



Code of Behaviour, St. Brigid's G.N.S. Palmerstown.

Introduction

The Code of Behaviour for St. Brigid's Girls' National School is the set of programmes, practices and procedures agreed on by staff, pupils, parents and management that form our school's plan for helping our pupils to behave well and learn well.

Rationale

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

- The existing policy is due for review/amendment
- We wish to ensure there is an orderly and positive climate for learning in the school
- **The opinions of our Students' Council should be included in the code**
- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23(1) which refers to:
"...the obligation on schools to prepare a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:
 - A. *The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 - B. *The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;*
 - C. *The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;*
 - D. *The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and*
 - E. *The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school."*

Relationship to the characteristic ethos of our school.

St. Brigid's is a Catholic all girls' primary school and its ethos and philosophies are based on a belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All policies, practices and attitudes of the school, including our Code of Behaviour, are inspired by Gospel values. Each child is equal in the eyes of God and each child is equal in the eyes of school staff. We promote inclusion and integration and cherish all our pupils equally.

The adults in our school model the school's standards of behaviour in their dealings with each other and with the students. Their good example helps to build up mutual trust, respect and understanding.

Rights of Pupils

Pupils are entitled to:

- Be treated fairly, consistently and with respect
- Learn and to be educated in a relatively disruption-free environment, safe from bullying and abuse

- To be listened to
- As learners, they should be allowed to make mistakes and learn from them
- Have confidence that their positive behaviour will be affirmed and that misbehaviour will be dealt with appropriately

Rights of Staff Members'

Staff members are entitled to:

- Be treated with respect.
- Work in a safe, well maintained physical environment.
- Work in an environment relatively free from disruption.
- Be entitled to a fair and just process when complaints or concerns arise
- Be in an environment that encourages professional development.
- Be listened to and to participate in the decision making that affects their own work and that of the school in general.
- To be provided with the necessary resources as agreed by the staff in consultation with the Board of Management:

Rights of Parents/Guardians:

Parents are entitled to:

- Information relating to all school policies. (*Induction Meeting / Parents' Association AGM / New parents /guardians information pack/ website*).
- Be part of the review process in the formation of the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Be treated with respect.
- A right to fairness and consistency in the manner in which their child is treated.
- Be contacted at an early stage to discuss difficulties or problems.
- Make a complaint – in line with the school's Complaint's Procedure
- To appeal a decision, except in exceptional circumstances as outlined in this document, to the Board of Management.

Aims of the Code of Behaviour:

By introducing this policy, the school aims:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision statement
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where pupils can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences among pupils and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their cooperation in the application of these procedures

- To ensure that the system of encouragement, rewards, rules and sanctions is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
- To assist pupils in learning how to take personal responsibility for their actions. To help them to understand that acceptable behaviour has positive consequences while unacceptable behaviour has negative consequences, i.e. sanctions.

School Rules and Behaviours' Guidelines:

School rules are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. For a school to function efficiently, it is essential that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. (See Appendix A).

Behaviour Guidelines

Safety: For my own safety and that of others;

- I should be careful coming to and going from school
- I should always walk while in the school building
- I should remain seated in class while eating lunch
- I should never play roughly in the school yard and always show respect for my fellow pupils
- An explanation for absences should be put on Aladdin or if I am late the reason for my late arrival at school should be recorded on Aladdin
- I should never leave the yard without permission from the supervising teacher
- I should never leave the school grounds without the permission of the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Caring for myself:

- I should respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order; I should write my name on my belongings
- I should always be in the class line before the bell rings at 8.50a.m. if I am in Junior Infants – 6th Class.
- I should always be in time, at 9.10am, if I am in The Orchard class.
- I should not remain on the school grounds after 2.30 p.m. unless I am involved in a school run extracurricular activity. I am expected to follow the Code of Behaviour at all times at school run extracurricular activities.
- I should show respect for my school and be proud to wear the school uniform or tracksuit every day
- I should wear my tracksuit on PE day only or with special permission
- I should always be aware of my personal cleanliness
- I should always bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Crisps, popcorn, minerals, or chewing gum are not permitted
- I should always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework to the best of my ability
- I should only use appropriate language and not swear
- I should accept constructive criticism and correction

- I should wear only stud earrings and a watch and no other jewellery; I should not have tattoos, transfers, false eyelashes, false nails, fake tan or makeup of any description.
- I should always have a hand towel.

Caring for others:

- I should be kind and respectful to teachers and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining silent and orderly in my class line
- I should behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn
- I should obey the class rules/charter which I have signed at the beginning of the school year
- I should behave well on the yard, not call others names or physically, mentally or emotionally hurt another pupil
- I should always keep my school clean and litter free. I should show respect for the property of my fellow pupils, my teachers and the school building and grounds. I should not take the property of others without their permission
- I should try to be truthful and honest at all times
- I should not bring my mobile phone to school

Pupils accept these behaviours by signing the School Charter and the Our Behaviour Guidelines in their Pupil's Journal. (See Appendix B).

The Role of the Student Council:

One of the reasons our code of behaviour was updated was to include the opinions of the Student Council and the student body of St. Brigid's GNS. The members of the council were given an opportunity to liaise with their peers and discuss their attitudes to our Behaviour Guidelines and make suggestions for improvement. The members brought their recommendations to the teachers assisting the Student Council and the Principal. A consensus was reached and the following changes were adopted in previous years:

- Nail polish may be worn but no false nails are allowed;
- Trousers may be worn all year round;
- "Doc Martin" boots can form part of the uniform providing they are black;
- Pupils may bring books to the yard to read;
- A homework tracker may be used to record names of pupils who regularly forget homework;
- Homework passes may be given to pupils as a reward.
- Navy, knee length, tracksuit material shorts may be worn in warmer months instead of tracksuit bottoms on designated PE days.
- **DOGS:** For Health and Safety reasons the Board of Management requests that dogs are **NOT** brought onto the school grounds at any time with the exception of guide dogs/service dogs where appropriate.

