



# **Code of Behaviour for**

## **St. Mary's Boys' National School**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Our school's Code of Behaviour was reviewed and updated in Term 3 2026 in consultation with the Board of Management, teachers, parents and pupils.

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its pupils, staff and parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil;
6. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* has been developed in accordance with '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

*In keeping with the school ethos this policy will promote a positive school climate that will support and promote good behaviour in the provision of a harmonious environment with clear co-operation between staff, parents and pupils. The provision of specific guidelines in this policy will ensure consistency and continuity in practice throughout the school.*

*St. Mary's B.N.S.* has deemed it necessary to review and update our Code of Behaviour to ensure compliance with the following legislation and guidelines:

- Bí Cineálta procedures to prevent and address bullying behaviour for primary and post-primary schools June 2024. These replace the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013.
- Children First National Guidance 2015
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2025.
- Data Protection 1998 -2018 and EU General Data Personal Regulation 2018 (GDPR)

## 2. POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps;

- i. Parents and Staff were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- ii. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and provide feedback where appropriate.
- iii. Policy discussed at staff meetings.
- iv. Pupil focus group with representatives from 3rd - 6th class.
- v. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.

## 3. AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

- 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 promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community by encouraging an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To assist school staff, 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.

## 4. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code. To support and promote good behaviour we will endeavour as a school to include;

- An ethos, policies and practices that are inter-linked.
- A teamwork approach to behaviour
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management
- An inclusive and involved school community

- A systematic process for planning and reviewing our behaviour policy.

## 5. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

### 5.1 Pupils

#### *General Behaviour*

Each pupil is expected to:

- be well behaved and to show consideration and respect for other children and adults
- show respect for the property of the school, other children and their own belongings
- to be honest and fair in their dealings with others
- attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence
- to try and do his best in all areas of school life
- obey the instructions of school staff
- listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice
- show respect for all members of the school community and all school personnel
- 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 or any type of bullying behaviour
- include other pupils in games and activities
- bring correct materials/books to school
- follow school and class rules
- set a good example for other pupils
- accept responsibility for their own personal behaviour and be aware of the consequences of their behaviour
- take pride in their appearance. All students are expected to keep their hair in a neat and clean condition. Long hair must be tied back to minimise outbreaks of head lice within classrooms. Extremes of hair colour and style, as determined by school management, will not be allowed.

**Please note, in the interests of Health and Safety, the wearing of earrings/studs and other body piercings is not allowed.**

#### *Classroom Behaviour*

Behavioural expectations are established in each class that are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the Code of Behaviour and which sets a positive atmosphere for learning. Pupil input is enlisted in devising the class rules. Teachers ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.

Each pupil is expected to:

### *Code of Behaviour*

- listen to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
- work to the best of his ability
- value school property and the belongings of fellow pupils
- follow the direction of his teacher
- obtain his teacher's permission to leave the classroom
- show kindness and help others
- respect the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom
- be honest and tell the truth
- remain in his seat if a teacher must leave the room
- wear his full school uniform/wear school tracksuit on P.E. days.

### ***Playground (Play pitches/School yard) Behaviour***

Each pupil is expected to:

- play safely avoiding any games or play that are rough or dangerous
- follow the directions of the staff on yard duty
- remain on school grounds at all times
- obtain permission before re-entering the school building during break periods
- respect the staff on yard duty and fellow pupils
- avoid swearing, fighting or name calling
- play in their designated area-children are not to be in the playground or field except at playtime or with a class teacher, or with teacher's consent.
- refrain from throwing objects, sticks, stones and kicking
- leave any remaining lunch in the classroom
- refrain from playing in school grounds before or after school
- line up in their proper places immediately when they hear the bell
- allow people join in games
- line up in single file once the bell goes
- stay off the grass

### ***Behaviour in other School Areas***

Each pupil is expected to:

- Walk quietly in the school corridors. No shouting
- Show respect e.g. give way to an adult, hold door open etc
- Be mannerly
- Use bathrooms responsibly

### ***Behaviour during School Outings/Activities***

Each pupil is expected to:

- follow his/her teacher's directions at all times
- remain with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
- behave politely towards those they meet on such trips
- observe the rules of general good behaviour as outlined above during school.

### **5.2 Staff**

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Teachers and other staff members will be actively involved in the reviewing and updating of the code through their expertise and understanding of the links between behaviour and learning, their knowledge of the school and of the school community.

- The Code of Behaviour will be kept on the agenda through formal and informal discussions at staff meetings and when opportunities arise
- New and temporary staff will be informed of school policy and given a copy of the Code of Behaviour by the principal.
- Children with special educational needs who present with behavioural difficulties will have behavioural targets detailed in their Support Plans following consultation with parents and school staff.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

- discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.
- ensure the rules are displayed in the classroom.
- encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.
- ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.
- implement a reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition.
- report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal and notify parents where necessary.
- support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour
- create a safe working environment for each pupil
- recognise and affirm good work and behaviour
- 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
- provide support for colleagues
- communicate with parents when necessary.

