

# **Code of Behaviour**

## **St. Brigid's N.S.**

### **Annacurra**

#### **Introductory statement and Rationale**

**This Code of Behaviour** was formulated in spring 2011 by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Special Duties Teacher with assistance from Fr. F. Murphy in the Patron's Office and involved consultation with staff, parents/guardians, pupils and Board of Management.

#### **Rationale**

We decided to review our Code of Behaviour as:

- the existing policy is under on-going review
- it is a requirement of the Education Act 1998 and the Education Welfare Act 2000 (Section 23.1,2,3)
- it is a requirement to ensure compliance with National Education Welfare Board Guidelines

#### **Relationship to Characteristic Spirit/Ethos of the School.**

In Annacurra N.S., we aim to nurture each child to enable her to develop his/her potential in a caring environment where the talents of each child are valued. As a Roman Catholic school, our Code of Behaviour reflects the Christian values we promote within the school, with an emphasis on forgiveness, reconciliation and new beginnings. This can only be achieved where there is a high level of respect and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

#### **Aims**

The aims of the Code of Discipline of St. Brigid's NS are:

- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To develop pupils' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these systems.
- To enable teachers to teach without disruption.
- To protect the health and safety of pupils, staff and their families by adhering to the new protocols of social distancing, respiratory and hand hygiene

#### **Implementation**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Discipline. Rules will be kept to a minimum. Positive behaviour will be emphasized and applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

## General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to tolerate these differences. It is agreed that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school and a high level of co-operation among staff and between staff, parents and pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that the code of behaviour is implemented in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. The limits of behaviour are clearly defined and children become familiar with the consequences of behaviour beyond these limits. The over-riding principle governing this code is respect – respect for ourselves and others and their property.

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. **Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.**
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to wear the appropriate uniform and footwear and to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to obey a teacher's instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

## Affirming Positive Behaviour

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

### Strategies/Incentives

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
- A comment on a child's exercise book.
- Visit to another class or Principal for commendation.
- Praise in front of class group.
- Individual merit awards, points awards or award stamps.
- Class certificate awards.
- System of homework tokens and “golden time”
- Student of week/month
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
- Written or verbal communication with parent.

## Discouraging Misbehaviour

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class or supervised location.
- Time out at play time.
- Detention during break time.
- Prescribing extra work.
- Communication with parents.
- Referral to Principal.
- Meeting between Principal and parents to discuss behaviour

- 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).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety

### **Examples of Minor Misdemeanours:**

Interrupting class work/arriving late for school/running in the school building/talking in the class line/leaving assigned seat without permission at lunch time/not wearing the correct school uniform/being discourteous/unmannerly/not completing homework without good reason/endangering self/fellow pupils in the school yard at break time.

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:**

- Verbal reprimand/reasoning with the pupil
- Noting instance of yard misbehaviour in yard book

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with regular occurrences of Minor Misdemeanours**

- Additional work assigned
- Note in homework journal to be signed by parent/temporary separation from peers
- Sending to another teacher/denial of participation in some class activity
- Time out at play time.
- Detention during break time
- Note to parents concerning further misbehaviour in yard (Misbehaviour in yard consists of any action that puts the safety of self/other pupil at risk)

### **Examples of Serious Misdemeanours:**

Constantly disruptive in class/telling lies/stealing/damaging other pupil's property  
Bullying/back answering a teacher/leaving school premises during school day without appropriate permission/Not working to full potential/using unacceptable language/bringing weapons to school/deliberately injuring a fellow pupil

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with serious misdemeanours:**

- Send to the Principal
- Principal sends note in Journal to be signed by parent
- Principal meets with one/both parents
- Chairperson of Board of Management is informed and parents requested to meet with the Chairperson and Principal

### **Examples of Gross Misdemeanours**

Deliberate damage or destruction of school property/building  
Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher/pupil

### **Examples of steps to be taken when dealing with gross misdemeanours;**

- Chairperson/Principal to sanction immediate suspension pending discussion with parents
- Expulsion will be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130 (6) *"No pupil can be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without prior consent of patron and until alternative arrangements are made for enrolment of pupil at another suitable school in the locality"*.

***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.***

## **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to cooperate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying/Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy.

## **Substance use**

Incidents relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use are considered gross misbehaviour and pupils may be suspended or expelled if involved in any drug related incident.

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance,
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities

Disposal of drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property

## **Covid 19**

The school has put special arrangements in place to deal with Covid-19 in school. All students should comply with school rules relating to Covid 19. Non Compliance or

## **Suspension/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 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 and the Staff, 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 Local Welfare Education 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.

## School Rules

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly. Students are asked to:

- Attend school regularly and come on time. Wear the full school uniform each day. Optional tracksuit to be worn only on P.E. days
- Present a tidy appearance free from unnatural hair colours, outlandish hairstyles and tattoos. Please tie back long hair.
- Participate fully in all school curricular and co-curricular activities. Attend swimming. (Medical Cert required for opting out for an extended period).
- Wear sensible dark coloured footwear (such as navy/black), tightly closed. No unsafe footwear allowed.
- No long or potentially dangerous jewellery to be worn at any time. Bulky watches not allowed on the playground. Leave valuable jewellery at home.
- Mobile phones not allowed during school hours. Please leave electronic equipment at home.
- Official opening time is 9.00am and official closing time is 2.40pm. Please see amended times in School Reopening Plan for Covid-19 Please enter via assigned entrance for your class and go directly to your classroom
- Enter and exit the school building in a safe orderly manner.
- Walk on the right hand side of the steps, corridor and ramps to allow others to pass.
- Treat everyone with kindness, courtesy and respect. No inappropriate language.
- Hang up coats.
- Display general good manners e.g. ask permission to leave room, stand back for adults, excuse them, knock before entering, etc.
- Respect other people's property.
- Take care of sports equipment and all other school property. Adhere to the Sports Code of Conduct. Report any damage.
- Do homework assigned in a diligent manner (Homework policy) Try to do homework in a suitable atmosphere. Present work they can be proud of.
- Obey all teacher's instructions and School Rules at all times.
- Observe good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Observe good hand hygiene
- Comply with all Covid-19 rules and protocols in the school
- Bring a note to explain absences. Provide written permission to leave school early.
- Enter and leave school through the Church Car Park entrance.