Classroom Behaviours

At the beginning of each school year each classroom teacher devises a set of "Classroom Rules". The characteristics of these rules include:

- The rules are clearly spelled out and explained
- The rules are written in age appropriate language
- The rules are displayed in a prominent place in the classroom
- There should be between 5 and 7 rules only, fewer for junior classes
- The rules are stated in positive behavioural terms
- The rules are enforceable
- Pupils are involved in drawing up the class rules
- The rules are referred to frequently.

A class agreement or class rules tells pupils how to behave. Good behaviour is rewarded and this helps motivate pupils to adhere to the class rules.

Responsibilities of Teachers and SNA's':

- To draw up a set of class rules at the beginning of the school year which support this Code of Behaviour.
- To recognize and affirm good behaviour.
- To recognise and provide for individual abilities and individual differences among pupils.
- To create a safe working environment for their pupils.
- To prepare appropriate learning activities for all pupils.
- To keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- To be diligent and alert while supervising on the yard.
- To remind all pupils periodically of their duties and responsibilities in having a safe and friendly environment for everyone.
- To deal appropriately with misbehaviour by following the agreed steps in the Code of Behaviour.
- To keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- To inform the Principal of misbehaviours
- To provide support for colleagues and adopt shared responsibility for behaviour.
- To communicate with parents when necessary and to set out reports and procedures on matters of mutual concern.
- To support families in seeking the appropriate services to cater for the psychological, emotional and physical needs of pupils

Other responsibilities of teachers and special needs assistants in relation to the supervision of pupils are set out in **St. Brigid's School Policies** for supervision of break-times and in the school's policy in relation to the assembly and dismissal of pupils.

Such policies acknowledge the need for staff punctuality as well as the need to escort pupils to and from classrooms at break times, PE times, and at the beginning and end of the school day. SET teachers should ensure that they both collect and return students directly to their classroom after each withdrawal SET group time. Students attending withdrawal SET support should be accompanied at all times by the relevant SET teacher.

Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians

- All parents and guardians of pupils in St. Brigid's should be familiar and support the implementation of the agreed Code of Behaviour. This involves co- operating with teachers in instances where their child is causing difficulties for herself and/or for others.
- Parents should sign notes sent home in relation to misbehaviour of their daughter.
- Parents must be aware that all pupils in their child's class have the right to an education that is not hindered by their child.
- Parents must communicate (and where necessary attend a meeting at an agreed time when requested) with the school in relation to any problems that may affect their child's progress or affect the progress of others.
- Parents can request a meeting with the class teacher by contacting the school office when they feel it is necessary.
- Parents must make any complaint in line with the agreed Complaints Procedure; they should accept that anonymous complaints will not be dealt with; they should accept that only complaints made according to the school procedures will be considered.
- Parents should not attempt to resolve disputes themselves between pupils on school premises but inform the school authorities of any concerns.

Responsibilities of the Principal:

- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner
- Arrange for review of the Code of Behaviour, as required.

Responsibilities of the Board of Management:

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment in the school.
- Support the principal and staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour
- Ratify the Code of Behaviour and see that it is reviewed when required

Implementation of the Code of Behaviour

Communication

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

Communication with parents include:

- Informal meetings/ Phone calls
- Formal meetings.
- Regular, accurate and meaningful reporting.
- Note home - See Appendix D and E
- Newsletter
- Aladdin
- Use of homework journal
- Parent/Teacher Meeting
- Updating school website

Strategies for rewarding good behaviour

Rewards can be individual, group and/or for the whole class

- A quiet word, smile or gesture, (e.g. wink, thumbs up), to show approval
- Giving a pupil positive attention
- A comment in a pupil's exercise book or pupil's journal or note home
- A visit to another member of staff for commendation
- A visit to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- A sticker or merit award on uniform or on work
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege e.g. First in the line, helping teacher, being a "Green Girl"
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- A night off homework – homework pass.
- "Star of the Week"
- "Girl of the Month" – Award certificate to best behaved girl of the month awarded at monthly assembly
- Acknowledgment of outstanding yard behaviour – yard teacher to complete behaviour token at the end of each break. Completed tokens placed in a prize draw at each assembly.

Approaches to encouraging good behaviour:

- Use of proximity praise
- Tactically ignoring low-level non-disruptive attention-seeking behaviours, if appropriate

- Use of non-verbal signals, e.g. looking intensely at pupil, wagging finger, putting finger to lips etc.
- Distracting pupils
- Redirecting a pupil, stating clearly the desired behaviour
- Reminding pupil of a class/school/yard rule/of pupil charter
- Giving warning of consequences to particular chosen behaviours
- Giving pupils a reasonable time to comply.
- Student Council explaining the Affirmation of the Month to their peers at each monthly assembly.
- Kindness Tree to promote positive communication and interactions between pupils'
- SWEET acronym to be used by children to foster resilience (See Appendix C)

Consequences for unacceptable behaviour

Pupils need to learn that there are consequences for behaviour and setting limits effectively benefits them in the long term. Setting limits help pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour can lead to consequences.

