

CODE OF CONDUCT

ST. JOSEPH'S TRAINING CENTRE

This Document outlines the Code of Conduct:

1. For Learners within the Centre and;
2. Inappropriate conduct outside the Centre will be dealt with when it impacts on the Centre.
3. Breaches will be dealt with in accordance with the Discipline Policy (see attached).

Day to Day Centre Activities

Non-attendance

In the event that a Learner cannot attend then they must:

1. Request permission in advance to take Leave or Personal Days;
2. Inform Director/Secretary of illness by 11am on the first day of illness;
3. Sick certificates must be handed into the office before **11.00am** on the **Friday** of your sick week. Late sick certificates will not be accepted.
4. Inform Director/Secretary of absence due to Emergency as soon as possible.

Participation

Learners must participate fully and to the best of their ability in their Education Programme by:

- Maintaining good time keeping;
- Regular Attendance;
- Taking responsibility for own learning;
- Working in partnership with staff to develop individual learning programmes when appropriate;
- Being considerate of other Learners' needs in the classroom;
- Being considerate of teachers during classes;
- Following the instructions given by teachers during centre time;
- Doing their own work and not using the work of other Learners in a dishonest manner.

The following are examples of classroom behaviours which are never acceptable, this list is not exhaustive:

- Leaving the classroom without permission during a class;
- Bullying, physical or verbal abuse to anyone in Centre;
- Refusal to clean up at the end of class;
- Refusal to comply with Health and Safety Regulations;
- Refusal to wear safety gear;
- Eating or drinking during class;
- Eating chewing gum;
- Using mobile phones;

- Non-participation in class;
- Defacing property with graffiti;
- Disrupting class by continuously arriving late.

Co-Operation and Respect

Learners and Staff are expected to treat each other respectfully and to co-operate in the day to day business of the Centre.

Learners, Staff and Visitors are expected to:

- Co-operate with each other to ensure the smooth running of the Centre;
- To behave respectfully towards each other;
- To respect confidentiality and avoid unnecessary chatter relating to matters which come to their knowledge in the Centre;
- To maintain the good name of the Centre;
- Not to report to work under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicants.

Bullying

There is a zero tolerance of bullying in the Centre. Bullying is defined as:

- Verbal and written bullying, through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander;
- Physical intimidation;
- Verbal intimidation;
- Isolation;

- Non-co-operation with fellow Learners, and/or staff;
- Excluding persons from activities.

The Centre aims to ensure such behaviour will not be tolerated. We will also ensure that no member of will be victimised for complaining of such abuse.

Property

Learner's need to be aware of the value of the learning resources made available to them and undertake to:

- Treat the Centre's property with respect, use it correctly under the instructions of staff, and store it carefully and securely;
- Maintain workspaces and classrooms, in good order;
- Use resources considerately and not wastefully;
- Be honest in their use of resources;
- Treat the work and equipment of other Learners and staff with care and respect.

External Incidents which may impact on the work of the Centre

The Centre has a policy of "*what goes on outside stays outside*", this is to ensure the smooth running of the Centre and to ensure that outside disputes/disturbances do not endanger the safety of persons using the Centre.

There are some exceptions to this rule as there are occasions when outside incidents impact on the welfare of Centre Staff and Learners and impinge on the good name of the Centre:

- The Director or Representative must be informed immediately of any family or individual disputes likely to impact on the work of the Centre;
- Learners who are the subject of a Garda criminal investigation, as a consequence of which the Learners may be at risk of a term of imprisonment, must inform the Director or cause the Director to be informed of this fact;
- Failure to disclose charges will be considered a breach of the code of conduct and disciplinary action will ensue.

