



ST BRIGID'S RDNS CODE OF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Introductory Statement

St. Brigid's GNS aims to provide a happy, secure, friendly, learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

Rationale

Under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 23(1), schools are obliged to prepare a Code of Behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school. Section 23(2) outlines that the Code shall specify:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned, including the grounds for removing a suspension;
- The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

St Brigid's GNS has reviewed and updated this Code of Behaviour to ensure compliance with current legislation, Department of Education guidance, and best practice in supporting positive behaviour, wellbeing, and inclusion.

This policy is informed by the following:

- Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Department of Education)
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2017)

- Data Protection Acts 1988–2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (Tusla)

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

St. Brigid's GNS Killester is a Catholic Community which aims to provide a caring environment where management, staff and parents work in partnership through mutual respect to develop the spiritual, personal and academic potential of each child according to their talents, skills and abilities. Respect for others and co-operation amongst pupils, parents, staff and the Board of Management are the guiding factors in our Code of Behaviour.

Aims:

The aims of this Code of Behaviour are:

- To promote positive behaviour and respectful relationships across the school community
- To support pupils' social, emotional and behavioural development
- To ensure a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment for all pupils
- To ensure a fair, consistent and transparent approach to behaviour
- To recognise and respond appropriately to the diverse needs and circumstances of pupils
- To prevent and address bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying and behaviour outside of school that impacts on the school environment
- To uphold the principles of equality, inclusion, dignity and respect for all members of the school community
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils

Guiding Principles:

This Code of Behaviour is guided by the following principles:

- Every pupil has the right to learn in a safe, supportive and respectful environment
- Every pupil has a responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate
- Behaviour will be addressed in a way that is fair, consistent and proportionate
- Restorative approaches will be used, where appropriate, to build, maintain and repair relationships
- Behaviour is understood in the context of a pupil's personal, social and environmental circumstances
- Positive behaviour will be actively taught, modelled and reinforced
- Early intervention and supportive approaches are essential in promoting positive behaviour
- The dignity and rights of all members of the school community will be respected at all times.

Content of the Policy:

In our Code of Behaviour, we address the following:

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school
2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour – roles and responsibilities
3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour
4. Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour
5. Suspension / Expulsion
6. [Keeping records](#)
7. [Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school](#)
8. Reference to other policies

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23, states that the Code of Behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school”.

The school recognises that behaviour is influenced by a range of factors, including a pupil's personal, social and environmental circumstances. These factors will be taken into account when responding to behaviour, and appropriate support will be provided where necessary.

The school is committed to:

- clearly communicating expectations of behaviour
- teaching and reinforcing positive behaviour
- supporting pupils to develop self-discipline and responsibility

In compliance with Section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, prior to registering a pupil, parents/guardians will be provided with a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour. Parents/guardians will be requested to confirm that they accept the policy and will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance.

2. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour – roles and responsibilities

Staff members, supported by the Board of Management, adopt a positive, consistent and supportive approach to behaviour within the school. Pupils are encouraged and acknowledged for their efforts in maintaining positive behaviour.

A whole school positive approach to behaviour includes:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are consistent and mutually supportive
- A teamwork approach among staff, pupils, parents and the wider school community
- A whole-school positive approach to behaviour, curriculum, teaching and classroom management (*e.g. SPHE, structured routines, consistent expectations across classes 'be kind, be safe, be respectful'*)
- A whole school positive behaviour matrix.
- An inclusive and respectful school environment where all pupils feel valued
- A commitment to consistency in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour across all settings (classroom, yard, school activities)
- A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy. (*e.g. staff meetings, SET reviews, feedback from parents and pupils*)
- The use of consistent positive reinforcement strategies across the school (*e.g. assembly recognition, Student of the Week awards, certificates, class reward systems, table points, marble jars, stickers, praise notes, line-up rewards for orderly transitions, positive reinforcement during yard supervision, praise/recognition from principal/ancillary staff, whole school agreed positive behaviour matrix and mantra "be safe, be kind be respectful", peer recognition and praise, "caught ya" recognition of demonstration of values*)

Staff

- At the beginning of each school year, all teachers will review the Code of Behaviour with their class and collaboratively develop a set of clear, positive class rules. These rules will reflect the principles of the whole-school Positive Behaviour Approach ([WSPBIS](#)).
- Relevant Assistant Principal and teacher(s) will support the Student Council in developing and reviewing a child-friendly version of the Code of Behaviour, promoting pupil voice and understanding of expected behaviour.
- The school's Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) & Wellbeing curriculum is used to actively support the Code of Behaviour. It promotes the development of communication skills, positive relationships, self-esteem, empathy, and appropriate conflict resolution strategies. It also supports pupils in understanding differences, developing citizenship, and contributing positively to the school community.