There is an agreed hierarchy of actions and consequences.

Consequences for Misbehaviour

1. Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
2. Communicate with pupils / Reminding of class/school rules
3. Noting nature of behaviours in record book
4. Temporary separation from peers
5. Loss of privileges - see below.
6. (a) Communication with parents by note. (See Appendix D/E) Copy of note to be kept in the child's pupil profile.
(b) Communication with parents by phone call
7. Prescribing extra work – reflective assignment to be completed at home with a parent / guardian - See Appendix D/E/F for tasks.
8. Informing / Referral to Principal
9. (a) Meeting between the class teacher and the parent/parents
(b) Meeting between the class teacher and the parent/parents, presence of the principal at the meeting if the issue/behaviour was persisting.
10. Detention during school breaks – if a child is removed from the yard due to very poor behaviour or behaviour that poses a risk to their safety or the safety of others, they should remain on First Aid with the First Aid teacher until the end of break time. – Yard teacher should inform the relevant class teacher who should contact parents about the misbehaviour on the yard.
11. Informing Board of Management
12. Suspension (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88). - Letter to parents from Board of Management
13. Expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88). - Letter to parents from Board of Management

Privileges

Below is a list of suggested privileges that may be lost due to misbehaviour.

- Classroom jobs / rewards
- Extra subject time / golden time
- Library visits
- Buddy Reading
- Yard Helpers
- Computer privileges
- School activities: PJ Day, bake sale etc.
- Being a member of school committees

Unacceptable Behaviours / Associated Consequences

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response, the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. These actions have been grouped with their appropriate consequences, however this list is not exhaustive.

Level One - Minor Misbehaviour

Actions	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Failure to wear uniform (including rules relating to jewellery)● Failure to complete homework without a note from parent / guardian● Arriving late for school on multiple occasions● Interrupting class work● Running in the school building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Reprimand● Reasoning with pupils● Reminding of school rules● A sincere verbal apology from pupil

Level Two - Serious Misbehaviour

Actions	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Repeated minor misbehaviour from above. (numerous times within a short space of time e.g. 2 times within one week)● Being discourteous or unmannerly to other pupils, staff members, or volunteers.● Defiance / refusal to carry out a specific instruction or assigned schoolwork● Being deliberately untruthful	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prescribing extra work to be done● Referral to Principal● Communication with parents/guardians by teacher● Withdrawal of privileges.● Written apology from pupil● Detention during school breaks● Noting nature of behaviours in child's record / pupil file● Signing a "Good Behaviour"

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bringing dangerous equipment or substances to school ● Using foul or offensive language ● Failing to honour the school rules when on the school premises and when representing the school at an external school related activity ● Bringing in equipment with recording capacity e.g. (camera, media recording smart watch/fitness tracker, phone) 	<p>contract - See Appendix E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact with parents from Principal. ● Removal of permission to attend activities / excursions outside school
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Level Three - Gross Misbehaviour

Actions	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A recurrence of serious misbehaviour listed above and/or; ● Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation) – see below ● Damage to property ● Leaving school/school activities/yard without permission. ● Theft of other pupils' belongings ● Assault on a staff member, volunteer or pupil ● Impersonating, commenting, mentioning by name and/or referencing any staff member on any platform/online website. e.g: to make a staff member easily identifiable. ● Taking, sharing, manipulating, publishing or distributing images, videos or other content online with the intention to harm another member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school or outside. ● Creating, transmitting, displaying, publishing, or forwarding any material that is likely to harass, cause offence to any person or bring the school into disrepute. ● Transmitting, recording, or bringing to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Immediate contact informing parents / guardians by teacher/Principal ● Recording of behavioural incident on report form - See Appendix G ● Suspension (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88). ● Informing Board of Management ● Letter to parents from Board of Management ● Expulsion (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular 7/88)

<p>school any digital material that may be offensive or injurious to any member of the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serious theft e.g. expensive equipment, staff belongings ● Serious damage to property including setting fire to school property ● Setting off fire alarm deliberately ● Serious, persistent and /or malicious bullying ● Possession of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, vapes ● Spitting on pupils, staff or another person's belongings ● Bringing a weapon to school 	
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Bullying

Bullying is repeated, deliberate aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others. It may manifest itself as fighting, threatening (either verbally or by using gestures), name-calling, deliberately excluding or ignoring.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture, additional needs or LGBTQIA+. Isolating or shunning a child. Spreading rumours about a person. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual pupils who complain of bullying incidents in a sensitive manner.

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. Such incidents will be dealt with under our Code of Behaviour.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with by following the procedures contained in our Anti-Bullying Policy which is reviewed annually.

For further information please see our **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Individual Behaviour Plans

There may be pupils for whom, from time to time, the whole-school approach to discipline will not be effective, pupils who have persistent frequent specific behaviours. Such pupils follow an Individual Behaviour Plan that is agreed with the pupil, parent, teacher and the Special Needs Assistant where appropriate. This usually entails on-going reinforcement with tasks broken down into small, achievable targets. A Reward Chart is devised based on tokens appropriate to the pupil's age.

Children with Additional Needs

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

The children in our school will be taught strategies to encourage kindness and support to assist a pupil with additional 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, while also having cognisance of the safety of all pupils and staff in the school. Examples of these strategies are as follows:

1. To interact daily with the zones of regulation
2. Observation – to help identify potential triggers for the misbehaviour (Appendix H)
3. To implement individual behaviour plans if necessary (See Appendix I)
4. To develop individual self-regulation / coping strategies
5. Positive praise and positive reinforcement

These strategies are implemented to encourage positive behaviour, however if misbehaviour persists and poses a risk to either the child themselves or other children/staff members, the steps of the Code of Behaviour will be followed.

