

Thinking of Christian values and activities for your school, you can draw on the way a Benedictine monastery was organised. There is an online Rule of St Benedict at <http://www.osb.org/rb/text/toc.html> and at <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/benedict-the-rule-of-st-benedict> you could refer to these for the actual words of the Rule. (Although the 6th century language is probably off-putting!) The suggestions below are modern interpretations for the school context.

General

- Begin meetings / work with prayer (Prologue)
- “We have therefore to establish a school of the Lord’s service, in the institution of which we hope we are going to establish nothing harsh, nothing burdensome.” (Prologue)

Role of heads, governors and teachers – using chapters 2, 3, 55, 61, 64

- No favouritism
- Work for the good of everyone
- Carry out responsibilities in the fairest and best way
- Make decisions with foresight and justice
- Share out responsibilities to weld the community together
- Leaders should be chosen “for the merit of their life and the wisdom of their teaching”
- Remember that challenge by visitors who come to your school with fresh eyes can be an opportunity for growth – be open to external ideas
- For those leading, at whatever level (including classroom monitors) - “Let him hate the faults, let him love the brethren. In the matter of correction let him act prudently and not too severely, lest while he desires to scrape off the rust too much the vessel be broken; and let him always keep an eye upon his own frailty and remember that the shaken reed must not be crushed, by which we do not mean to say that he is to permit faults to be nourished, but that he cut them off prudently and with charity, as he sees to be expedient for each, as we have already said; and let him take pains to be loved rather than to be feared. Let him not be full of commotion nor anxious, let him not be over-bearing nor obstinate, jealous nor too suspicious, because such an one is never at rest. In the matter of the commands he gives let him be provident and considerate before God and man. The work which he enjoins let him apportion with discretion.”

Behaviour – Using chapters 4, 23, 101

- Follow the Christian example, respect everyone, don’t be angry and vengeful
- Love your enemies, bear things patiently
- Acknowledge and take personal responsibility for any wrong doing
- Guard your mouths
- Be friendly with everyone, however they treat you. Be peacemakers, healers, forgivers
- Punishment should be about helping people to improve and grow – give them chances, until you have to act for the good of the community as a whole. Help people to understand why and what change is necessary. Beware of letting the whole community be infected by one person.
- Understand that everything you do is important because you are part of a community and affects others as well as yourself.

Collective Worship – using chapters 4, 7, 19, 35, 43, 47, 50, 52

- Use the Bible and pray frequently
- Don't get distracted
- Prayers should be brief and to the point
- Ask for God's help in all that you do
- Keep good time when going to worship, don't delay others
- Worship is important and should be "announced" (led / organised) by the senior members of the community
- It is always important to worship – even if on a trip and out of school
- Reflective or prayer corners should be kept special and not crowded out with other things

In the Classroom -using chapters 5, 7, 25, 31, 32, 48,

- Do what you are told – willingly
- Listen, learn, be open to others and their ideas – don't be a show-off
- Laugh with a person, not at a person
- Make sure those who need it can be given space
- Follow the school behaviour policy
- The school day should be balanced with a variety of tasks – including daily worship
- Make use of helpers to complete tasks without stress

Attitudes and behaviour – using chapters 5, 6, 23, 32, 35, 40, 48, 55, 63, 68

- Do things without grumbling (including grumbling inside)
- Don't gossip – it is corrosive in a community
- The community should know that poor behaviour is not tolerated
- Take care when using things belonging to the school or other people – including looking after the school environment – be good stewards
- Serve others – even if the task is a disgusting one
- Practise self-control
- Sort out grumbling and complaints quickly, before they corrode everything around you
- Value everyone, never take any person for granted, respect the spark of God in everyone
- Even when tasks seem too difficult for you, don't give up

The school community – using chapters 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 53, 63, 71

- We need one another
- Don't be envious if others seem to be getting more than you, and don't be greedy. To each according to his need.
- No moaning if we are asked to help others – we are a team
- Give particular attention to the "weak", don't ridicule, ignore or bully them
- Welcome new members into the community
- The older person has the greater responsibility to show an example to the younger
- Build people up rather than putting them down

- Always treat visitors as you would treat Christ – not rudely, or not give them proper attention. Politeness, welcome and care costs nothing and means everything