- A positive, consistent and fair approach to behaviour management will be implemented by all staff, with a focus on prevention, encouragement, and the reinforcement of positive behaviour, as well as agreed whole-school responses to inappropriate behaviour.
- Staff will ensure that behaviour expectations are taught, modelled and consistently reinforced across all settings (classroom, yard, school activities and outings).
- Staff will communicate promptly and constructively with parents/guardians regarding any concerns about a child's behaviour, wellbeing, or progress, and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to support positive behaviour.
- Where appropriate, behaviour concerns will be discussed with pupils in a respectful and supportive manner, ensuring that pupils are given an opportunity to explain their actions and are actively involved in reflecting on and improving their behaviour.
- Communication with parents/guardians may take place in person, by phone, by email or via the Aladdin Connect platform, depending on the nature and urgency of the concern.
- The Code of Behaviour is provided to all families upon enrolment and is available on the school website. Parents/guardians are expected to familiarise themselves with the Code and support its implementation.
- Staff will record and monitor behaviour incidents in line with school procedures to ensure consistency, transparency, and appropriate follow-up, including the identification of patterns where relevant

The Board of Management

The Board of Management plays a key role in ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair, consistent and effective manner in line with Tusla guidance and relevant legislation.

The Board supports the Principal and staff in promoting a whole-school approach to positive behaviour, ensuring that appropriate policies, procedures and supports are in place to create a safe and respectful learning environment for all pupils.

The Board encourages and supports ongoing staff development in understanding behaviour, including proactive, preventative and restorative approaches to behaviour management.

In line with Tusla guidelines, the Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is regularly reviewed, updated and implemented consistently across the school community.

Parent/Guardians

St Brigid's GNS is committed to fostering a positive, respectful and collaborative partnership between staff and parents/guardians, recognising that such partnership is central to promoting good behaviour and supporting students' learning and wellbeing.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the school through school activities, the Board of Management, the Parents' Association, and other initiatives.

Consistent with the principles outlined by Tusla, the school acknowledges the vital role of parents/guardians in supporting positive behaviour. The school therefore asks that parents/guardians:

- Familiarise themselves with the school's Code of Behaviour and support its implementation. Acceptance of a school place implies agreement to uphold the standards and expectations outlined in this policy.
- Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their child, helping them to understand the importance of respectful behaviour, responsibility, and adherence to school rules.
- Work in partnership with school staff to support their child's behaviour, learning, and overall development.
- Support the school's approach to promoting positive behaviour, including the use of rewards and, where necessary, fair and proportionate sanctions.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. In line with legal requirements, the school will notify Tusla Education Welfare Service where a child has been absent for 20 days or more in a school year.
- Provide a reason for any absence in a timely manner, using the school's agreed communication systems (e.g. Aladdin Connect), and inform the school in advance of any planned absences where possible.
- Engage constructively with the school where concerns arise, attending meetings when requested and arranging appointments in advance through the school office.
- Communicate any concerns relating to their child's wellbeing or behaviour at an early stage, so that issues can be addressed promptly and effectively.
- Support their child in completing homework and ensuring they are prepared for school with the necessary books and materials.
- Ensure their child follows the school's policies, including those relating to uniform, healthy lunches, and the appropriate use of mobile phones.
- Respect all school procedures and protocols, particularly in relation to the safe dropping off and collection of children.
- Monitor their child's health and keep them at home where they show signs of infectious illness, in the interest of the wider school community.
- Ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details and that they are contactable during the school day, with arrangements in place for the prompt collection of their child if required.

Through mutual respect, open communication, and shared expectations, the school and parents/guardians can work together to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment in which all students can thrive.

Pupils

Pupils play an important role in the ongoing development and implementation of the Code of Behaviour by:

- Being involved, where appropriate, in discussing and agreeing class rules.
- Developing an understanding of how [*Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful*](#) applies in everyday school life.
- Contributing, where possible, to discussions, monitoring and review of the Code of Behaviour through the Student Council.

Each pupil is expected, in line with their age, stage of development and individual needs, to:

Be Kind

- treat others with respect, kindness and consideration.
- include others and seek help from a teacher or trusted adult if they experience or witness behaviour that causes concern.

Be Safe

- follow the guidance and instructions of school staff.
- use school facilities and shared spaces, including toilets, in a safe and appropriate manner.