Suspension and Expulsion

Preamble

The Education Welfare Act accepts the right of the Board to take reasonable measures to “ensure the good order and discipline are maintained in the school and that the safety of pupils (and staff) is secured.” The Board of Management’s duty of care extends to all pupils and staff and includes providing a safe environment for all staff and pupils.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board has authorised the Principal or Chairperson to sanction an immediate suspension pending a discussion of the matter with the parent(s) or guardian(s). The sanction of Suspension or Expulsion will be applied in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In accordance with the revised practice of Boards of Management, the Principal will report any and all serious and gross breaches of discipline to the school Board of Management at scheduled Board meetings.

Where a pupil has been suspended and has re-offended, the Board reserves the right to expel the pupil from the school. Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with legislation, due process and fairness procedures.

The procedures for imposing Suspension and Expulsion as outlined in full in the publication 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for School' NEWB 2008 will be adhered to. What follows serves as a summary.

Fair Procedures

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a pupil. Fair procedures have two essential parts: The right to be heard, and 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 allegations 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;*
- *Where the possible sanction is of a serious nature, the right to ask questions of the other party or witnesses where there is a dispute about the facts.*

The Right to Impartiality means:

- *The right to an absence of bias in the decision-making process;*
- *The right to impartiality in the investigation and the decision making.*

Applying Fair Procedures In school:

In school, fair procedures apply to the investigation of alleged misbehaviour that may lead to suspension or expulsion and the process of decision making as to whether the pupil did engage in the misbehaviour and in what sanction to impose.

The principle of impartiality in decision making means that it is preferable that, where possible, the Principal arranges for another member or members of staff to conduct the investigation and to present a full report on the facts of the case and any other relevant information to the Principal. The Principal is then free to take a view whether the child did engage in the behaviour and about the sanction, based on the report of the investigation. It is incumbent on the Principal to ensure that the investigation has been fully and fairly conducted.

In circumstances of particular difficulty, school authorities may need to seek legal advice to support their decision making. (NEWB Guidelines Page 66, 67)

Suspension is defined as requiring the pupil to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days. Exclusion of a pupil for part of the school day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a child from school, as a sanction, is a suspension. Any exclusion imposed by the school is a suspension and will follow the NEWB Guidelines relating to suspension listed on page 74.

Suspension as part of a behaviour management plan should

- Enable the school to set behavioural goals with the pupil and their parents;
- Give school staff an opportunity to plan interventions;
- Impress on a pupil and their parents the seriousness of the behaviour.

Where Suspension is imposed, it is to be proportionate to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a pupil requires serious grounds such as that:

- The pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils;
- The pupil's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety;
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Factors to be considered before suspending a pupil:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour;
- The context of the behaviour;
- The impact of the behaviour;
- The interventions tried to date;
- Whether suspension is a proportionate response;
- The possible impact of suspension.

Forms of Suspension

Immediate Suspension

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may consider an immediate suspension to be necessary where the continued presence of the pupil 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. Fair procedures as outlined above must be applied. (NEWB Guidelines for Schools p 73)

Automatic Suspension

A Board of management may decide, as part of the school's policy on sanctions, and following the consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and pupils, that particular behaviours incur suspension as a sanction. (NEWB Guidelines for Schools p 73)

The following breaches of discipline will merit an automatic suspension:

- Bullying, where repeated offending has occurred, and a programme of interventions has failed to stop the behaviour;
- Leaving the school premises during school day without the permission of the Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal;
- Endangering self or fellow pupils in the school environments;
- Bringing a weapon, drugs or alcohol to school;
- Any action that is physically or verbally injurious to another member of the school community including the dissemination of any explicit or defamatory material that could be grossly offensive to a member of the school community regardless of whether this happens in school, outside school or on an online platform.

Procedures in Respect of Suspension

- A preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension.
- The formal investigation into the circumstances that led to the suspension, should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.
- Inform the pupil and parents about the complaint;
- Give the parents and the pupil a chance to respond.

The school may inform the parents by telephone or in writing depending on the circumstances in question and the parents will be given an opportunity to respond before the decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. Fair procedures as listed above will be followed.

Implementing the Suspension

The Principal will notify the parents in writing of the intention to suspend. The letter should confirm:

1. The duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end;
2. The reasons for suspension;
3. Any programme of school-work that should be followed;
4. The arrangements for returning to school including any commitments that should be entered into by the pupil and the parents;
5. The provision for an appeal to the Board;
6. The right to appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the DES.

Procedures in Respect of Immediate Suspension

Where the decision has been taken and the sanction of immediate suspension has been imposed for the safety of the pupil or for the well-being of other members of the school community, the parents may respond to the sanction. The imposition of the sanction will remain in place. The duration of the suspension will be decided by the Principal and will be proportionate to the alleged offence committed.

- A preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of

the suspension.

- The formal investigation into the circumstances that led to the suspension, should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension.
- Parents will be notified, and arrangements will be made for the pupil to be collected as the school must have regard to its duty of care for the pupil. (NEWB Guidelines for Schools p 75)
- Once the imposition of the suspension has taken place, steps 1-6 above will be followed.