## Classroom Rules

At the start of each school year the class teacher in consultation with the students draws up a

set of classroom rules. These will be displayed in each classroom. Children will regularly be reminded of the rules.

### **Playground Rules**

- Walk to the playground assigned to class groupings.
- The playground is for safe play for all – no potentially dangerous objects allowed.
- Play in your own playground.
- A general attitude of respect is expected to be shown both to people and the general school environment.
- Take care of yourself and others while playing.
- Please do not strike, drag or push. Do not scream or shout too close to another's face.
- Include others in games and activities
- Avoid exclusion, name calling and nasty remarks.
- Wear a helmet during hurling games. Sharing outside of families not allowed due to risk of head lice.
- Please stay away from trees, shrubs and stones.
- The teacher on duty is in charge; always do what they ask you to do.
- Request permission to leave the yard and report back to the teacher on your return.
- Respect all good hygiene and respiratory etiquette and all covid protocols

### **Green Code:**

As we are a green school please remember to:

- Keep the playground and school grounds litter free.
- Use compost bins for organic waste.
- Take home lunch wrapping and cartons.
- Chewing gum, crisps, popcorn, chocolate and nuts and fizzy drinks are not allowed (Healthy Eating Policy)
- Glass bottles are not allowed in school or on school outings.
- Recycle paper and use a minimum of paper in the toilets. Please do not flush paper towels the down toilet. Use bins provided.

This is not an exhaustive list of School Rules and may be amended as required.

### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the Staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of **8.50a.m.** or after the official closing time of 2.40 pm except where pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with school behaviour policy during these times.

### **Covid-19**

- **Comply with all arrangements and protocols regarding Covid-19**
- **Any incidents of abuse of Covid -19 protocols will be seen as gross misbehaviour**

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code.
- Ratify the code.

### **Principal's Responsibilities**

- 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, as required.

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

- Support and implement the school's code of behaviour.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and affirm good work.
- Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair.
- Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
- Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
- Provide support for colleagues.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.

### **Pupils' Responsibilities**

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
- Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
- Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
- Include other pupils in games and activities.
- Bring correct materials/books to school.
- Follow school and class rules.
- Observe good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Observe good hand hygiene
- Follow social distancing protocols as directed by the teacher
- Use hand sanitiser, soap, wipes and hand towels for the purpose for which they were intended only
- Show due care when using sanitising dispensers, hand towel dispensers and soap dispensers
- Comply with all Covid-19 rules and protocols in the school

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.

- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work.
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour.
- Comply with all arrangements and protocols regarding Covid-19 and School Re-Opening Plan
- Observe and respect all social distancing protocols when dropping off and collecting children
- Monitor your child for any signs of illness and keep your child at home if they show any signs of infectious illness
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact information for your child

**Ratified by Board of Management on 14/11 2011**  
**Updated version reviewed December 2013**  
**Updated version reviewed and ratified November 2014**  
**Reviewed January 2016**  
**Reviewed January 2017**  
**Reviewed January 2018**  
**Reviewed September 2020**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

A hard copy of this policy will be given to all new entrants.



Saint Brigid's N.S.  
Annacurra  
2014

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

The main objective of the accompanying Code of Behaviour is to foster positive attitudes in pupils towards their educational experiences at St. Brigid's NS. Needless to say, the vast majority of our pupils and their parents/guardians are supportive of and positive towards the school, in this endeavour. The school in turn is anxious to provide the best opportunities possible for its pupils to pursue their studies without hindrance from disruptive pupils who can cause much chaos if allowed to go unchecked.

Children are sensitive and appreciate positivity. In St. Brigid's N.S. children are rewarded for positive behaviour. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-esteem and respect for others. The school places a great emphasis on rewards and incentives rather than on sanctions.

'Discipline' is not an end in itself. In St. Brigid's we see discipline as a means to an end, an ongoing process requiring constant evaluation and updating.

On occasions where behaviour may fall short of that which is expected, there should be a fair, just, appropriate and agreed response. Pupils are encouraged to acknowledge misdeeds, expect any appropriate response, learn from experience and put the incident behind them.

Channels of communication between the school and parents/guardians are an important aspect of our discipline procedure. The more effective schools tend to be those with the best relationships with parents. Every effort will be made by the Principal and staff to ensure that parents/guardians are kept well informed. Parents/guardians will be told not only if their child has acted in a significantly inappropriate manner but also when they have behaved particularly well.

I kindly request you to read the accompanying Code of Behaviour carefully and to indicate your willingness to accept its provisions. If you have any queries or questions please contact me.

Le gach dea ghuí,

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Eva Ryan (Principal)

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Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

I accept the Code of Behaviour. Signed: \_\_\_\_\_