Hall rules section 1.2 below). The Study Hall supervisors are to be respected at all times and their decision is final in matters of discipline which may occur, subject to a right of appeal to the Principal.
- The use of mobile phones is prohibited throughout the College except for the canteen area, and then only on designated break periods. If mobile phones are taken out by a student either in class or the Study Hall, they will be confiscated. Failure to hand over a phone when requested to do so by a member of Ashfield College staff, will be considered a serious infraction of the Ashfield College Code of Conduct. (Please refer to specific Mobile Phones rules section 1.3 below).
- The classroom is a place of learning and questions from students of an academic nature are wholeheartedly encouraged. It is our goal to ensure that every student leaves the classroom with a clear understanding of the subject matter discussed during the class. Improper disruptions of any kind, either in our face to face or online campuses, are therefore not permitted as they undermine our goals and adversely affect the learning environment.

- During Covid-19 times, all students must abide by the Covid-19 regulations which operate within the school. Failure to observe and comply with Covid-19 regulations, will be considered a serious infraction of the Ashfield College Code of Conduct.
- Graffiti or defacement of College property is considered to be a serious breach of the College's disciplinary code. All members of the College community have a right to study and work in a clean environment. If a student causes any damage or defacement to College property they must compensate the College for same. Infringement may lead to suspension or expulsion depending on the seriousness of the breach (see 'Disciplinary Procedures' below).
- The College's Code of Conduct remains in force for the duration of all trips outside College premises organised by the College for academic or recreational purposes. All transport providers, or other persons involved in such trips, must be afforded the same level of respect as we would expect for any member of College staff.
- The College accepts no liability for loss of or damage to student property on the premises or grounds. Students are advised to have their possessions on view at all times.
- The College reserves the right to refuse admission (either to our Dundrum or online campuses).

1.1 Ashfield College Full Time Online Day School

- In order to attend our Ashfield College Online Day School, (either fully online or an agreed blended mix of online classes plus face to face classes), students must indicate this clearly and submit appropriate medical evidence for consideration at interview stage. **Only students with appropriate medical evidence will be considered for attendance via the online Day School.**
- Students who attend our online Day School, either full time or in a blended manner, are subject to the Ashfield College Code of Conduct.
- We consider use of our Online Day School as a privilege. Our role is to ensure that students continue to engage in a pedagogically sound manner with our online campus and as such, a students' online participation and engagement, is continually reviewed.
- If students wish to attend a blended mix of classes i.e. some face to face and some online, this must be agreed *in advance* with the Principal.
- If granted approval by the Principal to study online, online students are required to attend all online classes and engage appropriately with the teacher, their peers and the subject matter. This is reviewed for each online student on a regular basis. If it is considered by the Principal that the online student is not engaging online in a pedagogically sound manner, the Principal's approval to study online may be revoked.
- Online students must sign in to all classes using their full name, as per school records, otherwise, attendance for the student will not be recorded.
- Online students are expected to engage fully and appropriately while online.
- Attendance in school plays a vital role in academic success. Students who attend Ashfield College, whether online or face-to-face, are expected to have full attendance. However, if a student becomes ill, a parent must report the absence to Reception by 8.30 a.m. on the morning of the illness, where it will be noted on file. Due to the fact that there is a significant correlation in the literature between attendance and exam success, we treat attendance very seriously in Ashfield College. Should any patterns of poor attendance be observed, this will initially be dealt with by the Year Head. Should attendance issues continue, this will result in a meeting between the Principal and the student and his/her parents. In such a case, this will be treated under our 'Disciplinary Procedures' below. This refers to both face-to-face and online delivery. Issues with attendance may affect a student's progression in to 6th Year.

Absences without permission will result in suspension on the occasion of the first and second infringement, and possible expulsion thereafter.