The Period of Suspension

Rule 130- Rules for National Schools (5) Where the Board of management deems it necessary to make provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils, or with a serious breach of discipline, by authorising the chairperson or principal to exclude a pupil from school, the maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days. A special decision of the BoM is necessary to authorise a further period up to 10 school days to allow for consultation with the child's parent(s) or guardians(s).

If a period of suspension longer than three days is proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the Board for consideration and approval, given the circumstances and the expected outcomes. However, the Board of Management has further authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson, to impose a suspension of up five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance concerning such suspensions. (NEWB Guidelines for Schools p 75) The Board places a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. (Rules for National Schools 130 (5))

The Board will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (NEWB Guidelines for Schools p 76).

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the procedures outlined above will have been followed. The normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

Repeated Offence

Where there are repeated instances of serious or gross misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed, and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information.

Notification of the Education Welfare Officer

The Education Welfare Act (2000) obliges the school to notify in writing the Education Welfare Board (Túsla and Education Welfare Officer) of instances where pupils have been suspended for 6 days or more (cumulatively) and proscribes schools from expelling pupils until 20 days have elapsed following the notification to the Education Welfare Board (Túsla) via the EWO. (The EWO may be notified by way of the returns sent to Túsla at the end of each term.)

Appeals

The Board of Management will offer the opportunity to appeal the decision to suspend a pupil. Where the total number of days for which the pupil is suspended reaches twenty days in the current school year, the parents may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007. At the time when the parents are being formally notified of such a suspension, they should be told about their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and should be given information about how to appeal. See Circular letter M48/01 Appeal Procedures Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 at the Department of Education and Science website at www.education.ie for full details.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. They must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school Code of Behaviour and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the local Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. Rule 130 Rules for National Schools.

A pupil is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school having complied with the provisions of Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

In line with the Education (Welfare) Act, the school reserves the right to impose a suspension or expulsion on a pupil from school activities where:

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

Where expulsion is considered, the school authorities will generally have tried a series of other interventions and believe that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. These will include:

- Meeting with parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the pupil to change their behaviour;
- Ensuring that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour should they persist;
- Ensure that other possibilities have been tried;
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies such as NEPS, CAMHS, NCSE and the National Behaviour Support Service.

Expulsion for a First Offence

The Board notes that the NEWB (TUSLA) lists the following for possible inclusion in a list of single breaches of discipline that may lead to expulsion:

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff;
- Actual violence or physical assault;
- Supplying illegal drugs to other pupils in the school;
- Sexual assault.

Factors to be Considered Before Proposing to Expel a Pupil

(Listed NEWB (TUSLA) Guidelines for Schools p 82 under the following headings)

1. The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
2. The context of the behaviour
3. The impact of the behaviour
4. The interventions to date
5. Whether expulsion is a proportional response
6. The possible impact of expulsion

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

(as listed by the (NEWB Guidelines for Schools chapter 12 and summarised here.)

Step 1: A detailed investigation is carried out under the direction of the Principal.

The Principal will:

- Inform the parents and the pupil in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Give parents and the pupil every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- Where expulsion may result from an investigation, the parents will be afforded the opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made about the veracity of the allegation.

Step 2: A recommendation to the Board is made by the Principal

The Principal will:

- Inform the parents that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Ensure that the parents have records of the allegations made against the pupil, the investigation itself and written notice of the grounds on which the Board is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide the Board with a copy of the same records as are given to the parents
- Notify the parents of the date of the hearing and invite them to the hearing
- Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- Ensure that the parents have enough notice to allow them time to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing

- It is the responsibility of the Board to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with procedures.
- The Board should undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case.
- Where the Board decides to consider expelling a pupil, it must hold a hearing.
- At the hearing, the Principal and the parents put their case to the Board in each other's presence. Each party should be allowed to question the evidence of the other party directly.
- In the conduct of the hearing, the Board must take care to ensure that they are and are seen to be impartial as between the Principal and the pupil. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this in line with good practice and Board procedures.

Step 4: Board deliberations and actions following the meeting

- Having heard from all of the parties, the Board must decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and, if so, whether or not expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
- Where the opinion of the Board is that the pupil should be expelled, the Board must notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).
- The pupil cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).
- The Board should inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process. Where expulsion is proposed, the parents should be told that the Board will now inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Step 5: Consultations arranged by the EWO

Within 20 days of receipt of the notification from the Board of Management of its opinion that a pupil should be expelled, the EWO must:

- Make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the pupil and anyone else who may be of assistance.
- Convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend. (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).
- In the interests of the educational welfare of the child, those who come together should with the EWO, plan for the pupil's future education. St.
- Pending these consultations, the Board may take steps to ensure that good order is maintained and that the safety of pupils is secured (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(5)).
- The Board may consider it appropriate to suspend a pupil during this time. The suspension should only be considered if the presence of the pupil during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

- Where the 20-day period following notification to the EWO has elapsed and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the pupil is to be expelled, the Board should formally confirm the decision to expel. This task may be delegated to the Chairperson or the Principal.
- Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed.
- The Parents should be told of the right to appeal and be supplied with the standard form on which to lodge an appeal.
- A formal record should be made in the minutes of the Board of the decision to expel a pupil.

Appeals

A parent may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science (Education Act 1998 section 29). An appeal may be brought by the NEWB (TÚSLA) on behalf of a pupil. The process begins with the provision of mediation by a mediator nominated by the Appeals Committee (DES)

SUMMARY:

The procedures will include:

1. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management to expel the pupil is made by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. The deliberations of the Board will be recorded, and the actions proposed following such a hearing.
5. Consultations will be held with the Education Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel will be recorded and communicated to the parents and TUSLA in writing.

