

St Bernadette's Junior School

Quarryvale, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

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Principal: **Dónal Ward**

Deputy Principal: **Noirin Kenny**

Policy Summary Details:

Policy Title:	Code of Behaviour
Version Number:	5
Written/Adopted Date:	April 2026
Written by:	Board of Management
Date Shared with Staff:	April 13 th 2026
Date Ratified by BOM:	April 24 th 2026
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Code of Behaviour Policy Implementation Date:	April 25 th 2026

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by the staff, pupils, parents and BOM of the St. Bernadette's J.N.S., Quarryvale, Clondalkin, Dublin 22. This behaviour code applies to all pupils in St. Bernadette's J.N.S., including: **those in our Special Class, those with diagnosed special education needs and those in our Early Start Pre-School.**

Rationale

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

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

E. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

In St. Bernadette's J.N.S. we attempt to address co-operation between staff and pupils on a daily basis. Through our school values we provide a harmonious environment and aim to nurture the potential of everyone in the whole school community. We hope that this Code of Behaviour will attempt to continue to develop positive relationships and values which exist in the school and to act as a framework for good behaviour.

Objectives of our Code of Behaviour policy

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To instil and promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school

Content of policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings.

1. School Rules
2. Guidelines for behaviour in the school
3. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour
 - Staff
 - Board of Management
 - Parents
 - Pupils
4. Positive strategies for managing behaviour
 - Classroom
 - Playground
 - Other areas in the school
5. Sanctions
6. Suspensions
7. Expulsion
8. Appeals
9. Keeping records
 - Class
 - Playground
 - School records
10. Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school
11. Reference to other policies

1. SCHOOL RULES

The following is a list of school rules to which all students must adhere to.

Children are not allowed mobile phones in school

Rules for inside the classroom 'Golden Rules'

1. Kind hands, kind feet, kind words
2. Do as you are told when you are told
3. Do your best, and let others do the same.
4. Sit safely and listen well
5. Walk quietly and safely

Rules for the yard

- Obey ALL adults on duty
- Allow others enjoy their break
- Respect the boundaries of the yard and stay within them
- All pupils 'freeze' when they hear the bell and line up after the teacher blows the whistle.
- Walk to the line, line up in an orderly fashion
- Line up until the teacher comes.

Rewards

1. Stars of the month.
2. Certificate Awards
3. Star lines.
4. Golden time.

Sanctions

At the start of every school year and whenever a new pupil is enrolled all teachers will review steps and strategies for regulating emotions when doing inclusionary time out.

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|------|----|--|
| Step | 1. | Pupil given first warning |
| Step | 2. | Pupil given second warning |
| Step | 3. | Pupil will complete an inclusionary time out in classroom |
| Step | 4. | SET will assist pupil with inclusionary time out in support room. Parent will be informed. |
| Step | 5. | Principal will discuss behaviour with parent |

2. Guidelines for behaviour in St. Bernadette's J.N.S.

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the code of behaviour shall specify "the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school".

The standards of behaviour this school wishes to expect from the pupils are as follows:

- We believe that respect in our school is defined by the following examples: Manners and courtesy, listening, politeness, showing respect for difference, conversational skills and knowing when not to interrupt.
- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own belongings
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework and all curricular areas
- Each pupil shows respect for teachers, each other and anybody they come into contact with in the school
- We expect pupils to obey staff instructions
- Expect the pupil to have a positive attitude to school
- Each pupil is expected to have good manners in all areas of the school

3. Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour.

Staff:

We in St. Bernadette's J.N.S. believe that a positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between teachers and the ways in which pupils and teachers treat each other. This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.

In our school we treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff, pupils, and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour.

Examples:

- We have a Positive behaviour code which emphasises good behaviour around the school and in the yard.
- Teachers in our school strongly believe in the benefits of praise and encouragement.
- We operate a Star Of The Month award in each classroom which rewards pupils for good work, behaviour, improvement etc.
- Positive re-enforcement is explicitly promoted through certificate awards.
- Each teacher may also operate his/her own in-class reward schemes.

Throughout the year we strive to improve and maintain our Code of Behaviour in the following ways:

- Discussions at Staff meetings
- Our Code of Behaviour is explained to new parents before their child/children start school.
- Children are taught 'Our Golden Rules' in Junior Infants and revised up through the school.

We believe that all staff should be aware of this Code of Behaviour, including Principal, teachers, secretarial staff, caretaker and special needs assistants. Details of our Code of Behaviour are made available to all staff.