- Ashfield College teachers and staff are contactable to students via their Ashfield College emails. Teachers and staff will check their emails only during working hours and not during holiday periods. Students are asked not to email teachers and staff outside of normal working hours, or if they do, to be mindful that they will not get a response until the next working day. Students are also asked to ensure that email communications to teachers and staff are respectful in tone and content.
- Whilst online students may attend online classes for online tuition, attendance is mandatory for online students for all relevant component parts of subject programmes i.e. Geography, Agricultural Science Field Trips, Art Gallery trips, project work etc. In such instances, students must present to the Dundrum campus or appropriate location. No exceptions will be made.
- As all State Examinations will be held in a face to face environment, it is always our intention to work with students in our online campus whilst at the same time, supporting them in their preparation for taking exams, (either school exams or Leaving Cert exams), in our Dundrum campus.
- It is expected that online students will present for all exams and tests within Ashfield College's Dundrum campus. Whilst online students may submit homework to teachers online, all tests and exams must be completed within our Dundrum campus, in real time with the class group, in the exam hall, in order for teachers to record test results and comments on School Reports. No exceptions will be made.
- If a student has interviewed for the on campus Day School and a student's circumstances changes during the school year, whereby they must attend the Online Day School, students must make an application to attend our Online Day School. This application must include medical evidence and parental approval. The application will be considered by the Principal, who will also discuss the application with the student and parents. The Principal may afford the student an opportunity to attend classes online for a certain period of time, after which time, the matter is reviewed. Only students with certified medical documentation, and where it is considered pedagogically appropriate by the Principal for the individual student, will be permitted to study online.
- If students complete 5th Year online or in a blended manner, (part online and part face to face in Dundrum), Ashfield College will hold a meeting with the student and the parent at the end of 5th Year to determine a plan for 6th Year.

1.1.1 Attending Online Classes Temporarily for a Short Illness

- Due to Ashfield College's use of technology to enhance our teaching and learning, if a full time Day School student is ill, and unable to attend school, the student may watch classes from home, for a limited period of time, *once a parent informs the school of this by 8.30 a.m. on the day of the illness*. Please be advised that unless the College receives this confirmation by the start of first class, the student will be marked absent.

1.2 Study Hall

We consider the Study Hall to be one of the most important classes of the day. Due to the importance of the Study Hall, the following rules are provided to ensure maximising the productivity and creating a positive atmosphere in the Study Hall:

- **Study Hall Supervisors and all users of the Study Hall** - The Study Hall Supervisors and all users of the Study Hall are to be respected at all times.
- **Compulsory Study Hall Periods** - Attendance at these Study periods is mandatory unless the student is on their designated break.
- **Optional Study Periods** - Attendance at these Study periods is permitted only if the student attending has an attitude to study which complies with the policies and procedures set out in this document.
- **Food** - Food is not permitted to be eaten within the Study Hall.
- **Drinks** – Cold drinks are permitted to be consumed within the Study Hall provided that the container is an appropriately sealed container to prevent potential spillage. Students are only permitted to fill these containers during designated break times as it is imperative that the study of other students is not interrupted unnecessarily. Hot drinks are not permitted to be consumed within the Study Hall.
- **Toilet Breaks** are of course, permitted by the Study Supervisor whilst using the Study Hall. However, students are expected not to abuse such breaks as persistent use of the bathroom, affects the concentration of other students.
- **Cleanliness** – users of the Study Hall are expected to place all their rubbish in the bins provided and to respect the study space.
- **Lunch Breaks** - The break times of individual students are to be clearly defined by the Study Hall Supervisor in conjunction with the Principal. It is not permitted for students to amend these breaks unless they have obtained permission to do so by the Study Hall Supervisor on duty. All lunch breaks are recorded on the attendance system. Students are permitted one lunch break per day.
- **Talking** - Talking is not permitted within the Study Hall as it poses a threat to the success of other students of the College.
- **Seating** - The Study Hall supervisor may, at their discretion, allocate a seat to a student to improve their concentration/productivity.
- **Lockers** - Students are expected to have the books/equipment necessary for the subject(s) which they wish to study in a Study session with them prior to the commencement of the study period.
- **Meetings with Staff Members** - If a member of staff enters the Study Hall and requests a student to exit with them, for educational reasons, then it is permitted for the student in question to leave the room. Students, however, must sign in and out.
- **Career Guidance Meetings/Meetings with Counsellor** - Students are only permitted to meet with Career Guidance Counsellor (or other Counsellors) when they are in a Study period. Students must sign in and out for these meetings.
- **Study Locations** - Students are not permitted to study elsewhere other than in the Study Hall.
- **Alternative Modes of Study** – only students who have a certified Reasonable Accommodation may utilise a laptop.
- **Project Work** is an integral part of many subjects and may require a considerable quantity of typed content. This means that a number of students may request to complete such work on a laptop during study periods, during certain periods of the year. These periods will be made known to the Study Hall Supervisors by the Principal.
- ***Mobile Phones** - Students are not permitted to use mobile phones at any time in the Study Hall. (see below)
- **Headphones/Earphones/Listening Devices** - The use of any kind of head phone/ear phone/music listening device is not permitted in the Study Hall.