7. The parents may appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the DES.

Reference to other Policies

The following school policies have a bearing on the code of behaviour e.g.

- SPHE plan (Including Weaving Wellbeing and Welcome to Wellbeing)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Health & Safety Statement
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Attendance Strategy
- Yard Duty/ Supervision Rota/Procedures

Success Criteria

The following are some practical indicators of the success of the policy

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment and when representing school at outside activities
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy are consistently implemented by teachers and parents.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils
- Positive school environment obvious to school visitors

Implementation

This update of our school's existing school discipline policy will be implemented as soon as it is ratified by the Board of Management.

Review

This policy will be reviewed within two years of ratification or sooner if need arises.

Approved by the Board of Management on the 8th October 2024

Signed: 
Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: 
Principal

List of Appendices

Appendix A - Our Behaviour Guidelines

Appendix B - Saint Brigid's Charter of Good Behaviour.

Appendix C - SWEET acronym

Appendix D - Note home to parents (Behaviour)

Appendix E - Note home to parents (Uniform)

Appendix F - Contract of Good Behaviour

Appendix G - Behavioural Incident Report form

Appendix H - Teacher checklist for children showing a change in behaviours

Appendix I - Individual Planning Template

Appendix A

Our Behaviour Guidelines:

School rules are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

- (1) **RESPECT AND COURTESY – SCHOOL PROPERTY:** - All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul language and any form of bullying are unacceptable. Pupils must respect all school property and keep the school environment clean and litter free. Posting graffiti is absolutely forbidden. No writing on or defacing school property allowed. Chewing gum destroys our schoolyard and is not allowed. St. Brigid's is a Smoking/Vaping free zone.
- (2) **PUNCTUALITY:** - The official opening time is 8.50 a.m. for Junior Infants – 6th class mainstream classes and children should assemble in the schoolyard in their class groups from 8.40am. Parents are asked to allow their children "enter" and "exit" the building on their own as yard supervision is provided by members of the school staff from 8.40am. daily.

Children attending The Orchard start at 9.10am and should be escorted to the gate of The Orchard yard at that time where they will be received by The Orchard staff members.

Classes for Infants end at 1.30 p.m. Classes for the other pupils end at 2.30 p.m.

No responsibility is accepted for the pupils outside of these times.

If a pupil needs to leave the school before the appropriate time for any reason, advance notice from the parents must be given to the school through Aladdin. Pupils must be collected by a parent, or a responsible adult nominated by the parent in their note on the Aladdin system. Students will not be released to minors or individuals not indicated on the parents/guardian's communication through Aladdin. **No child is allowed to return to the school premises after 2.30p.m. for any reason.**

- (3) **PERSONAL PROPERTY:** - Children should have their names on their coats and other personal property, such as schoolbooks, copies etc. The school cannot take responsibility for items lost or stolen on the premises.
- (4) **UNIFORM:** School uniform consists of: -
Light-blue long-sleeved Blouse (Polo shirt in May and June **Not September**)
Grey Skirt/Pinafore.
Standard school grey straight legged trousers (No other colour or type of trouser will be acceptable and this rule will be strictly enforced)
Black Tights/White knee
Royal-blue Cardigan or Jumper
School Tie.
Flat black shoes or flat black boots.
Runners with adequate support on PE days only. Laces must be tied. **Runners should not be worn on uniform days.**
Navy, knee length, tracksuit material shorts may be worn in warmer months instead of tracksuit bottoms, on designated PE days only.

Full Uniform must be worn, tracksuit on PE days **only**. **Plain Navy tracksuit with school crest only allowed (no zips, brand logos or hoods with/without cords).** Crests available at office.

Loop type/long style earrings are not allowed. Rings are not allowed. Watches and one pair of stud earrings only permitted.

Body painting, transfers, and body piercing (other than one stud in an ear) are not permitted.

Makeup of any description is not permitted including false eyelashes, false nails, fake tan etc. This list is not exhaustive.

NO MOBILE PHONES, under any circumstances

- (5) **BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS:** - Pupils should have all their books and complete written work and homework. Pupils should respect their teacher and fellow pupils and themselves. Pupils are taught to respect their own property and not to take that of others without permission. They should respect the right of other pupils to learn.
- (6) **LUNCH:** - St. Brigid's G.N.S. operates A Healthy Eating Policy. Every effort should be made to ensure that children have a wholesome lunch. Friday will be treat day. On Friday children may bring **one fun size** chocolate bar, **one** small cereal bar or a small bag of jellies. Popcorn, chewing gum, fizzy drinks, energy drinks, crisps, mints, lollipops are not allowed. Children should not share food or lunches in case classmates have food allergies.
- (7) **BEHAVIOUR OUT OF CLASS:** - Walking **ONLY** allowed on corridors one pupil behind the other – pupils stand back to allow an adult or teacher pass. Any instructions or directions given by the supervising or Substitute Teacher are to be complied with. Rough behaviour is not acceptable whether inside or outside school. In the interest of general good behaviour in the school any adult staff member may correct any child from any class. Pupils remain the responsibility of their parents until 8.50 a.m. and after 2.30 p.m. (1.30pm for Infants classes)
- (8) **HOMEWORK:** - It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Homework is rarely assigned at weekends. If homework is not done or if a pupil is absent a note of explanation should be given. Parents should check pupils' homework daily.
- (9) **YARD:** - Pupils are expected to behave in a mannerly fashion. They should not behave in any way, which endangers themselves or others. Chasing, fighting, spitting, or pushing are not allowed. Safe running" on yard is permitted. This means that the children will be allowed to run in a safe way but if a child is running in an unsafe or in a way that poses a risk of harm to themselves, other children, or the staff members on the yard they will be asked to stop running for the remainder of the break. No child is allowed to stay in at the "breaks", except in exceptional circumstances (Ongoing illness or recovery from injury) Written permission from their parents will be required in these instances. No pupil may leave the yard without the teachers' permission. Children who wear glasses may not do so on the yard unless parents have given written consent. Children may not bring toys, pencils etc. on to the yard but they may bring books.
- (10) **DOGS:** For Health and Safety reasons the Board of Management requests that dogs are **NOT** brought onto the school grounds at any time with the exception of guide dogs/service dogs where appropriate.
- (11) **ABSENCES:** Every absence of a child must be accounted for. Please inform the school if your child is absent through the Aladdin system. Please notify the school if your daughter has an infectious disease or head lice. **Each child must supply a home phone number, mobile phone number and two alternative contact numbers, so parents can be contacted in the case of illness or emergency on their Personal Profile.**
- (12) **BIRTHDAY PARTY invitations** may not be distributed during school hours.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE RULES AND AGREE WITH THEIR AIMS AND CONTENT