Be Respectful

- respect the school environment, including school property and the belongings of others.
- engage with their learning and school activities to the best of their ability, with appropriate support where needed.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

Understanding Behaviour

Behaviour is viewed as a form of communication. Children's behaviour can be influenced by a range of factors including age, stage of development, individual needs, additional educational needs, family circumstances, social and emotional wellbeing, and the school environment.

The school recognises that some pupils may require additional support to meet behavioural expectations. A supportive, inclusive and proactive approach is adopted, focusing on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviour, while responding to difficulties in a fair, consistent and understanding manner.

Classroom

Behavioural expectations are developed within each classroom in a way that reflects the school's ethos and the principles of the Code of Behaviour. Class teachers, in collaboration with pupils, create a small number of clear, positive and age-appropriate class rules at the beginning of the school year. These rules are aligned with the school mantra *Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful* and are designed to support a positive and inclusive learning environment.

Teachers ensure that pupils understand these rules, the reasons behind them, and what they look like in practice. Expectations are revisited regularly and adapted where appropriate to reflect the needs, age and stage of development of the class group.

Classroom rules may include expectations such as:

- treating others with kindness and respect
- listening to others and taking turns when speaking
- following instructions and classroom routines
- taking care of personal and shared property
- using materials and equipment safely and appropriately

Teachers may also establish additional routines or expectations specific to their classroom (e.g. organisation of workspaces, movement around the room, use of materials), ensuring these are reasonable, clearly explained and consistently applied.

Positive Strategies

Good behaviour is recognised and acknowledged throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged and supported in making positive choices, and their efforts are affirmed in a variety of ways. The following are examples of strategies that may be used to promote positive behaviour:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- Positive written or verbal feedback
- Praise in front of the class or group
- Displaying and celebrating work
- Visits to another class or the principal for commendation
- Awards (e.g. Kindness award usually distributed at whole school assemblies)
- Individual or group reward systems (e.g. Class Dojo, class charts, tokens)
- Stickers or stamps
- Assigning responsibility or leadership roles
- Communication with parents/guardians
- Occasional rewards such as extra activity time (e.g. Golden Time)

These strategies are applied in a fair and consistent way, taking into account the age, stage of development and individual needs of pupils.

Restorative Practices

The school uses restorative practices, where appropriate, to support pupils in understanding the impact of their behaviour and in repairing relationships where difficulties arise.

This may include guided conversations, reflection, problem-solving discussions, or apologies, supported by staff. The focus is on helping pupils take responsibility, learn from incidents, and rebuild positive relationships in a safe and respectful way.

Yard Expectations

In the yard, we follow our school motto: [Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful](#).

Be Kind

- We are kind and helpful and use kind words.
- We include others in our play and look after each other.
- We tell an adult if we are feeling sad, worried or left out.

Be Safe

- We use gentle hands and feet and do not hurt others.
- We play safely and use equipment properly.
- We stay in the yard unless we have permission from a member of staff.

Be Respectful

- We take care of school equipment and our environment.
- We listen to and follow staff instructions.
- We line up quickly and quietly when asked.

Golden Rule

- We treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves.

School Related Activities

The Code of Behaviour also applies to behaviour outside of school where it has a direct impact on school life, relationships, safety, or the reputation of the school community.

4. Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Despite the best efforts of the school, instances of inappropriate behaviour may occur. Behaviour is understood as a form of communication and may be influenced by a range of factors, including a pupil's age, stage of development, individual needs, additional educational needs, social and emotional wellbeing, family circumstances and wider environmental factors.

Even minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if persistent. More serious incidents can impact on the learning, safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff. The school therefore aims to respond to all behaviour in a fair, consistent, proportionate and supportive manner.

The school operates a whole-school tiered framework of behaviour support, which ensures that responses are proactive, graduated, and appropriate to the needs of the pupil.

[Whole-School Tiered Behaviour Support Framework](#)

- Tier 1 – Universal Supports
Applied to all pupils through clear expectations, explicit teaching of behaviour, positive reinforcement, SPHE curriculum, and consistent classroom and school-wide routines.
- Tier 2 – Targeted Supports
Additional support for pupils who require further guidance, including check-ins, structured behaviour plans, mentoring, increased home-school communication, and targeted reinforcement systems.
- Tier 3 – Intensive Supports
Individualised, structured support for pupils with significant or ongoing behavioural needs, developed in collaboration with parents/guardians, the SEN team, and external agencies where appropriate.