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship. A number of different teaching methodologies are addressed including Circle Time and Co-operative Games.

Board of Management

'The Board of Management has a role to play in the maintenance of desirable standards of behaviour in a school. It should be supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and discipline within the school' (Circular 20/90).

The Board of management of St. Bernadette's J.N.S. has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Code of Behaviour is prepared and revised in line with current legislation.

The Board will be informed of any changes and revisions which may need to be addressed by the principal and/or the teacher rep.

The Board of management has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school and overall responsibility for policies. The Board will play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's responsibilities and ethos.

The Board will ensure that all members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in work and revisions of this code. It will formally record the adoption of the code of behaviour, the commencement date and decisions about when the code will be reviewed.

The Board of Management will also deal with serious breaches of the code by meeting with all parties concerned. A number of strategies may be developed arising from such meetings and these may include suspension and/or expulsion.

The Board of Management has delegated the power to suspend for a maximum of 3 days to the Principal or in their absence the Deputy Principal. With the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, a suspension of 4 or 5 days may be imposed by the Principal or in their absence the Deputy Principal. A suspension in excess of 5 days and for not more than 10 days can only be imposed by the Board of Management.

Parents and their role in discipline

'Evidence seems to indicate that schools which succeed in achieving and maintaining high standards of behaviour and discipline tend to be those with the best relationships with parents'

The following are strategies that will be used in reporting to parents:

- Step 4 or 5
- Teachers will speak directly to parent re: any minor misbehaviour
- Note home for a serious misbehaviour to be signed by the parent.
- Informal meeting before or after school.
- For repeated misbehaviours we invite the parents in for a meeting.
- On a regular basis parents and teachers would meet to monitor the situation. Occasionally children would be invited to attend one of these meetings to encourage ownership of their own behaviour. For serious misbehaviours the principal would attend the meeting.

Parental involvement.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns by firstly making an appointment with the class teacher. If the concern is not resolved an appointment may be made with the Principal, however every effort

should be made to resolve the misbehaviour / issue at class level. If the behaviour/issue cannot be resolved at class level or by the principal, then it may be referred to the Board of Management.

On enrolment every parent is made aware of our code of behaviour and agrees to accept it. Hard copies are available on request.

Parents support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour in the following ways:

- They are aware and cooperate with the school's system of rewards and sanctions
- Ensure children are at school on time
- Attend meetings at the school if requested
- Help children with homework and ensure its completed
- Ensure children have the necessary books and materials for school

Pupils

Pupils in the school play an ongoing part in the implementation of this code in the following ways

- Taking part in School Assemblies where golden rules are emphasised
- Attending and being rewarded at Star Assemblies
- Collecting Certificates for Good Behaviour

Pupils are constantly given opportunities to reflect on the Code of Behaviour through classroom discussions and by observing the rules in action in the class and on the yard.

4. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

'The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place'. (Managing Challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for teachers INTO 2004: 5).

Classroom

Teachers will devise their own reward systems in their classroom. In addition, whole school strategies for promoting positive behaviour will be utilised.

1. Whole school approach of focussing on pupils' good behaviour. Positive behaviour is encouraged through explicit praise and encouragement.
2. Class teacher has 'Golden Rules' displayed and ensures that the children have a good understanding of them.
3. Children are encouraged / rewarded for following the golden rules through 'Certificate Awards' and 'Stars of the Month'.

Certificate Awards

Early Start

If pupil displays positive behaviour a certificate is sent home with the pupil (c. one cert per class per day). The certificate describes the Golden Rule which the pupil exhibited. The pupil also gets a small reward.

Junior Infants to Second Class

If pupil displays positive behaviour a certificate is given to the pupil (c. one cert per class per day). The certificate describes the Golden Rule which the pupil exhibited. Pupils attempt to collect five certificates. One for each 'Golden Rule'. At weekly whole school assembly any child with all five certificates is congratulated and rewarded with a prize from the principal.

Stars of the Month

Senior Infants to Second Class

Pupils are rewarded for sustained good behaviour and application to class work. At monthly Star Assemblies, three stars from each class are rewarded certificates. The certificate explains the reason why the child is a 'Star'. Stars are rewarded at the discretion of the teacher but an effort should be made to ensure that every child is a star at least once in the school year.

Playground(s)

The positive strategies which we as a staff in St. Bernadette's S.N.S. implement to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour are as follows:

- A concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted are developed.
- There are organised activities in ways that will minimise misbehaviour e.g. skipping and painted play zones in the yard.