- **Online Students** – the Study Hall affords all students the opportunity to complete homework during the day. Whilst studying at home, online students should also use these sessions to complete homework.

1.3 *Mobile Phones in Ashfield College

Students are not permitted to use mobile phones at any time in classes or the Study Hall. Mobile phones may only be used in the canteen area when a student is on a designated break.

If a student is seen using such a device in the Study Hall or a class, the teacher or Study Hall Supervisor will confiscate the device. One of the student's parents/guardians will receive a phone call, and one of them must collect the phone at the end of the day. **Please note: the phone will not be returned to the student.**

The Principal will then discuss the matter with the student or their parent/guardian before returning the phone to the student.

Failure to hand over a mobile phone will be considered a significant breach of the Ashfield College's Code of Conduct.

1.4 Progression of 5th Year Students into 6th Year

Students and parents/guardians should note that those who have completed the 5th year programme are not automatically entitled to proceed to 6th year. Applications by students who have completed 5th year at Ashfield College for admission to 6th year are considered *de novo*, so that admission to 5th year in no way constitutes an automatic entitlement to progression to 6th year. Progression is not solely determined by academic results throughout the year but rather also considers behaviour, academic progress, attendance and punctuality.

1.4.1 Progression of 5th Year Online Students in to 6th Year

As indicated in 1.4, before moving in to 6th Year, students who have completed 5th Year either partially or fully online will meet with the Principal or member of the Ashfield College team, in order to ascertain how online learning has been working for the student. This is to ensure that the student remains on track and in order to make an educational plan for 6th Year. As outlined in 1.4 above, progression is not solely determined by academic results throughout the year but rather also considers behaviour, academic progress, attendance and punctuality. In the case of an online student, this will very much consider how the student has engaged with, participated in and progressed using online learning.

1.4.2 Leaving Certificate

All students in Ashfield College are defined as 'External Candidates' by the State Examinations Commission. In 6th Year, all Ashfield College students must complete an individual External Candidate Application online and pay the associated Leaving Cert. fee. When such details become available, Ashfield College will direct parents and students to the website but **it remains the student's responsibility to make this application online.** (Further details will be available at www.examinations.ie)

1.4.3 Communication

Once enrolled in Ashfield College, we will make regular contact with parents, guardians and students through a variety of communication channels, details of which is outlined in our Welcome Pack at the start of the school year. Parents, guardians and students are asked to take some time to familiarise themselves with our communication channels at the start of the year. Communication sent to parents, guardians and students will relate to pertinent information, relevant to the Leaving Certificate from bodies such as the State Examinations Commission and Department of Education. Such communications are necessary in order to ensure our duty of care and responsibility for our students as they prepare for the Leaving Certificate.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that they supply the College with their most up to date contact details on the original Application Form. If these details change throughout the school year, parents must log these changes on our School Management System. Alternatively, parents/guardians may request **in writing** for changes to be made to their contact details on our School Management System. Such requests must be sent via email to info@ashfieldcollege.ie, with 'Change of Contact Details' in the subject line.

Similarly, requests to send communications to different email addresses must be clearly outlined on the Application Form, amended on our School Management System or requested in writing via email (as above).

We will issue regular communication to parents, guardians and students. It is parents'/guardians'/students' responsibility to ensure that they keep a regular check on our communication channels.

Ashfield College students will be issued with Ashfield College email addresses at the start of the school year. Communications will be issued to students through their Ashfield College email addresses only. Parents and guardians should ensure that students keep a regular check on their Ashfield College email address. Their Ashfield College email address will give students access to Moodle, our Learning Management System.