This framework ensures early intervention, proportional responses, and consistent support for all pupils.

Three levels of unacceptable behaviour are recognised at St Brigid's: Minor, Serious and Gross Misbehaviour. These categories are used as a guide only, and responses will always take account of the individual circumstances of the pupil and the incident. The lists below are not exhaustive.

[Examples of Minor Misbehaviour](#)

Minor misbehaviour refers to low-level, often unintentional behaviours that may disrupt learning but do not pose immediate risk.

- Disrupting class learning (e.g. talking out of turn, interrupting, calling out)
- Not following instructions or classroom routines
- Distracting others or engaging in off-task behaviour
- Inappropriate laughter or silliness at unsuitable times
- Leaving seat without permission
- Careless use of school or personal property
- Low-level discourtesy or unkind comments
- Name-calling or negative remarks

- Excluding others from play or group activities
- Littering or lack of care for environment
- Minor misuse of school materials or facilities
- Not adhering to agreed school expectations (e.g. uniform, presentation)

Examples of Serious Misbehaviour

Serious misbehaviour refers to behaviour that is deliberate, repeated, or significantly impacts the wellbeing, safety or learning of others.

- Physical aggression (e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting)
- Deliberate intimidation, threats or harassment
- Persistent disruption of teaching and learning
- Refusal to follow reasonable instructions from staff
- Stealing or deliberate damage to property
- Verbal abuse, derogatory language or sustained name-calling
- Spreading rumours or malicious gossip
- Persistent exclusion of peers
- Leaving class or school areas without permission
- Repeated refusal to complete assigned work or homework
- Bullying behaviour (as defined in the school's Bí Cinealta Policy)
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones or digital devices

Examples of Gross Misbehaviour

Gross misbehaviour refers to very serious incidents that may pose a risk to safety, wellbeing or the orderly running of the school.

- Repeated serious misbehaviour that persists despite intervention and support
- Serious physical violence or aggressive/threatening behaviour
- Bringing dangerous or prohibited items to school
- Leaving the school grounds without permission
- Serious theft or deliberate significant damage to property
- Possession, use or distribution of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, vapes or other harmful substances
- Severe or persistent bullying, including cyberbullying
- Serious misuse of mobile phones or digital devices (e.g. recording, sharing or distributing images without consent)
- Deliberate actions that significantly endanger the safety of others

5. Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

In line with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the school outlines a range of proportionate and staged responses to support behaviour development.

Teachers will use professional judgement, knowledge of the pupil, and the context of the behaviour when deciding on appropriate responses. The emphasis is on early intervention, restorative approaches where appropriate, and supporting pupils to learn from incidents.

Responses may include:

1. Non-verbal reminder or redirection
2. Reasoning with the pupil and reinforcing expectations
3. Verbal reminder and guidance on improvement
4. Temporary separation within class or relocation within school (where appropriate)
5. Reflection time or restorative conversation
6. Loss of privileges (linked and proportionate to behaviour)
7. Additional supervised reflection time
8. Communication with parents/guardians
9. Referral to Principal
10. Principal communication with parents/guardians
11. Formal measures such as suspension or expulsion, in line with national guidelines and procedures

Restorative practices may be used where appropriate to support pupils in understanding the impact of their behaviour and repairing relationships.

6. Inclusion and Context

In line with the principles of inclusive practice outlined by Tusla, it is recognised that all behaviour must be understood in context. The interpretation and response to behaviour will take account of a pupil's age, stage of development, additional educational needs, and any relevant social, emotional or environmental factors.

Some pupils may require additional support to understand, regulate or meet behavioural expectations. In such cases, the school will take a supportive and differentiated approach, focusing on teaching appropriate behaviour, reinforcing positive choices, and providing appropriate interventions and supports.

Behaviour classifications (Minor, Serious, Gross) are used as a guide only and do not determine automatic responses.

7. Mobile Phones

Children are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school.

Where there is a genuine and agreed need for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school (for example, health, safety or specific family circumstances), a written request must be made by the parent/guardian to the Board of Management and approved in line with [school policy](#).

If permission is granted, the mobile phone must be handed to the class teacher at the beginning of the school day and will be stored securely by the school for the duration of the school day. The phone will be returned to the pupil at home time.

Mobile phones are not permitted to be kept in schoolbags or used at any time during the school day or on school grounds.

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour and may result in the withdrawal of permission and/or further appropriate follow-up with parents/guardians.

8. Bullying

In line with Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, the school is committed to a whole-school, preventative and restorative approach to addressing bullying behaviour.

