



Saint Brigid's National School, Ticknevin.

Code of Behaviour.

Draft

Code of Behaviour.

Rationale.

Under section 23 of the Education and Welfare Act 2000, the board of management of each school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students in accordance with NEWB guidelines.

The school has a central role in the children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. The children bring to school a wide variety of behaviour. As a community environment, in school we must work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honest, respect, consideration and responsibility. It follows that acceptable standards of behaviour are those that reflect these principles.

Background.

A review of the Code of Behaviour was undertaken during the school year 2012/2013. The revised code was developed by the staff, parents, student focus group and the board of management. The draft policy was published on the school website for the parent body to make submissions. It was sanctioned by the board of management on _____.

School Schedule.

St. Brigid's National School aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil; intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. St. Brigid's National School models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Mission Statement.

St. Brigid's National School, Ticknevin, is a national school under the patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, for the education of children in Ticknevin and surrounding areas. The school is committed to the aims and principles of the 'Revised Primary School Curriculum 1999'. It celebrates the uniqueness of each child as expressed in each child's personality, intelligence and potential for development. The school seeks to nurture the child in all

dimensions of his or her life - spiritual, moral, emotional, cognitive, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.

St. Brigid's National School seeks to be a warm, welcoming place, respectful and accommodating of the diversity in race, culture, religion, gender and ability. We recognise the dignity and value of each person made in the image and likeness of God. We strive to provide an inclusive environment responsive to the needs of all. We aim to promote equity in all areas and to strive to provide extra support for any child with a learning disability or difficulty.

Our curriculum aims to enable each child:

- To live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual.
- To develop as a social being, through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society.
- To prepare for further education and life-long learning.

We aim to provide quality learning experiences that are engaging, enriching and stimulating through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Pupils do their best, respecting others and the school environment. The Principal and teachers continue to make the school a centre in which high professional standards are maintained. Whole school policy development in curricular, administrative, organisational and pastoral areas will be central. This will involve regular reviews of policy and practice. Teachers lead the learning experience through good classroom management, the positive application of rules and the encouragement of each child to respect and follow the school's Code of Behaviour.

All school partners will strive to ensure a happy and safe learning environment exists for our pupils. The pupils will be guided to an awareness and concern for our environment. The Green School Programme will be fostered through the school's Green School Committee and the promotion of our Green Code.

The school views itself as an integral part of the parish and in partnership with parents seeks to nurture the Catholic faith through religious education, preparation for the Sacraments and through the ethos of the school. Religious education is provided for the pupils in accordance with the doctrine and tradition of the Catholic Church. Prayer is a feature of the school day and pupils

are given opportunities to participate in liturgical celebrations arranged by the school.

We value most highly our relationship with parents and the local community and seek to continue to work with all school partners in our mission. We strive to foster a sense of community between management, teachers, parents and pupils and a sense of belonging with the wider community.

The school is a learning community. We promote and value lifelong learning for all. We urge all the school partners to work together, in good faith, to reinforce the shared values of home and school.

Aims of the Code.

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.

School Rules.

Behaviour in the School.

- Pupils must respect teachers, school staff, visitors and other pupils at all times.
- All forms of bullying are strictly forbidden.
- Bad language, improper gestures, answering back, sulky and/or cheeky behaviour are forbidden. Pupils must follow direction respectfully.

- Pupils should move quietly and in an orderly manner when walking around the school corridor or building.
- Kicking, biting, hitting, tripping, spitting, pushing, throwing objects of any kind, pulling clothes, carrying others on ones back, wrestling, name calling, racist remarks, rough play or rough games and mess fighting of any kind is forbidden.
- Pupils are encouraged to assist in keeping the school building and grounds tidy at all times. All litter must be disposed of in the appropriate bins provided. This develops a communal sense of pride and belonging.
- All lunches should be eaten in the classroom.
- Smoking is strictly forbidden on school grounds by staff, pupils, parents or visitors.
- Mobile phones and other electronic equipment are not permitted in school. Toys may not be brought to school unless permitted by the classroom teacher.

Classroom Behaviour.

The management of classroom behaviour is primarily a matter for the classroom teacher who will draw up rules appropriate for the age level of the children.