Supervision

- The arrangements for supervision in the playground are noted on the staff noticeboard and each teacher would have a copy.
- When a teacher changes duty arrangements must be made to have the yard duty covered.
- Teachers on course days /self-certified days / school business must make alternative arrangements for yard cover if they are rostered for that day.

Misbehaviour on the yard

- When incidents of misbehaviour occur, the teacher on duty will report to classroom teacher where necessary.
- If necessary sanctions i.e. Step System will be applied.
- Serious misbehaviours are recorded on pupil's Aladdin file and reported to the principal.
- Persistent misbehaviour may result in the principal discussing the behaviour with the parent.

Wet Days

- The arrangements for wet days are that all pupils stay in their seats and have suitable activities to do.
- The teachers on duty go from class to class whilst supervising ensuring all children are safe and seated.
- When incidents of misbehaviour occur, the teacher on duty will report to classroom teacher where necessary.

Use of the Toilet

Children ask permission from the teacher on duty.

Other areas in the school

The following are examples of positive strategies:

- When in the corridor, pupils will always walk in single file quietly.
- When travelling to Mass, Library, Drama, Science or tours pupils will always walk two abreast quietly.
- Pupils going to Learning Support / Resource or Special Class are collected by the teacher.
- Children are expected to behave in the school hall, act in a safe responsible manner and respect school property

5. Sanctions

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 23, states that a school must outline 'the measures that may be taken if a student fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined'.

See the table below for examples of misbehaviours and sanctions

This list is not exhaustive

Categories	Examples	Sanctions	Who?
Minor Misbehaviours	No homework Not following instructions Interruptions Out of seat on wet days Breaking class rules Repeatedly not wearing proper uniform Not lining up	Verbal warnings Placed on a step Inclusionary Time out (5 mins within class) Inclusionary time out with SET Letter to parent	Class teacher Staff member must inform the class teacher who will deal with the incident.
More Serious Misbehaviours	Repeated minor misbehaviours Bad language Obscene gestures (Verbal or physical) Bad attitude Cheekiness Answering back Questioning authority Vandalism Dangerous behaviour	Placed on a step up to Step 4 note Discuss with parent and get feedback from parent Inclusionary time out with SET	Class teacher/Principal to parent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note • One-to-one meetings if it is repeated

Major Misbehaviours	Repeated more serious misbehaviours	Placed on a step 4 / 5	Teacher
	Leaving the school without permission	No external outings	Parent
	Deliberate bad / foul language	Meeting with parents	BOM
	Intentional vandalism	Suspension	Principal.
	Violence	Expulsion	Chairperson BOM.
	Threatening violence		Have at least two adults to supervise child. Ask parent to collect them immediately.
	Stealing		
	Persistent rule breaking		
	Verbal abuse		
	Bullying...refer to bullying policy.		

6. Suspension

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify... ‘the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned’ and “the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.”(Sections 23(2) c, d)

Grounds for Suspension

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student is responsible for serious damage to property
- The student’s continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety of members of the school community
- The student’s behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education and learning of other students
- A single incident or first offence of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

Examples of such behaviour would include:

- a serious threat of violence against a member of the school community
- actual violence or assault against a member of the school community
- gross defiance
- drug or alcohol offences
- a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour.

This list is not exhaustive.

Prior to receiving their first suspension, a pupil may receive a suspension warning.

Incidences of serious misconduct may also incur the sanction of permanent exclusion following a period of suspension.

Rationale for Suspension

Suspensions can provide a respite for students and the staff, give the student time to reflect on the link between his/her action and its consequences and give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour to meet the school's expectations in the future.

Suspension is most effective when it highlights the parents' responsibilities for taking an active role in partnership with the school in working with their son/daughter to help him/her improve his/her behaviour as required.

The Period of Suspension

If 1 day suspensions do not result in the cessation of behaviour which warrants suspension, the Board of Management may implement 3,5, and possibly 10 day suspensions. A very serious incident may warrant a 3,5 or 10 day suspension without the prior use of a 1 day suspension.

The Board of Management has delegated the power to suspend for a maximum of 3 days to the Principal or in their absence the Deputy Principal.

With the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, a suspension of 4 or 5 days may be imposed by the Principal or in their absence the Deputy Principal.

A suspension in excess of 5 days and for not more than 10 days can only be imposed by the Board of Management.

Additionally, any suspension that would bring the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more must be formally reviewed by the Board of Management. All cases will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management in the Principal's Report.

Procedures in respect of Suspension

Fair procedures will be followed by the school.