The Principal will:

- 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.

### **5.3 Parents/Guardians**

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which produce positive behaviour in school. By involving parents in the development of the Code of Behaviour we will draw on their expectations and insights in an effort to underline their responsibilities for their children's behaviour. On enrolment parents will receive a copy of the school's Code of Behaviour.

Parents can support the school's Code of Behaviour by:

- Encouraging their children to do their best and take responsibility for their work.
- Encouraging participation in all curricular areas.
- Attending meetings at the school if requested.
- Make an appointment through the office if they wish to meet the teacher.
- Helping their children with homework and ensure that it is completed.
- Ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials for school.
- Having a positive and respectful attitude toward the school and staff.
- Encouraging their children to abide by the school rules.
- Alerting their teachers to difficulties they may be experiencing.
- Encouraging punctuality and regular attendance.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork.
- Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, others and for property.
- Cooperating with any home-school behaviour programmes.
- 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 or does not comply with the code.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect their child's progress/behaviour.
- Notify the class teacher of a child's absence and the reason for an absence i.e. by a signed and dated note in the child's homework journal, or in a signed and dated written note. If a parent notifies the school by phone, a written note is still required.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher.

In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents may be invited to participate in the intervention process.

## **6. PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

As a general rule the school will endeavor to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and rewards with the aim of preventing challenging behaviour occurring in the first place. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

Promoting good behaviour at class and at school level may involve the following:

1. Giving students responsibility in the school and involving them in the development of class rules

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2. Making sure they understand why the code is important and their role in making it work
3. They can see that the code works in a fair manner
4. The standards are clear, consistent and widely understood
5. Parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour
6. There are good relationships between teachers, parents and students and a happy school atmosphere
7. Adults model the behaviour that is expected from students
8. Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students
9. Good school and class routines
10. Clear boundaries and rules for students
11. Helping students themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour
12. Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour
13. Discussing with students how people should treat each other
14. Involving students in the preparation of the classroom rules
15. A quiet word or gesture to show approval
16. Achievement stickers or stamps
17. Positive comments on a child's exercise book
18. A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
19. Praise in front of class group
20. Individual star awards
21. Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
22. Written or verbal communication with parent
23. Work displayed

24. Homework pass or reduced homework
25. Class treat or prize

Each class teacher will devise a set of appropriate rules at the beginning of each school year in consultation with the pupils.

## 7. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed. The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be proportionate to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to the age and emotional development of the pupil and also cultural background. Factors influencing the seriousness of the misbehaviour are frequency, duration, severity, persistence of the behaviour and if it is part of an escalating pattern of poor behaviour.

### Level One

#### *Level 1: Behaviours*

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive. Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Disrupting class work by:
  - Talking when teacher or another pupil is talking, interrupting the teacher, shouting out answers, talking over another pupil, talking out of turn
  - Pupil not listening to instructions, fiddling with stationery etc.
  - Laughing/sniggering/sneering at other children, “giddiness” and giggling
  - Making noise, swinging on chairs
  - Getting out of seat or moving around the room without permission
- Carelessness with books and stationery, scribbling/drawing on school books
- Drawing on tables, being careless with another pupil’s property
- Commenting negatively on another pupil’s work
- Excluding others
- Leaving litter in and around the school
- Lack of compliance with school policy on uniform
- Being discourteous or unmannerly

- Name calling
- Throwing objects at peers
- Telling lies
- Gestures of defiance and using bad language
- Unruliness in the classroom or in the hall
- Failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
- Running in the hallways
- Disturbing the work or play of others
- Disrespectful language, tone or manner
- Possession of objects/toys which are deemed distracting or inappropriate by teachers.

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### ***Level 1: Disciplinary Actions***

Consequences for Level 1 behaviours are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at Level 1. Listed below are some examples of Level 1 responses. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

- Verbal reprimand/reminder(s) including advice on how to improve
- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
- Temporary separation from peers, friends or others within class and/or temporary removal to another class
- Prescribing additional work/completion of classwork/writing out what happened at home due to misbehaviour
- Loss of privileges e.g. time out from yard or certain activities
- Supervised detention
- Reflection sheet completed by pupil and signed by parents
- Loss of playtime in yard
- Parent contact
- Behaviour contract
- Time out, either in the classroom or in another room

### ***Level 1 Supportive Interventions***

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

- Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time or class meetings, with the option of informal consultation, (e.g. with parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff members)
- Discussion of behaviour with the child
- Classroom reward system/classroom support plan