However, the following rules apply in all classrooms;

- All teacher and/or SNA instruction must be followed respectfully.
- If a teacher has to leave a classroom for any reason, pupils must continue to remain seated and working silently. This behaviour supports the safe and healthy environment for our pupils.
- All work should be completed to the best of the pupil's ability and written exercises should be neatly presented.
- Pupils should walk at all times while inside the school building. This rule will support a safe classroom environment.
- Homework and homework journals should be checked and signed by parents/guardians each night. A note from parents/guardians is expected to excuse homework not being completed.
- Pupils must ensure that they have all the necessary books and utensils with them every day.
- Pupils should keep their property and classroom tidy. This fosters a sense of community and pride in one's class and classroom.

- Pupils should use appropriate language while in the classroom and on the school premise. This fosters our ethos of mutual respect.
- Pupils should make visitors feel welcome and respected. This creates a warm, welcoming atmosphere in the school.

Behaviour in the School Yard.

- The instructions of the teacher and/or SNA on yard duty must be respected and obeyed at all times. This instils a respect for authority and helps to create a safe environment for our pupils.
- Pupils should not enter the school building at break-time without the permission of the yard supervisor.
- Pupils should not leave the school grounds unless directed to do so by the yard supervisor.
- Food is not permitted in the school yard.
- Pupils should allow other pupils to join their games at any time. This fosters mutual respect and friendship amongst pupils.
- Pupils should respond immediately to the school bell by ending their play and assembling in their class line where they will be supervised by the yard supervisors until the class is escorted inside by their class teacher.
- Children should play in a manner which is respectful of others and not harmful to themselves or others.
- Pupils are not permitted to walk on flower beds. This fosters a sense of communal responsibility, belonging and pride in our school.
- Pupils should report any difficulties and/or poor behaviour to the yard supervisor. The incident may be recorded in the Yard Book.

Behaviour During Wet Breaks.

- Pupils should remain in their seats in their classroom. This ensures pupils are adequately supervised by the indoor supervisors.
- Pupils should follow classroom rules during wet breaks as would be done during class time.
- Pupils should tidy up and put games etc. away correctly once the break has ended.

Uniform.

Children should wear full school uniform to school each day. Only stud earrings are allowed to be worn in the ears. No other piercings are allowed for health and safety reasons.

Bullying.

'I should never bully others. I should never allow others to bully me and if it happens I should tell my parents and my teacher.' Bullying is always unacceptable.

Implementation of the Code.

This code will be implemented in good faith and with the utmost impartiality by the school teaching staff and board of management. Parents, when accepting a place for their child in St. Brigid's NS, will sign their acceptance of this code and all school policies and pledge to support the implementation of this code and support the school staff and board of management in all matters relating to the implementation of the code.

Positive Reinforcement of Good Behaviour.

Encouragement is vital to success and achievement in a pupil's life. The school aims to encourage and promote good behaviour, effort and the development of a happy and healthy lifestyle. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards of behaviour and effort as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are examples of how praise might be given;

- Praise- in written/verbal form.
- A comment in the pupil's copy.
- Extra privileges granted to those who behave well.
- A visit to another member of staff or to the principal for commendation.
- Awarding of tickets, stickers, homework vouchers and other prizes.

- Star of the Week.
- A mention to parent through written or verbal communication.

Sanctions for Misbehaviour.

Sanctions deemed fair and appropriate may be applied. Sanctions will be appropriate to age and the development stage of the pupil. It is important that our pupils understand the purpose of the sanction as applied. Sanctions will be explained to the pupils and the pupil will be guided to understand the consequences of his/her misbehaviour and how to behave when they next encounter a similar situation.

Where an individual management plan exists for a pupil, flexibility will be shown vis-à-vis the implementation of the code. However, where there is a case of gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour when the safety and duty of care to other pupils and staff is an issue, the code will take precedence. Such matters will be determined by the principal.

The following sanctions may be used for behaviour contrary to the code:

- Pupils will be instructed to apologise for their misbehaviour.
- Reprimand:
 - Altering of seating arrangements.
 - Separation from peers
 - Withdrawal of privileges.
 - Time out
 - Note home to parents.
 - Extra work or writing out the school rules.
 - Complete written assignment detailing pupil's part in the incident of misbehaviour.
 - Forfeiting a trip or event.
 - Referral to principal.
 - Formal record of misbehaviour on pupils file.
 - Other sanctions as deemed appropriate by class teacher and/or principal.
 - Incomplete or badly presented work may have to be re-done.
 - Misbehaviour in yard may be entered into the yard book and dealt with by the class teacher or principal.

- Detention.

Detention.

Saint Brigid's NS does not detain children outside of school hours. The class teacher and/or principal may detain a pupil in the classroom during break time. During this time, the pupil will complete curricular exercises or may be asked to repair/clean damaged property or other activity as determined by the class teacher and/or principal. Teachers will ensure that the pupil gets a minimum of 20 minutes recreation break. Detained pupils will be supervised by the class teacher. A pupil may be sent on supervised yard with a yard supervisor. This may entail accompanying the yard supervisor for a part/whole break or being requested to remain seated in a specific area of the yard.

Applying Sanctions for Misbehaviour Outside School.

Sanctions may be applied by the school for misbehaviour outside the school where there is a clear connection with the school and a demonstrable impact on its work before the code of behaviour applies.

Applying Sanction to Misbehaviour by a Pupil with a Special Need.

When considering sanction for misbehaviour of a pupil with a special need the school will consider any individual management plan which exists for that pupil and flexibility will be applied in the context of the behaviour management plan when considering the sanction.

Flexibility will also be applied to pupils with special needs who do not have a behavioural management plan in the context of applying the code for misbehaviour by that pupil.

However, where there is a case of gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour when the safety and duty of care to pupils and staff is an issue, the code will take precedence. Such matters will be determined by the principal.

Sanctions for Serious Misbehaviour including Bullying Behaviour.

All incidents of serious misbehaviour will be referred to the principal. The principal will determine if the incident referred constitutes a serious misbehaviour and sanctions will be applied accordingly.

Sanctions may include:

- Reprimands including any of the sanctions listed above.
- Pupils will be instructed to make a sincere apology for their actions. Failure to do so in a sincere manner will constitute a further serious misbehaviour.
- Pupils will be asked to give a verbal and/or written assurance that the behaviour will not re-occur.
- Parents/Guardians may be asked to meet formally with the class teacher and/or principal following a serious misbehaviour.
- Recompense may be sought from parents/guardians for damage, loss of property or theft of property.
- Serious misbehaviour will be recorded on the pupil's file.
- Replacement of the pupil - the pupil may be withdrawn from class and will spend a period of time, as determined by the principal, in another classroom. Work will be set for the pupil.
- Suspension in accordance with Rule 130 in the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular 20/90.
- Expulsion in accordance with Rule 130 in the Rules for National Schools as amended by Circular 20/90.

Suspension.

The sanction of suspension requires the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of days. During the suspension period the pupil retains their place in St. Brigid's National School.

Suspensions can provide a respite for staff and the pupil, give the pupil time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the pupil to change unacceptable behaviour.

The principal may suspend a pupil for a period of 3 days and/or a period of 5 days with the approval of the Board of Management. A pupil may be suspended for a maximum period of 10 days by the Board of Management for serious incidents. Whereby the cumulative total of days reaches 20 days the suspension will be subject to a review by the BoM.

Grounds for Suspension.

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension and the school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such that;

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at the time poses a threat to the safety of pupils or staff.
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.
- A serious incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Before suspending a pupil, the principal, staff and/or BoM, should reflect on the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context of the behaviour, the impact of the behaviour, the interventions tried to date (where applicable), whether suspension is a proportionate response and the possible impact the suspension will have on all concerned. (NEWB Developing a Code of Behaviour - Guidelines for Schools).

Forms of Suspension.

Suspension may take the following form:

- Immediate Suspension.

The principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school, or any other person.

- Automatic Suspension.

A decision may be reached, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following consultation by the principal and/or BoM with the teachers and parents, that particular named behaviours incur suspension as a sanction.

- Rolling Suspension.

A pupil should not be suspended from school shortly after returning to school unless;

- the pupil engages in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension and
- fair procedures are observed in full and
- the standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as the standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.

Fair Procedures in Respect of Suspension.

Fair procedure will be followed in relation to all suspensions. The two essential parts to fair procedure are:

- the right to be heard
- the right to impartiality.