Bullying is defined as unwanted, intentional or repeated behaviour, including verbal, psychological or physical actions, carried out by an individual or group against another person or persons, which causes harm or distress and impacts on their wellbeing.

The school recognises that bullying is a complex behaviour and focuses on prevention, early intervention, education, and the promotion of positive relationships.

Forms of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- physical aggression
- verbal abuse or name-calling
- Cyberbullying
- damage to property
- intimidation or threats
- exclusion or isolation
- spreading rumours or malicious gossip
- extortion

Bullying may also be based on identity or difference, including:

- Gender
- sexual orientation
- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- disability or additional needs

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of digital technologies to deliberately cause harm, distress or exclusion. This may include the use of mobile phones, messaging platforms, social media or other online tools.

Any online behaviour that impacts negatively on pupils' wellbeing, relationships or learning in school will be addressed under this Code of Behaviour and the school's Bí Cinealta Procedures.

The school promotes safe and responsible use of technology and digital citizenship education as part of its preventative approach.

School Approach (Bí Cineálta Framework)

In line with Bí Cineálta, the school takes a preventative, whole-school and restorative approach to bullying behaviour. This includes:

- promoting a positive and inclusive school culture
- teaching pupils about respectful relationships and online safety
- encouraging early reporting of concerns
- responding promptly, fairly and consistently to incidents
- supporting pupils involved, including those who have experienced and those who have engaged in bullying behaviour
- repairing relationships where appropriate through restorative practices

Serious Concerns and External Reporting

Where behaviour is considered to be potentially abusive or poses a risk to a child's welfare, the school will follow Children First National Guidance (2017) and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Where required, referrals may be made to appropriate external agencies, including Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

9. Suspension

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents/guardians will be utilised. Communication with parents/guardians may be verbal, through meetings, phone calls, email or by letter depending on the circumstances.

The school is committed to responding to behaviour in a fair, supportive and restorative manner. Every effort will be made to support pupils in managing and improving behaviour through early intervention, positive behaviour strategies, restorative approaches, collaboration with parents/guardians and the development of appropriate supports and behaviour plans where necessary.

Suspension

9.1. Definition of Suspension

Suspension is defined as “requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days.”

Suspension is considered a serious sanction and will normally be used only where:

- other interventions and supports have been attempted and reviewed, or
- the behaviour is of such seriousness that immediate suspension is warranted in order to ensure the safety of pupils, staff or others, or to maintain the effective functioning of the school.

The principles of fair procedures, including the right to be heard and the right to impartiality, will apply in all cases.

The following procedures will apply:

- For serious misconduct or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered.
- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil or member of staff will be regarded as serious misconduct.
- Parents/guardians of a pupil will be given an opportunity to respond to an allegation before a decision is made and before a serious sanction is imposed.
- Parents/guardians concerned will be invited to meet with school staff to discuss their child's case. A written record of the meeting may be kept and shared with relevant parties where appropriate.
- Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management may be informed and parents/guardians may be requested in writing to attend a meeting with the Chairperson and Principal.

- Parents/guardians will be asked to work collaboratively with the school to support the pupil in meeting behaviour expectations moving forward.
- Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, taking account of:
 - records of previous behaviour incidents
 - interventions and supports already implemented
 - the context and circumstances of the behaviour
 - the age and developmental stage of the pupil
 - any relevant additional or special educational needs
 - the impact of the behaviour on the school community
- Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.
- In exceptional circumstances, where it is necessary to ensure the safety of pupils, staff or others, the Board of Management delegates authority to the Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending further discussion with parents/guardians.
- Where a decision is taken to suspend a pupil, the Principal will notify the parents/guardians and the pupil in writing of the decision, the reasons for the suspension and the arrangements for returning to school.
- Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to suspend a pupil to the Board of Management.
- Following or during a period of suspension, parents/guardians may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school.
- The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour support plan for the pupil where required and will support the pupil's reintegration into school.
- Where the total number of days for which a pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents/guardians may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

Reintegration Following Suspension

The school will support pupils returning from suspension by:

- meeting with the pupil and parents/guardians prior to return where appropriate
- reviewing behaviour expectations and available supports
- implementing a behaviour support or restorative plan where necessary
- promoting a positive, respectful and supportive fresh start for the pupil

Record Keeping in Relation to Suspension

In the case of the suspension of a pupil, formal written records will be kept of:

- the investigation (including notes of relevant meetings and interviews)
- the decision-making process
- the decision and the rationale for the decision
- the duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension
- any supports or interventions implemented following the suspension

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, including the reasons for and duration of each suspension. The Principal is required to report suspensions in accordance with Education Welfare Service reporting guidelines under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

10. Expulsion

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

Expulsion may be considered only in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour and where the school has taken significant steps to address the behaviour, except in exceptional circumstances where the behaviour poses a serious threat to the safety or wellbeing of others.

