



St Bride's NS

Code of Behaviour

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In St Bride's N.S., we hope to foster this ideal in co-operation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the 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 through the parent's handbook, availability of policies and an ethos of open communication
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy

Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children. As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations. We have different expectations for infants than for senior children.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage '*Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet*'.

A Code of Conduct for staff, pupils and volunteers ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

School Rules-The following are the rules that make the school safe and create a good learning environment.

1. We show respect for self and others
2. We show respect for our own property and the property of others including that of our school.
3. We show respect for other students and their learning
4. We are kind and willing to help others
5. We follow instructions from staff immediately
6. We walk quietly in the school building
7. We show courtesy and good manners at all times
8. We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict
9. We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.
10. We do our best in class
11. We take responsibility for our own work
12. We wear the appropriate uniform.
13. We follow our Healthy Eating Policy.
14. We represent our school proudly when we are outside our school grounds.

These can be summed up as 6 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. We don't hurt anyone's feelings.*
5. *We work hard. We don't waste time.*
6. *We look after property. We don't damage things.*

These rules are displayed in each of the classrooms of our school.

These 6 "Golden Rules" will be the main ones used for junior classes (Junior Infants to 2nd class)

Rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, (student voice) based closely on the “Golden Rules” and signed by child and parents as part of child’s homework at the start of the year. Class rules will be kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Where possible they emphasise positive behaviour (e.g. ‘Walk’ and not, ‘Don’t run’). Rules will be revisited in class and at school assemblies throughout the school year, applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage. This will depend on the age of the children and the nature of the concern.

The following is the expected behaviour from the children during the school year

- The children are expected to walk calmly into school from 9:05 am.
- When break time ends they are expected to line up at their classroom door and wait to be brought in by their teacher.
- If it is a wet day the children are expected to sit quietly in their classrooms, either playing with materials in the room or reading books.
- I pads/ laptops should not be turned on unless permission is given to do so.
- Roll Call takes place before 10:30 a.m. Children who arrive in school after that time may be marked absent.
- The children are expected to do their homework to the best of their ability. If they are unable to do so parents are expected to write a note to the teacher (in homework journal if used)
- Children show respect to their teachers and their parents by handing up neatly written work. If children are having difficulty with any aspect of homework, parents should inform the teacher by note.
- Children are expected to wear their full uniform on non PE days.
- Children should walk slowly in the corridor and stand aside when they see an adult approaching.
- When it is break time the children are expected to eat their lunches quietly at their desks.
- They are expected to put their lunches back into their boxes.
- The children are expected to line up and walk out of the school quietly.
- The children are expected to listen to their teacher when she/he is speaking. Group work will allow children to discuss topics. Children are expected to allow other children to speak, no child should dominate a group and children should listen when another child is speaking.
- The children are expected to show respect to each other to each other’s property, and to school property.
- Children are not allowed to engage in any activity which prevents another child from learning.
- The children are expected to show kindness to each other. Children should not hurt other children in any physical way.
- Children are expected to include other children in their play.
- In the yard children should not engage in rough play. If a teacher tells them a game is unsuitable they should stop playing that game. Children are expected to play ball only at break times. Ball play is not allowed outside school gate.
- Children are expected to leave their mobile phones at home.

- Children are expected to stay out during playtime as there is no supervision inside. However permission will be given to a child to use the toilet. The teacher will tell the child he/she may check to see if the child has come out again.
- Children are expected to eat according to the Healthy Lunch Policy. One treat only is to be eaten on a Friday. If a child has more than one treat the teacher will confiscate the other treats in the interest of fairness.
- Children are expected to use polite words such as “please”, thank you,” “Excuse me” and to say “Yes” and the teacher’s name.
- The children are expected to tell the truth at all times.
- If a teacher has to leave the room children are expected to continue with their work silently.
- If children go swimming they are expected to sit quietly on the bus. They are expected to prepare to enter the pool quickly and to dress quickly in the dressing rooms after the session. If a child messes in the changing room he/she may have to discontinue lessons and get money refunded.
- On school trips children are expected to sit quietly in their seats and put their belts on. Children standing up in the bus will have to sit near teachers. Eating is not allowed on the bus and no rubbish should be left on the bus. Serious misbehaviour on the trip may lead to the child being excluded from the next trip.