SIGNED: _____ Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Appendix B

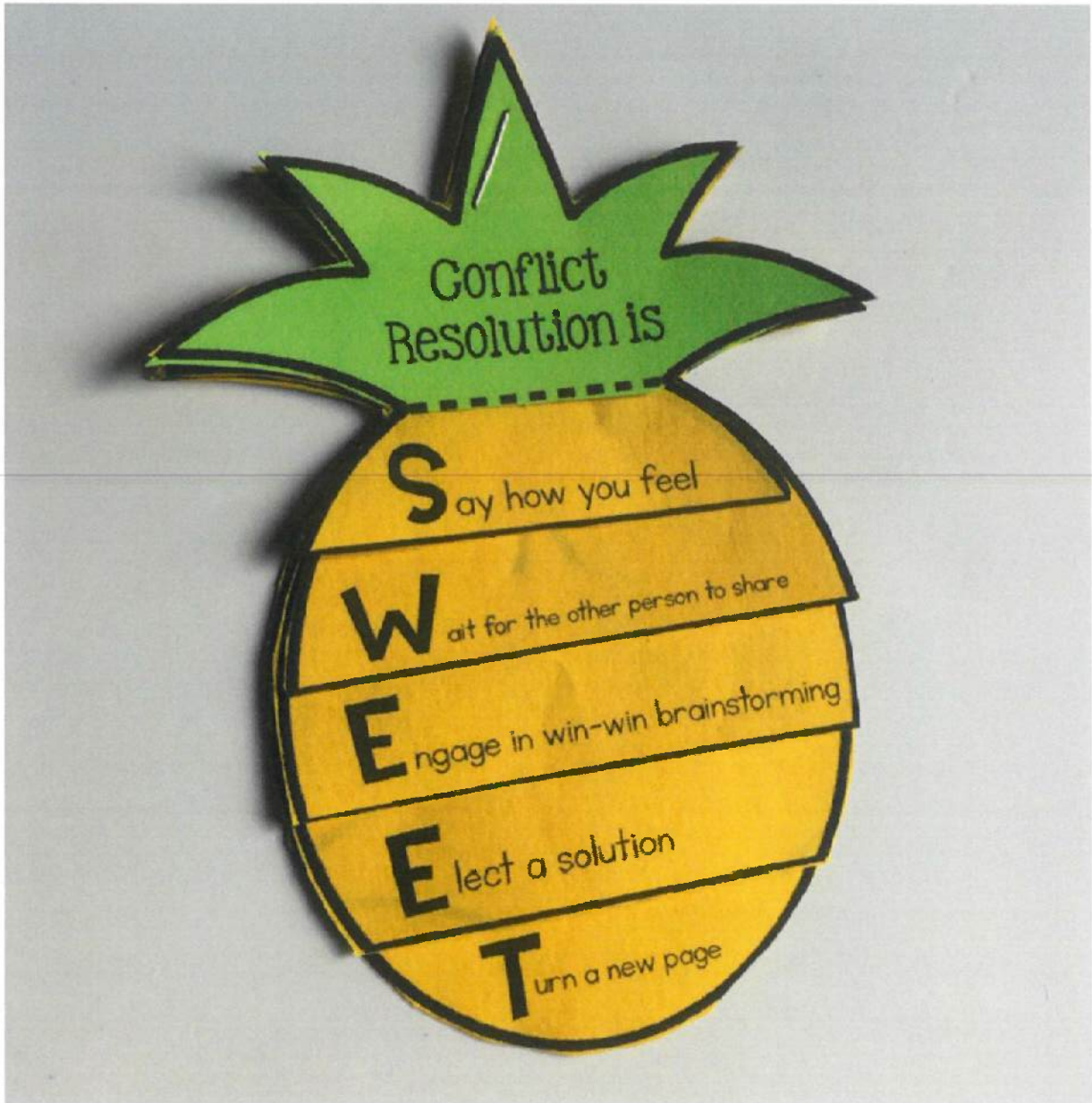
Saint Brigid's Charter of Good Behaviour.