Once a disclosure has been made the following procedure shall apply;

- The Director, may convene a meeting of the Board of Management to discuss the issue (within 7 working days). The decision of the Board will be based on the greater good of both the individual concerned and the Centre. The Board may:
 1. Invoke the Disciplinary Procedure;
 2. Suspend the Learner with pay until the outcome of the court case is decided;
 3. Suspend the Learner without pay until the outcome of the court case is decided;
 4. Decide to take no action and leave the Learner in the Centre;
 5. May suspend the Learner for some time as per the disciplinary procedure, this will be subject to monthly reviews;
 6. May do more than one of the above.

The Learner has a right to be represented as per the Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure of the Centre.

Risk of Physical Violence

When there is a view expressed by staff or Learners to the Director or Representative that there is a disturbance in the air the following steps have been suggested:

- The Director and/or the named voluntary mediator --meet with the parties involved. (The mediator is normally a staff member and is held in high esteem within the Traveller Community and has a history of mediation between different family groups, this policy would have to be reviewed if no such mediator was available to the Centre);
- Actions: after meeting the mediator would make a recommendation to director/Representative;
- When or if everything is resolved then both parties to be released for the day with pay and given time to reflect. A record of this would be put on Learner's file, but no formal action taken.

Re-entry to Centre: both parties must meet by appointment with Director/Representative to clear the air and have a clear understanding of behaviour/participation expected in Centre and sign that they understand the code of behaviour which is expected of them.

Physical violence

In the case of a physical fight the following steps are suggested:

- Send for help to office ASAP;
- Staff to talk to parties from a safe distance, try to calm situation;
- Staff to instruct other Learners to leave the area immediately;
- Staff do not physically intervene but remain calm;¹

Training will be offered to all staff on how to deal with violent incidents should it arise; this could be a broad VEC policy

- Staff member also gets help from nearby staff or Learners.

In the case that other Learners refuse to leave the vicinity of the fight;

- staff to make on the spot decision, for their own safety, stay with Learners / leave room;
- Get or send a responsible person for help;
- Contact reception 200;
- Inform Director.

Actions:

- Director/Representative to make the decision to contact Guards;
- If either party requests to contact guards it must be done;
- If staff feels genuinely frightened/threatened guards must be contacted;
- If mediator recommends then the guards be informed of situation;

The safety and welfare of staff and Learners comes first. If there is no risk to the safety of the staff member or Learners, then all tools should be locked away before leaving the building. If there is a risk to the safety of staff and Learners then the recommendation is that the building be evacuated immediately without tidying up.

When a Learner, under 18, has been instructed to leave building due to a breach in the Health & Safety regulations, the parents/family member are to be informed by Director/representative. Also, if under 18, transport to a safe place will be arranged by the Director/Representative until a parent/guardian can be contacted.

Other actions

In the case of the physical violence creating a disturbance in other classes the following has been suggested:

- Staff to try to maintain class by continuing to teach the subject and discourage chit chat about the disturbance, continue on with the normal day to day activities of the class;
- If a Learner does not co-operate and continues to “stir”, the incident must be reported to Director who will then make a decision as to actions taken.

Trouble outside Centre

It is important to continue the practice of not allowing outside incidents to impact on the work of the Centre. Centre policy is “*What goes on outside stays outside*”. For the most part this policy works. However the following are some suggestions if an individual Learner finds themselves in trouble outside:

Suggestions

- Do not attend Centre if you feel you may not be able to participate with the fear of physical violence following you into the Centre. (Learners feel particularly strong about this as the “greater good” should be taken into consideration);
- Inform Director/representative trouble in the air whether or not the Learner attends the Centre on that day;
- Support that could be offered;
 - Use of phone contact home/guards;
 - Counselling;
 - Released from Centre until safe, this would have to come before the Board of Management and a decision regarding payments made on a case by case basis.

When requesting/instructing a young person to leave St. Joseph's STTC due to a disturbance parents will be contacted and informed of the situation, regardless of the age of the young person.

Everybody is responsible for safety.

Code of Conduct - St. Joseph's Training Centre

I have read and I understand the code of conduct and behaviours expected of me in St. Joseph's Training Centre. I agree to abide by this code.

Learner Signature: _____

Date: _____

Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____