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of St Bride’s NS is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that children have many different talents 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. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

The following are some samples of how praise might be given:

- Children are praised by the teacher
- The children will clap good behaviour
- Children may get sent to another teacher for praise
- Children may get a homework pass or choose from prize box in classroom
- Children will get full Golden Time. Golden Time is a Friday evening activity choice time given to all children who follow the golden rules. Activities for golden time agreed upon with class teacher.
- The teacher may give the children a reward-trophy of the week, sweets, extra playground time, watch a movie, a clap at assembly time, a special school trip.
- A praiseworthy note is put in the child’s notebook or copy.

Children will have an input in to what rewards they would like and would consider meaningful (student voice).

Field trips Christmas trip annual school tours and our end of year special event will be reserved for those who have consistently strived to behave well.

Sanctions

Sanctions are used in a corrective way and are intended to help the child to change and improve his/her behaviour patterns. The nature of the misbehaviour and the age of the child will determine the strategy to be employed.

Children will have an input into what sanctions teachers use and discuss their effectiveness and fairness.

The following are sanctions that may be used in the school;

- The teacher may speak to the child and explain why the behaviour was unacceptable
- The children may be denied a treat-a sweet, reduced golden time.
- Children may have to sit away from other children for a certain length of time until behaviour improves.
- A note may be sent home in the child's bag.
- Children may have to do extra work.
- Referral to the Principal and Detention during yard time for serious incidents (this may take up to 2 weeks following a serious incident, parents will also be informed in such instances)

The class teacher will keep a record of misdemeanours and how they were dealt with.

It should be noted that these lists consist of examples only: it is not meant to be a totally comprehensive list of misdemeanours and procedural steps.

Referral to the Principal

The principal will ask the child to explain why he/she has been sent to her. If the child is not clear on this she will speak to the teacher. If necessary, she will verbally reprimand the child.

Sometimes the principal and the teacher will work out a reward based system (behavioural plan to improve behaviour) with the child and parents. Sometimes the principal will work out a programme for the child in conjunction with the class teacher and the learning support teacher, with permission from the parents. The principal may ring the NEP's psychologist or other outside agencies (CDNT9/SENO) for advice.

During this time the child will be asked to write/ state an explanation of what he/she did or write/ state why the behaviour was unacceptable. The principal may ring the parents of the child or may ask the parents to sign what the child has written. If parents are called in, the Principal may ask the Deputy Principal or the Assistant Principal to be present at the meeting to record decisions made.

On the Yard-Minor misbehaviour on the yard is usually dealt with by the teacher on supervision. This may involve the child being verbally reprimanded or the child may have to take time out from play under the supervision of the teacher on yard. If the misdemeanour is serious the class teacher may be informed as will the principal and the parents. The incident will be recorded in the yard incident book. Members of staff on the yard are asked to reprimand minor misdemeanours and to report serious misdemeanours.

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. 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. Serious misbehaviour and repeated minor misdemeanours are recorded by the class teacher in the teacher's diary.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

Interrupting class work/ running in the school building/ not standing still in the class line/ being out of place during breaks if not allowed/ littering the school/not wearing the correct uniform/being discourteous/not completing school work or homework without good reason/ not working to full potential endangering self /others in the school yard e.g. unintentional rough play.

Examples of serious misdemeanours include:

Constantly disruptive in class/ back answering a teacher /damaging school property / telling lies/ stealing / using unacceptable language/ intentionally partaking in rough play.

Examples of gross misdemeanours include

Leaving the school premises without permission/ deliberately injuring a fellow student or member of staff /bullying another pupil.

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others. Please see St Bride's NS "Bí Cineálta" policy for further details

- 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 and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. 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 members in a sensitive manner.

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

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher.

This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions to deal with Bullying (this document must be read in association with our “Bí Cineálta” policy)

If bullying takes place (a thorough investigation will proceed this finding) the following procedure is followed:

- Apology to the victim
- A record is kept. Pupils write an account of the incidents that lead to the Bullying behaviour and what they have learned from this episode in their lives-parents must sign this.
- Pupils may be removed from an activity if endangering self or others.
- Pupil is sent to the Principal and made aware that suspension is a possibility
- Suspension procedures may follow if deemed necessary by the Board of Management.

The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and or/Principal bases on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious 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. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. 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. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

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

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code 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.

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 and any outside agencies that the child may be connected with 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.

Communicating with Parents

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.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal/formal parent/teacher meetings and phonecalls
- Through children's homework journal (infants do not have a homework journal, please check homework folder in bags for notes)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School Newsletters/ e-mails school web-site (updated Feb 2026) /
- TextaParent service.
- School social media page (St Bride's NS facebook page)

This policy will be shown to the Parents Association and to the Board of Management before it is ratified. It will be reviewed each year.

Signed _____ Chairperson BOM

Signed _____ School Principal

Date _____