- ✓ I have the **right** to learn in a happy, peaceful school.
 - ✓ It is my **responsibility** to ensure I do not disrupt others.
 - ✓ I have the **right** to ask questions and participate in my learning activities.
 - ✓ It is my **responsibility** to listen to my teachers and classmates.
 - ✓ I have the **right** to keep my own belongings in good order.
 - ✓ It is my **responsibility** to respect school property and my classmates' belongings.
-
- ✓ I have the **right** to begin my day on time and learn as much as I can.
 - ✓ It is my **responsibility** to be punctual and not waste my time, teacher's time or my classmates' time.
 - ✓ I have the **right** to be a full member of our school, treated with consideration and respect at all times.
 - ✓ It is my **responsibility** to ensure everyone is respected and no one has to endure bullying, ridicule, or injury at any time.

Signed: _____, Pupil. Date: _____

Signed: _____, Parent. Date: _____

Appendix C



Appendix D

Contract of Good Behaviour	
<u>What student will do:</u>	
Signature of Student: _____	
<u>What teacher will do:</u>	
Signature of Teacher: _____	
<u>What parent will do:</u>	
Signature of Parent: _____	

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E

St. Brigid's GNS Code of Behaviour - Note to Parents (Behaviour)

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

Please talk to your child and remind her of the importance of keeping the following rule(s):

- Behaving in class.
- Behaving in the yard.
- Having respect for school property, their belongings and the belongings of others
- Having respect for all members of the school community.

Completing homework assigned

Teacher's comments:

Signed (Teacher): _____ Date: _____

I have spoken to my child about the above rules and she promises to try harder.

Signed (Parent/Guardian): _____ Date: _____

Signed (Pupil): _____ Date: _____

Pupil response: Pupil can write / draw what they have learned from discussing these rules with their Parent/Guardian.

Appendix F

St. Brigid's GNS Code of Behaviour - Note to Parents (Uniform)

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

Your child was wearing the incorrect uniform today.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's uniform, please contact the office.

- Inappropriate jewellery: hooped earrings, necklaces, rings
- Missing an item of uniform: school jumper / shirt / tie / crest
- Incorrect footwear
- Incorrect item of uniform: tracksuit bottoms / jumper
- Wearing make-up / false nails / hair down / false tan / false eyelashes

Teacher's comments: _____

Signed (Teacher): _____ Date: _____

I have spoken to my child about the above.

Signed (Parent/Guardian): _____ Date: _____

Signed (Pupil): _____ Date: _____

Pupil response: Pupil can write / draw what they have learned from discussing these rules with their Parent/Guardian.

Appendix G

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date of Incident: ____ / ____ / _____ Time of incident: _____

Minor Serious Gross

Details of incident:

Staff members present: _____ Other witnesses: _____

Was incident a health and safety risk: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, to whom? _____

If physical hurt or injury was caused, please describe injury briefly:

Action Taken:

Principal informed Yes _____ No _____ Parents informed Yes _____ No _____

Parents asked to visit school Yes _____ No _____ Teacher/Parents meeting held Yes _____ No _____

Principal/ Parents meeting held Yes _____ No _____

Further action:

Was child suspended? Yes _____ No _____

Date(s): _____

If child was suspended, was suspension reported to TUSLA?

Yes _____ No _____ Date: _____

Appendix H

Teacher's Checklist for children showing a change in behaviours

Has the child recently experienced?

- Bereavement
- Loss of friends / pet
- Been involved in a cycle of bullying
- Been in an accident of any kind
- Is the child new to school or in transition from another school
- Family disharmony or marital breakdown
- Some unusual event
- Experienced medical difficulties

Has the child's behaviour changed to show?

- Change from outgoing to withdrawn or reserved to wild

- Trying to escape – poor attendance, running away
- Breaking rules frequently
- Changes in self-care – poor hygiene, disturbed eating habits, irregular sleep
- Problems with bowel or bladder control
- Experimentation with harmful substances
- Entering into conflict frequently
- Low trust of adults
- Poor concentration, attention and organisational skills at school
- Excessive anxiety around school – being perfectionist / withdrawing totally
- Frequent outbursts of anger for no apparent reason
- Self-harm
- Taking risks

The child exhibiting any of the above behaviours needs to talk to a significant adult (teacher, parent, doctor) and express their feelings. Parents should be encouraged to seek the advice of a doctor for their child.

Appendix I

Individual Behaviour Planning

Pupil's Name: _____

Pupil Overview

Characteristics:	
Is good at:	
Needs help with:	
Likes:	Dislikes:

Challenging Behaviours or barriers to learning (bullet point)

--

Assessment

Completed Assessment	
To Do	
Ongoing Assessment	

Possible functions of the behaviour

Escape	
I want a 'thing'/Item of comfort/Enthusiam	
Attention	
Sensory	

Situations related to patterns of behaviour: Some things to consider, but may not all be applicable

Subject / Class activity:	
Peer interactions:	
Demands / instructions:	
Activity structure:	
Performance:	
Interactions with staff:	
Pre / After school:	N/A

Interventions currently in place

Working Well	Needs further consideration

Preventative Interventions

What?	Who?	When?
Individual Rule Agreement:		
Individualised reward system (Token Economy):		

Managing a serious Incident

Behaviour exhibited	
Personnel	
Strategy	
Trigger Phase	
Acceleration Phase	
Incident Peak	

De-escalation		
Recovery		
Steps for further communication (parents / Gardai / other outside agencies)		
Who	When	How

How to communicate with the pupil

Suitable Language	Potential Triggers

Positive Consequences for desired behaviour and outcomes

Behaviour	Reward

Other consequences as per code of Behaviour

Behaviour	Sanction

Staff involved:

Class Teacher: _____

Support Teacher: _____

SNA(s): _____

Management: _____