The incident will be investigated.

This will usually be a Principal and/or Deputy Principal.

The parents will be given a right of reply.

It will sometimes be necessary to enforce an immediate suspension if a particular incident warrants it.

Grounds for immediate Suspension

- Physical assault on teacher/adult.
- Threatened assault on teacher/adult.
- Blatant verbal abuse of teacher/adult (defiance, cursing.....)
- Physical assault on another pupil.
- Causing intentional damage to school or other property.
- Stealing of teacher/other pupil's property.

Implementing a Suspension

The Principal will notify the parents and the student in writing of the decision to suspend.

The letter will confirm:

1. the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
2. the reason(s) for the suspension
3. the arrangements for returning to school
4. the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management
5. the right to appeal, if appropriate, to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (Education Act 1998, section 29).

Opportunity to Respond

Parents and student will normally be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint before a decision to suspend is made. Ideally this response will be made at a meeting involving the student, his/her parents and the Principal (or in the Principal's absence, the Deputy Principal). If a student and her parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising the parents of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school will record the invitations made to parents and their response. If an immediate suspension is warranted it may not be possible to provide an opportunity to respond prior to the decision to suspend being made.

Procedures for the Re-Introduction of the Student into the School

The parents and the student may be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal or another staff member delegated by the Principal before the student returns to class. The purpose of this meeting is to emphasise the seriousness of the misbehaviour that gave rise to the suspension and to ensure parental support for the school's Code of Behaviour. It is also an opportunity to stress parental responsibility in supporting the school in its efforts to help their son/daughter to behave well when he/she returns to school.

Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction has been completed, the school will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Reporting

The Principal will report all suspensions to the Board of Management, with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension.

The Principal is required to report to the Educational Welfare Officer all suspensions of six days and longer, or any suspension where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days.

7. Expulsion (permanent exclusion)

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, it is the right of a Board of Management to take '...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured.' (Section 24(5)) Essentially this means that the Board of Management has the

authority to expel a student from any setting within the school – this includes those who are in the special class setting and Early Start as well as those in the mainstream of the school.

Expulsion of a student is a very serious step. Prior to considering expulsion, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid the expulsion of a student.

All actions taken regarding expulsion will adhere to the National Educational Welfare Board's guidelines for developing a Code of Behaviour. Should you wish to see those guidelines in detail, they are available at https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

As a matter of best practice, the authority to expel should be reserved to the Board of Management and should not be delegated.

8. Appeals

Where a decision is made by the Principal to suspend a student the parents have the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Management.

If the appeal is heard after the suspension has been implemented and if the appeal is upheld, then the record of the student will not include the suspension.

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year. Accordingly, schools should advise parents of this right of appeal and associated timeframe if it has been decided to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02)

9. Keeping records

A record of all serious misbehaviours and sanctions will be kept and where necessary will be recorded in the Board of Management minutes in an appropriate manner. In addition, the following records will be kept.

Classroom

- Each teacher is expected to maintain a record of positive and negative behaviours on the pupil's file on Aladdin. These records will be deleted upon the completion of second class.
- If there is a child with recognised repeated major misbehaviours, records will be maintained on Aladdin and the teacher for the following year will be informed.

Playground

- Serious misbehaviour in the yard will result in detention. Incidents of detention will be recorded on the pupil's Incident Record on Aladdin. Parents are informed of this detention.
- Step 4 and 5 notes should be filled out by the supervising teacher / class teacher after a serious incident on yard/in school. These will be signed and dated by the parent. This will be recorded in the pupil's Incident Record on Aladdin.

10. Procedures for notification of a pupil's absence from school

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23 (2) (e) states that the code of behaviour must specify, "the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school." Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student's absence and the reason for this absence.

The following are used to encourage school attendance:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment
- System for acknowledging/rewarding good or improved attendance
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximise relevance to pupils
- Adapting the class and school timetables to make it more attractive to attend and to be on time
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- Prizes/certificates at end of year for children on no absences.
- Trophy given to best class in each block at weekly assembly

11. Reference to other Policies

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

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying
- Enrolment
- Home / School links
- Health & Safety and Risk Assessment Policy
- Dignity at work policy
- Special Educational Needs.

Ratification

SIGNED: _____



Dr. Michael Joyce

Chairperson, Board of Management

DATE: _____

24 / 4 / 26

Modification Clause

The management and authorities of St. Bernadette's Junior N.S. reserve the right to modify details of this code of conduct at short notice. Such modification may be needed in an ever - changing environment and social context.