The school will ensure that all procedures relating to expulsion are carried out in accordance with:

- the Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- the Rules for National Schools
- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (Tusla)
- the principles of natural justice and fair procedures

Before expelling a pupil, the Board of Management shall notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

10.1. Procedures in Respect of Expulsion

Step 1: Investigation

A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.

In investigating an allegation, in line with fair procedures, the Principal should:

- inform the pupil and his/her parents/guardians in writing about the details of the alleged misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.

- give parents and pupil every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.

Step 2: Recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

The Principal should:

- inform the parents/guardians and the pupil that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ensure that parents/guardians have records of:
 - the allegations against the student
 - the investigation
 - and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as given to the parents and/or guardians
- notify the parents of the date of the hearing by the Board of Management and invite them to that hearing
- advise the parents/guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- ensure that parents/guardians have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

Step 3: Consideration by the Board of Management

Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation; and the holding of a hearing.

The Board will:

- review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.
- undertake its own review of all documentation and the circumstances of the case
- hold a hearing where the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student.
- allow the Principal and the parents/guardians to put their case in each other's presence
- allow each party to question the evidence of other party directly
- ensure that the Principal and parents/guardians are not present for the Board's deliberations

Step 4: Board of Management Deliberations and Actions Following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled, the Board will:

- notify the Educational Welfare Officer (TUSLA) in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion.
- inform the parents/guardians in writing about its conclusions and the next steps in the process.
- inform parents/guardians that the Board of Management is writing to inform the Educational Welfare Officer.
- not expel the pupil before the passage of twenty school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, s24(1)).

Step 5: Consultations Arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

Within twenty days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management of its opinion that a student should be expelled, the Educational Welfare Officer must:

- make all reasonable efforts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parents and the student, and anyone else who may be of assistance
- convene a meeting of those parties who agree to attend (Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 24).

Step 6: Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel.

10.2 Appeals

A parent/guardian may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998. An appeal may also be brought by Tusla on behalf of a pupil.

Review of Use of Expulsion

The Board of Management will review the use of expulsion at regular intervals to ensure:

- its use is consistent with school policy and current guidance
- fair procedures are being followed
- patterns are monitored to identify possible underlying issues
- expulsion is used appropriately, proportionately and only as a last resort

10.3 Pupils with Additional Needs / Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All pupils are expected to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that some pupils, including those with additional needs or special educational needs (SEN), may require additional support in understanding, following and managing behaviour expectations.

The school recognises that behaviour is best understood in context and may be influenced by a range of factors, including a pupil's age and stage of development, communication and learning needs, social, emotional and sensory needs, and personal circumstances or experiences.

In such cases, the school will prioritise understanding the underlying need before considering consequences. Expectations may be adapted where appropriate, and reasonable accommodations and additional supports will be put in place to help the pupil succeed.

Behaviour support may be planned as part of a structured support process, including a Student Support File, Support Plan, Behaviour Support Plan, or other relevant planning framework.

These supports are developed collaboratively with parents/guardians, the pupil (where appropriate), class teachers, Special Education Teachers, Special Needs Assistants, the Principal, and external professionals where necessary.

The school will:

- clearly teach and reinforce expected behaviours
- provide structured routines, supports and accommodations
- use positive, preventative and restorative approaches
- support pupils in developing self-regulation and social skills
- respond to behaviour in a fair, proportionate and supportive manner

The school also recognises that behaviour may arise from unmet needs, including communication difficulties, anxiety, sensory needs, emotional distress or difficulties with self-regulation. These factors will be taken into account when responding to behaviour incidents.

Where appropriate, professional reports and recommendations will be considered in planning and supporting pupil needs.

Pupils may also be supported to develop understanding of difference and to build positive, inclusive relationships that contribute to a safe and respectful school environment for all.

The dignity, wellbeing and rights of every pupil are respected at all times.

Review

This policy was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management in April 2026 to ensure continued compliance with:

- the Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (Tusla)
- Bí Cineálta
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)
- current Department of Education guidance and best practice in supporting positive behaviour, wellbeing and inclusion

The policy will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as required in line with legislative, policy and school developments.