1.4.4 Use of Ashfield Express

Students and parents are advised that the Ashfield College Express School bus does not run during Leaving Cert. State Exams. Students are responsible for making their way to and from Ashfield College during all State Exams.

1.5 Disciplinary Procedures

The College Principal, in the first instance, determines whether a breach of this Code of Conduct has occurred. In the making of such determination, the student may be cautioned, suspended or expelled. A student who has been suspended on two separate occasions will be expelled from the College on the third occasion. The final decision relating to suspensions or expulsions will be made by the Principal subject to the right of appeal set out below.

A student may also be expelled from the College, without having first been suspended, subject to the application of the procedures outlined in this Code of Conduct, should the breach be considered 'serious'. Examples of serious breaches include, but are not limited to the following:

- Acts of theft, or fraud;
- Physical or verbal abuse of a staff member, classmate, member of the public while on College premises or its environs or employees of any organisation who have business with the College;
- The possession or consumption of illegal drugs or alcohol;
- Racial, sexual or other acts of harassment or discrimination, including sexual misconduct on College premises;
- Acts of gross insubordination, or refusal to comply with legitimate instructions
- Serious negligence;
- Wilful or negligent misuse or damage to College property or the property of employees causing financial loss;
- A conviction for any non-minor criminal offence. The College is committed to the application of fair, equitable and appropriate disciplinary procedures. Students are asked to familiarise themselves with the expectations of the College as described in the foregoing Code of Conduct.

1.6 The Rights of Students or Applicants at Disciplinary and Appeal Hearings

A student who is dissatisfied with a decision by the Principal to caution, suspend or expel him or her may appeal the decision. Students have the following rights in relation to appeal hearings:

- To be given 10 days' advance notice of the hearing (or less if agreed by all parties) in order to ensure that he/she can attend and, should he/she wish, organise representation. The notice shall state the time and venue of the hearing and shall specify the student's rights in relation to the hearing.
- The right to attend the hearing. If a student fails to attend the hearing, the hearing shall proceed in the absence of the student.
- The right to be represented at a hearing by a parent/guardian, fellow student, a staff member, a friend, an adviser or a legal representative. Any costs associated with legal representation of the student or applicant shall be borne by the student or applicant unless the Disciplinary or Appeal Board otherwise determines.
- A representative may speak on behalf of the student. A student who chooses not to be represented shall be requested at the hearing to confirm in writing that he/she has been informed of his/her right of representation and has declined to exercise it.
- The right to request sight prior to the meeting of evidence to be presented at the relevant hearing, to hear and see the evidence presented, to challenge the evidence on cross-examination and to present his/her own evidence.

1.7 Grounds for Appeal

Appeals are heard by an Appeals Board constituted by the College's Chief Executive Officer. The grounds for appeal are as follows:

- There was a breach of natural justice or a significant procedural irregularity in the handling of the allegation that the applicant was guilty of a breach of the College's Code of Conduct.
- The student wishes to appeal against a decision to penalise him/her on the grounds of misconduct.
- That the penalty imposed was too severe bearing in mind the circumstances of the case,

- The student wishes to present information of mitigating circumstances which were not known at the time of the initial determination. In this case, the student must also show good reason why such circumstances could not have been made known prior to determination.
- That the appellant would be reasonably entitled to an appeal on the merits of his/her case.

1.7.1 Confidentiality

This section refers to appeals that have been made as a result of an allegation of misconduct made by the College against a student. Where the College is satisfied at any stage within these procedures that misconduct has not taken place, no documentation relating to the alleged misconduct and the associated investigations shall be retained in the student's file. The disciplinary process, once entered into, is confidential to all parties. Therefore, it is essential that any individuals involved in the process respect this.

1.7.2 Responsibilities

The Student should become familiar with the appeals procedure and, if he/she has grounds, should appeal the decision made within the requisite timeframe of 28 days.

1.7.3 Chair of Appeal Board

The Chair of the Appeal Board informs the student of the outcome of the appeal hearing.

Student's Signature: _____ Date:

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: