

Code of Behaviour

This policy will be communicated to staff and the school community as appropriate and will be subjected to yearly review, unless there is a compelling reason to review it earlier.

Ratified on: Nov 2021

Reviewed: October 2022

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by the staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management of St. Brigid's NS Greystones.

Rationale of the Code of Behaviour

Our motto 'Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí'

Our code of behaviour is based on respect for oneself and others. We acknowledge the individuality of each child. We recognise the variety of differences which exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. We foster an atmosphere where each child can learn. We expect each child to respect the rights of others and to play his/her part in making the school a safe and happy place to learn. Teachers, the Board of Management, parents and support staff all work in partnership to ensure that all school hours are devoted to teaching and learning.

Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal.

We acknowledge that good behaviour, especially in Junior and Senior Infants, flows from a desire to please and is based on the relationship between the child and teacher. As girls and boys grow older, we recognise that good behaviour is based on mutual respect, a sense of motivation and purposeful learning. We acknowledge that communication, co-operation and positive relationships between parents, teachers and others in the school contribute enormously to good behaviour.

We acknowledge that vigilant supervision and acknowledgment of good behaviour are vital. Children will be reminded monthly, and as the need arises, about the school's rules. A record of unacceptable behaviour is kept by the class teacher.

It was necessary to revise the Code of Behaviour of St. Brigid's N.S. because:

- It is an area of concern identified by the school community.
- The existing policy is due for review.

- To ensure an orderly climate for learning in the school.
- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23.

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In St. Brigid's N.S. we strive for co-operation between staff and pupils on a daily basis. Our mission statement is to enable each child to learn and develop to his/her full potential in a happy, safe and Christian learning environment. Through this mission statement and school values we aim to provide a caring, harmonious environment which aims to nurture the potential of everyone in the whole school community. We hope that this Code of Behaviour based on *respect, responsibility, self-discipline, health and safety, co-operation, and the importance of learning* will continue to develop positive relationships which exist in the school and act as a framework for good behaviour.

Aims

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our mission statement
- To foster and maintain good relationships, partnership and communication in the whole school environment including staff, parents and pupils
- To create a positive atmosphere of respect, responsibility, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community
- To support parents and pupils in understanding school procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To ensure that the school rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the whole school.

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The policy is addressed under the following headings:

1. **Behaviour and learning**
 - **Standards of behaviour expected in the school**

What behaviour is unacceptable?

- **Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour**

Staff

Board of Management

Parents

Pupils

- **Positive strategies for managing behaviour**

Classroom

Playground

Other areas of the school

- **School Rules**

We have basic rules to help protect your rights and to encourage responsibility

Why are school rules needed?

- **Rewards, Unacceptable Behaviour and Sanctions**

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

- **Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school**
- **Reference to other policies**
- **Implementation Date**

1. **Ratification, Communication and Review**

2.

A child's good behaviour, co-operation and concentration have a very positive impact on his/her own and other's learning and progress. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true.

We are continuously monitoring the children's behaviour. We do our best to prevent any incidences of misbehaviour/ bullying while children are in our care. However, as you will appreciate, it is not possible for us to deal with incidences which may arise when children are outside our care.

When there are concerns regarding a child's emotional, social wellbeing and development, these concerns will be discussed with the child's parent(s) guardian(s) and, sometimes, assessment may be recommended.

The purpose of the Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Code is to foster and maintain good relationships and happy learning atmosphere.

Standards of Behaviour expected in the school

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the Code of Behaviour shall specify 'The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school'.

All children are expected to:

- Behave in a responsible manner, to show courtesy, consideration and respect for others
- Work diligently, make good use of their time and to refrain from interrupting others at work
- Be well-behaved, have good manners and obey all teachers and school rules
- Have good attendance, punctuality and be proud to wear the school uniform
- Come to school well prepared and take responsibility for their own learning

What behaviour is unacceptable?

It is unacceptable for children to behave in a way that indicates a lack of respect:

- For themselves, e.g. doing something dangerous and not giving of their best
- For others, e.g. unkind, disruptive, aggressive or bullying behaviour
- For adults, e.g. lack of courtesy
- For property and the environment, e.g. deliberately breaking things

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Staff

We, the staff of St. Brigid's N.S., believe that the creation of a positive school learning environment, based on mutual respect between teachers and pupils, is of utmost importance. This positive ethos permeates all activities in the school and helps to form a strong sense of community. It is the policy of St. Brigid's N.S. to actively promote good behaviour through example, honesty and courtesy. Children learn best by being rewarded. As part of our on-going efforts to promote positive behaviour time will be allocated at some staff meetings for discussion regarding implementation of the code. Staff will be

given opportunities to share their experience of both positive and negative behaviour and to learn from collective wisdom.

Teachers will use various strategies to promote good behaviour including “Golden Time”, star/reward charts, stickers, points on class Dojo, homework passes, lucky dip, group competition (groups compete, if someone misbehaves other groups get extra point), extra responsibilities in class and in the school, singling out for exceptional worthwhile achievements and efforts, and other incidental means of praise or reward. The school’s S.P.H.E. curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills including S.A.L.T (Stop, Ask, Listen, Talk).

To facilitate new members of staff to become familiar with practices within the school, discussion regarding the implementation of the code will always form part of the first staff meeting held each September. A copy of the code will be available to both parent and teachers on the school website. The code will also be given to parents.

Board of Management

The Board of Management of St. Brigid’s N.S. has overall responsibility for ensuring that the code of behaviour is prepared and revised in line with current legislation.

Parents

Parents play a very important role in helping our school implement its code of behaviour. Evidence indicates that a good relationship between parents and the school is a very important factor in maintaining high standards of discipline.

Pupils

Pupils were consulted with in the drafting of this Code of Behaviour.

4. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

‘The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place’, (Managing Challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for teachers INTO 2004:5).

Classroom

The following positive strategies are used by staff to effectively manage behaviour in the classroom –

- Class contract is drawn up with the children based on a discussion about respect, co-operation, responsibility, behaviour and learning.

- Teachers model positive behaviour and ensure pupils are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities, for example in S.P.H.E., Golden Time, Pupil of the Week, and 'Catch them being Good!'

Playground

We have playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour.

The bell rings twice at end of break time in the yard

- On ringing of the first bell the children 'Freeze'.
- On ringing of the second bell children walk to their line and line up in single file.

Other areas of the school

When on the stairs, pupils walk quietly in single file

5. School Rules based on the principles of respect, responsibility, self discipline, health & safety, co-operation & importance of learning

School Rules

We have school rules to help you learn, be happy, safe and responsible. These can be summed up as 6 Golden Rules.

Golden Rules

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

Why are school rules needed?

We have school rules to ensure that children:

- Are safe and happy;
- Feel secure and know what is expected of them;
- Develop respect for themselves, other, their school and their environment;
- Develop their sense of responsibility and co-operation;
- Use their time well to learn and develop their talents; and
- Get on well with others.

No Bullying

Bullying in any form is strictly forbidden.

If you are bullied, follow the Stay Safe Rule: say 'STOP', MOVE AWAY and TELL AN ADULT WHOM YOU TRUST. (Please see Anti-Bullying Policy)

6. Rewards, Unacceptable Behaviour and Sanctions

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of St. Brigid's is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school.

At St. Brigid's N.S. we strive to promote effort and positive behaviour by verbal acknowledgement and merits. We promote positive behaviour, where greater emphasis is placed on rewards rather than sanctions.

Rewards:

Rewards such as the following are given:

At Junior Level

- Verbal praise, stickers and stars are used.
- Certificates are also given to children for good work and behaviour.
- Pupils are mentioned at class assembly and over the intercom.

At Senior Level

- Praise, acknowledgement and appreciation of good behaviour.

- Merit awards.
- Classroom privileges.
- More responsibility.
- Opportunities for pursuing enjoyable interests and activities.
- Pupils are mentioned at class assembly and over the intercom.

Unacceptable Behaviour and Sanctions

We as a school have a responsibility to respond to any child's unacceptable behaviour.

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher, or the supervising teacher at break-times.

Sanctions are imposed which take into account the child's age the seriousness of the misdemeanour and the child's previous behavioural record. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- Helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.
- Reinforcing the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- Signalling to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the behaviour.

Procedure for dealing with unacceptable behaviour in Junior Classes

The starting point for this process depends on the nature of unacceptable behaviour.

1.	Reasoning with the pupil
2.	Verbal warning of unacceptable behaviour and advise on how to improve
3.	Second Verbal warning

4.	'Time-out' on the thinking chair for a short period.
5.	Time out twice in one day, child required to draw/write out the story of what happened/fill in think sheet to be signed by parents
6.	Communication with parents.
7.	The class teacher will draw up an Individual Reward Chart//Behaviour Contract.with the child which the child, along with his/her parents, will be asked to sign.
8.	Referral to the Principal
9.	** Referral to the Board of Management. Referral to Board of Management and the parents will be requested to meet the chairperson, the principal, their child's class teacher, another member of the Board of Management to discuss any breach of contract and subsequent sanctions e.g. shortened school day**

**On account of Covid 19 protocols, a face-to-face meeting between the parents, Board of Management, principal and class teacher may not be possible at this time. Meetings will take place online using Zoom or Webex **

Procedure for dealing with unacceptable behaviour in Senior Classes

The starting point for this process depends on the nature of unacceptable behaviour.