- Informal notes regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

## Level Two

### *Level 2: Behaviours*

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and wellbeing of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Disobeying teacher's instructions
- Negative physical contact e.g. pushing, hitting, biting, spitting, kicking, tripping up, pulling hair, punching etc. to another person which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
- Screaming/ shouting at another child/teacher
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property
- Theft
- Deliberate/continued use of profanity
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, family circumstances, gender, religion, physical condition, sexual orientation, disability, or ethnic origin
- Being disrespectful towards the teacher, any member of staff or visitor to the school
- Possession or use of toys or sporting equipment which may be deemed dangerous (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day or leaving the care of school staff and tour instructors during school outings
- Deliberate exclusion of peers
- Spreading rumours/lies about another pupil/member of staff
- Threatening/ intimidating peers
- Bullying – physical, verbal, cyber (Ref: Anti-Bullying Policy)
- Consistently interrupting/distracting others in the class
- Consistently not doing homework
- Refusal to do work assigned
- Refusal to co-operate with the teacher
- Damaging school property
- Misuse of school device in class
- Not disclosing having a mobile phone or other personal electronic device (eg smart watch) in their possession

- Using mobile phones or other personal electronic device on school grounds. It is important to note that taking photographs, videos, audio recordings etc of staff or pupils on such devices is considered a gross breach of our Code of Behaviour.

### ***Level 2: Disciplinary Actions***

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the class teacher/Principal depending on the severity of the incident, and may include the formal notification of parents, with written documentation. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

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- Repetition of Level One disciplinary actions if appropriate
  - In school supervised detention
  - Completion of work in another class
  - Communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s)
  - Inform the Board of Management where appropriate
  - Suspension from school of one to five days, depending on the severity of the behaviour

### ***Level 2: Supportive Interventions***

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

- Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Place the pupil on the Continuum of Support and devise a behaviour management plan.
- Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.
- Referral of a Child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment (with the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent).

## **Level Three**

### ***Level 3: Behaviours***

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal wellbeing of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment. Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention
- Assault on a pupil or member of staff
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Setting fires
- Intentional possession or use of weapons
- Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin
- Consistent bullying of another pupil e.g. emotional, physical, cyber

### ***Level 3: Disciplinary Actions***

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

➤ **Suspension from school for one to five days:**

This response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

➤ **Suspension from school for five to ten days:**

This response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

➤ **Expulsion:**

Repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

## **8. PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS**

### **8.1 Suspension**

#### ***Definition of Suspension:***

*‘requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days’*

‘Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board’

### ***Authority to Suspend:***

The Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* has formally and in writing delegated the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally and in writing delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy. An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the ~~specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board~~ the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

### ***Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension***

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.*, having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

- Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
- or
- Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property
- or
- Leaving the school without permission during the school day.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected. In no circumstance will a student be

sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will issue in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

- the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
- interventions to prevent a reoccurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

#### ***Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:***

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply:

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of *St. Mary's Senior B.N.S.* will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed:

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- ii. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- iii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

## 8.2 Expulsion

### ***Definition of Expulsion:***

*'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'*

'Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board'

### ***Authority to Expel:***

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

### ***Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:***

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

- a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required).

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s):

- o Details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- o An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond.

- b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management.

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

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

- i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of:
  - o the allegations against the student
  - o the investigation
  - o written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion
- iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

- c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing:

- i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing
- ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management
- iii. that they may, if they so choose, be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that:

- i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures
- ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence
- iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party
- iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & 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:

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- i. Will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.
- ii. Will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
- iii. Will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
- iv. Will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
- v. Will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) 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 will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of St. Mary's B.N.S. acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

## 9. NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence:

- The school should be notified of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher
- The absence should be notified by using Aladdin Connect
- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.

The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer in writing where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more, where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year, where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register.

## 10. RECORDS

The school BoM is a *data controller of personal data* relating to its past, present and future staff, students, parents/guardians and other members of the school community. All such data is treated in accordance with the Data Protection legislation and the terms of our Data Protection Policy.

Data relating to individuals will only be processed in a manner consistent with the purposes for which it was gathered. Information will only be disclosed on a 'need to know' basis, and access to it will be strictly controlled.

In line with the school's policy on record keeping and data protection legislation, records are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour both at class and school level. These records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Records of an individual pupil's behavior may contain:

- Incidents of misbehaviour,
- Interventions used to improve behaviour, including contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) or referral to other agencies
- Evidence of improved behaviour
- Any sanctions imposed, and the reasons they were imposed

## 11. BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of Behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* has adopted a Bí Cineálta Policy within the framework of the school's overall Code of Behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published by the Department of Education & Skills in June 2024. This policy is given to all new parents of the school and is available to view by request. Our Bí Cineálta Policy is also available on our school website [www.ferrybankbns.ie](http://www.ferrybankbns.ie)

## 12. COMMUNICATION

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This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

## 13. SUCCESS CRITERIA


- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils

## 14. IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

This policy will be implemented upon ratification and will be reviewed every two years or as the need arises.

## 15. POLICY RATIFICATION

The policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management of *St. Mary's B.N.S.* at its meeting held on 18th June 2026.

Signed:  Date: 18/06/2026  
Chairperson, Board of Management