The right to be heard means;

- The right to know that the alleged misbehaviour is being investigated.
- The right to know the details of the allegation being made and any other information that will be taken into account.
- The right to know how the issue will be decided.
- The right to respond to allegations.
- Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to be heard by the decision making body (may be the principal and/or BoM and/or member of teaching staff)

The right to impartiality means;

- The right to absence of bias in the decision maker.
- The right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision making.

The level of formality for a 3 day suspension is less than that for a longer suspension.

Implementing the Suspension.

When the sanction of suspension is to be imposed the principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm;

- The period of suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and parents (for example, parents may be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the code of behaviour).
- The provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.
- The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, Section 29) where the total number of days exceed 20 days. A Section 29 appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent.

The school will make allowances for parents with reading difficulties and/or language issues in the communication of the letter to them, once parents inform the school of such needs.

After the Suspension Ends.

The period of suspension will end on the date given in the letter of notification to the parents about the suspension.

Reintegrating the Pupil.

St. Brigid's National School will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the pupil takes responsibility for catching up on work missed and will make every reasonable effort to assist the pupil in this regard. The pupil will be monitored by the class teacher and the principal to help ensure any feeling of anger and/or resentment does not lead to further problem behaviour.

Clean Slate.

As is standard practice, the pupil will be made aware that they have a clean slate in the eyes of the school and the teaching staff and should work to build on this opportunity for a fresh start. A record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, and once the sanction has been completed, the school should expect the same standard of behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

Records and Reports.

Written reports will be kept of;

The investigation

Decision making process

Decision and rationale for the decision.

Duration of the suspension and conditions attached.

Principal's reports to the BoM.

Report to the NEWB if suspension is for 6 school days or more in any school year.

A note of the behaviour and sanction will be added to the pupil's file by the principal and a note will be added to the classroom file by the teacher.

Appeals.

Parents may appeal a decision of the Board of Management to suspend under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Parents will be directed to the DES website for current guidance in this area.

Expulsions.

A pupil is expelled from Saint Brigid's National School when the Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him/her from the school having complied with the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Authority to Expel.

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil from St. Brigid's NS. This authority rests only with the Board of Management.

Grounds for Expulsion.

The Board of Management of St. Brigid's NS may decide to expel a pupil for what they view as an extreme case of unacceptable behaviour. St. Brigid's NS will not expel a pupil unless significant steps have been taken to address the misbehaviour and will take steps to avoid the expulsion of a pupil by:

- Meeting with the parents and the pupil to try to find new ways of helping the student to change their behaviour. A behaviour management

plan will be formulated and implemented by the school. This plan will be formulated in consultation with the parents and where appropriate, the pupil. Such a plan must receive support of teachers, parents and the pupil involved.

- Making sure the pupil understands the possible consequences of his/her behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensuring all other possible options has been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of the relevant support agencies.

A proposal to expel may be made if serious grounds exist whereby:

- The pupil's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, the key difference is that when expulsion is considered in St. Brigid's, a series of other interventions will have been tried and the Board of Management believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour.

Automatic Expulsion - Expulsion for a First Offence.

The Board of Management may impose the sanction of expulsion for the following offences;

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff or visitor to the school.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school.
- Sexual assault.
- An action which results in the intentional serious injury or death of another pupil or member of staff or visitor to the school.

Determining the Appropriateness of Expelling a Student.

The Board of Management will undertake a detailed review of a range of factors in deciding whether to expel a student. The Board will consider the factors outlined on pg. of 'Developing a Code of Behaviour; Guidelines for Schools.'

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion.

The fair procedures based on the principles of natural justice as outlined in the section of this document dealing with suspension apply. Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviours that could warrant expulsion, and/or persistent misbehaviour that results in persistent disruption to learning and/or property that could warrant expulsion exist, the procedural steps will include;

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the board of management by the principal.
- Consideration by the board of management of the principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

It is a matter for the Board of Management to decide which of the tasks in these procedural steps requires separate meetings and which tasks can be accomplished together in a single meeting. Parents will be given due notice of meetings and a fair and reasonable time to prepare for the Board hearing.

Appeals.

Parents may appeal a decision of the Board of Management to expel under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Parents will be directed to the DES website www.education.ie for current guidance in this area.