

St. Bernadette's School
Principal: Mr. J Haran
RN: 19592J



Code of Behaviour Policy

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

In St Bernadette'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.

Our ethos is that as our pupils have individual requirements they should be treated with positive support, dignity, and respect in trying to meet their needs as regards behaviour management.

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.

Every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive proactive approach to the issue of behaviour in the school. Our code offers a framework within which positive techniques of motivation and encouragement are utilised by all staff towards the children. The school therefore places greater emphasis on encouraging and rewarding good behaviour than on sanctions in the belief that this will, in the longer term, produce the best results.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between the children and the need to accommodate these differences in so far as this is practical.

All efforts are made to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes, and interests of each pupil. IEPs are in place for all pupils, and these are developed alongside input from teachers, pupils (if applicable), parents and other external personnel, if available, for this process.

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
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community

Responsibility of Staff

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.
- 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, ethnicity, 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.

Responsibility of parents

- Parents will support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour by
- Ensuring that their children attend regularly and punctually.
- Encouraging their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work.
- Cooperating with the school's rules and system of rewards and sanctions
- Attending meetings in school as requested
- Ensuring that their children wear the correct school uniform.
- Sharing any relevant information with the school which may affect a pupil's behaviour.

Responsibility of Pupils

Standards of behaviour expected from pupils.

School Rules

Safety

- We walk quietly in the school building.
- We show respect for self and others.
- We ask permission to leave the classroom/school.

Caring for myself

- We come to school on time.
- We show respect for self and others.
- We do our best in class.
- We show respect for our own property and the property of others.
- We take responsibility for your own work.
- We wear the appropriate uniform.

Caring for others

- We show respect for self and others.
- We show respect for our own property and the property of others.
- We show respect other students and their learning.
- We are kind and willing to help others.
- We follow instructions from staff.
- We show courtesy and good manners.
- We try to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.

These can be summed up as 5 Golden Rules:

Come to school.

Be Respectful

Do your best!

Work Together

Be Safe

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

All children are required to comply with the code of behaviour. However, the school recognises that due to their special needs the children in St Bernadette's may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans (IBP) will be put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, the class 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 and other reports will be incorporated into individual behaviour plans.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil 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.

Class Rules

At the beginning of each academic year, the class teacher will draft a list of class rules with the children, based closely on the “Golden Rules”. 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 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.

Incentives/Reward System

Part of the vision of St Bernadette’s special School 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. 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:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment in a pupil’s copy or homework journal/Aladdin
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication.
- Special mention at assembly. – Student of the Month awards

Teachers may implement individualised reward systems with their class grouping for individual pupils.

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. 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.

Examples of minor misbehaviour include:

- Bringing electronic equipment or mobile phones to school
- Not wearing appropriate uniform
- Not following instructions.

Examples of serious misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats or physical hurt to another person

- Damage to other pupils' belongings or school property
- Theft
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school
- Leaving school/school activities without permission.

Examples of gross misbehaviour include:

- Repeated incidents of serious misbehaviour as outlined above.
- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious Damage to property
- Serious bullying
- Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal, or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others.

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, a meeting, made through the proper channels i.e., a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher via Aladdin, to arrange a convenient time for both parties, can be arranged. 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.

Sanctions

As part of the whole school approach, we in St. Bernadette's have an agreed response to inappropriate behaviour which allows for consistency among staff as well as ensuring that there is a planned approach to helping students to change their own behaviour. There are three levels at which intervention may take place and at each level parental and family support is sought.

1. Support for all: most students behave appropriately with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and in school. Occasional, minor misbehaviour should be attended to routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher.
2. Additional support for some students: some students need more active intervention to help them manage their behaviour. Without additional help they may be at risk of failing behaviourally, socially and educationally. Additional inputs or interventions might include referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the student for a time, setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the student in a supportive way and/or behaviour contracts.
3. Specialised support for a small minority of students: a small minority of students may show particularly challenging behaviour. They may have difficulty in learning new behaviour and may not respond to low level interventions. These students will need a sustained and systematic response involving all the important adults in their lives, in school and at home. Sources of support may come from NEPS, HSE services, NCSE/SESS and other relevant agencies where appropriate e.g., NEWB, An Garda Siochana (JLO), Autism Services.

Our aim is to prevent challenging behaviour from occurring in the first place however we do need to plan for times when behaviour may occur that requires the use of sanctions. 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.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour.
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning.
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

A sanction is a form of positive intervention and should be used in a respectful way that helps students to understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour.

In particular, a sanction should:

- Defuse and not escalate a situation
- Preserve the dignity of all parties
- Be applied in a fair and consistent way
- Be timely

St. Bernadette's School proposes to apply good practice in the use of sanctions by ensuring that:

1. Sanctions are part of a plan to change behaviour
2. Sanctions are used consistently
3. Students and parents know what sanctions are used in the school
4. Sanctions are proportionate
5. Sanctions are appropriate
6. Sanctions are understood clearly by students with special educational needs and disabilities so that they know and understand the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable and the purpose of the sanction.

It is important to remember that school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students, including those with identified special educational needs. The use of sanctions or consequences should be characterised by certain features;

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied
- The consequence must relate as closely as possible to the behaviour
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions
- Group punishment should be avoided as it breeds resentment
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is the focus

As our school believes in a proactive approach, we will try to prevent minor misbehaviours from occurring or if they do occur we aim to prevent them escalating into serious misbehaviour. The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

- Reasoning with pupil
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
- Loss of privileges
- Communication with parents
- Referral to Principal

- Principal communicating with parents.
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)

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

Suspension and Expulsion

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, 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.

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 another pupil or a member of staff 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 or a maximum of five school days in exceptional circumstances in order to achieve a particular objective.

If there have been repeated sanctions including suspension then the Board of Management may consider expulsion, 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.

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension where:

The students behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process

The students continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.

Where expulsion is considered, the school has tried a series of other interventions and believe that they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

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.

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.

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

Through children's home/school notebook by arrangement between the class teacher and the parent(s)

Aladdin Connect

Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school

Phone call

School notice board (Aladdin)

School web-site/e-mails



St. Bernadette's School Behaviour Plan



Name:	Behaviour:
Risk of:	Rating:
Warning signs: In class: Out of class:	
Setting events: Triggers: In Class: Out of class:	
Interventions to de-escalate: In class: Out of class:	
Signed: Reviewed: Date:	



Incident/Minor Accident Report and Risk Assessment

Pupil: _____

- What happened?
- What were the risks involved?
- What did you do?
- Why did you do what you did?

Date:	Time:	Location:
<p>(Antecedent)</p> <p>What happened?</p> <p>(Brief outline of the significant aspects leading up to the incident)</p>		
<p>(Behaviour)</p> <p>What happened and what were the risks involved?</p> <p>(To pupil, staff, or other pupils)</p>		

<p>(Consequence)</p> <p>What did you do?</p> <p>(Factual, brief account of the actions you took. Include and 'on the spot' actions you took to minimize risks to the child, other children, or staff)</p>	
<p>How was this in the best interests of the child?</p>	

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Staff present: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____