1.	Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve. .
2.	Second Verbal Warning
3.	Temporary separation from peers in the classroom.
4.	Child required to fill in 'Think sheet' to be signed by parents.
5.	Communication with parents
6.	Behaviour Contract to be drawn up with the child, which the child, along with his/her parents, will be asked to sign.
7	Referral to the Principal
8.	**Referral to Board of Management and the parents will be requested to meet the chairperson, the principal, their child's class teacher, another member of the Board of Management to discuss any breach of contract and subsequent sanctions e.g. shortened school day**
9.	Temporary suspension by the Board of Management in accordance with Rule 130(5).

10.	Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130(6).
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Children with Special Needs

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that children with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, learning support/ resource teacher, and or principal will work closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be invaluable.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Please note:

- For serious instances of misbehaviour, a child may be suspended immediately by the principal with the written approval of the chairperson of the Board of Management.
- School staff supervise children *during school hours* and respond to any misbehaviour. The school *cannot take responsibility* for children's behaviour *outside* of school hours.
- Parents are advised to monitor and supervise their children's use of the internet/social media and mobile phones.



The most effective schools are those that have good relationships with parents. Every effort will be made by the Board of Management, Principal and staff to ensure that parents are kept well informed regarding their child's behaviour. The school provides a welcoming atmosphere towards parents. Parents are not only informed when their child behaves badly, but also when he/she behaves particularly well.

The Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence from school and the reason for this absence. Under the terms of the Educational Welfare Act schools are obliged to inform the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) when a child has been absent for more than 20 days whatever the reason.

The following is the procedure in this school in the event of a child's absence from school:

- If your child is absent from school you are obliged to notify the school in writing or via the Aladdin Connect App giving the dates and reason for absence
- If you know in advance that your child is going to be absent e.g. for dental or medical appointment we would encourage you to inform the class teacher beforehand.
- If a child is absent for 15 days this is reported to the Principal and a letter is sent to parents reminding them that their child's absence will be reported to the EWO if the child is absent for 20 days.
- If a child is absent for 20 days or more the Deputy Principal/Principal is obliged to refer this matter to the Education Welfare Officer for his/her consideration. The parents are informed in writing that this referral has taken place. A child's attendance forms part of their school record and is stored in their personal file. Full school attendance, where possible, is a very important aspect of school life and has a very significant effect on your child's progress at school.

Children who have very good attendance in St. Brigid's N.S. are rewarded throughout the year and also during the last week of school during an awards ceremony.

8. Reference to other policies

The Code of Behaviour includes information from the following school plans and policies;

- S.P.H.E. Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy/
- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

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This policy was first implemented on August 31st 2012 and most recently reviewed on 20th October 2020.

The Board of Management has ratified this Code of Behaviour. It will be published on the school website (www.saintbrigidsgreystones.ie) and a copy will be made available to all school personnel, the Parents' Association, the Patron and to parents on request.

A copy of this policy will also be made available to the Department

of Education and Science if requested.

This policy will be subjected to yearly review, unless there is a compelling reason to review it earlier.

Signed: *Tom Sherlock*
Board of Management)

Date: 20/10/2020 (Chairperson,

Addendum – (October 2020) During the current Pandemic crisis, we all have responsibility to keep each other safe and well. In order to do so, we have high expectations of our students to follow the rules and guidelines of the school related to:

Following any altered routines for arrival and departure

Following school instructions on hygiene, such as handwashing and sanitising

Following instructions on how pupils can socialise at school

Moving around the school following specific instructions

(For example, out of bounds area, queuing, lunch routines)

Expectations about sneezing, coughing, tissues and disposal (“Catch it, bin it, kill it)

Telling an adult if they are experiencing symptoms of Corona Virus

Rules about sharing any equipment or other items including drink bottles

Amended expectations about break and play times

including where children may or may not play

Use of toilet facilities

Students must not spit at or deliberately cough on another student or staff member. This will be considered a serious misbehaviour and will be dealt with in accordance with our behaviour policy