



ST. BRENDAN'S COLLEGE, KILLARNEY, CO. KERRY.

# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

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Ratified by the Board of Management

July 2014

## St. Brendan's College

### Code of Behaviour

#### The Philosophy of our Code of Behaviour

St. Brendan's College is a school community of students, teachers and ancillary staff, parents/guardians and past-pupils, that fosters an ethos centred on positive relationships and seeks the development of the potential of each member of the community.

This code gives priority to the promotion of good behaviour, affirming that behaviour, and thereby creating and sustaining the environment for effective teaching and learning.

We hold the highest expectations of all members of this community. This code outlines these expectations. Central to this code is the knowledge that students' behaviour can change. The code seeks to outline strategies, goals, motivation and incentives to support a student in managing his/her behaviour

This code also clearly outlines our response to behaviour which undermines the positive climate of our college. The code seeks to involve students, teachers and parents in the process of managing behaviour which hinders the promotion of positive teaching and learning.

All members of this community have a right to be safe and respected. This code of behaviour is our policy supporting these key rights and an outline of the strategies and sanctions which serve to promote these rights.

#### General Principles underpinning our Code of Behaviour

This Code of Behaviour has been developed by staff, students, parents and the Board of Management of St. Brendan's College in consultation with the National Education Psychological Service, the Education Welfare Officer and the National Behaviour Support Service, to support a positive, expectations-led, teaching and learning environment for all members of the school community. The document is developed under the guidance of the **Mission Statement** of the College

*St Brendan's College, Killarney, is a Non-Selective, Diocesan, Secondary School with a Board of Management. It is a vibrant community of Students, Staff, Parents and Management, founded on the Christian values of justice, truth and honesty which permeate all aspects of school life and in which the participants find fulfilment.*

*The school, while conscious of its bountiful heritage, recognises the need for professional development to meet the challenges of a changing world.*

*The school aspires*

*To develop the whole person, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural and physical.*

*To promote academic excellence to the full potential of each student.*

*To equip students with life-skills and develop leadership qualities.*

*To foster the ideals of gender equity and equality of opportunity.*

*To inculcate good standards of behaviour and respect for one another.*

*in a well ordered, supportive and caring environment.*

*While respecting the conscience and convictions of each member of the School Community, the education given in this college promotes a sense of identity enriched by an awareness of its Catholic tradition.*

It also complies with the legislative framework in relation to the framework of-

The Education Act 1998  
The Education Welfare Act 2000  
The Equal Status Act 2000  
The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005  
Education for Persons with Special Education Needs 2004

This Code of Behaviour is also guided by '*Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools*' published by the National Education Welfare Board.

In accordance with Section 23 of the *Education (Welfare) Act 2000*, responsibility for this Code of Behaviour rests with the Board of Management.

In accordance with Section 23.2 of the *Education (Welfare) Act*, this code will specify the standard of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending St. Brendan's College, the reward systems to promote and reinforce the positive measures that may be taken when a student fails to observe those standards, the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or excluded from the College, the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student and the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from the College.

A positive partnership between all members of the school community is essential to the operation of the code and the full support of parents is required in upholding the code.

In accordance with *Section 23.4 of the Education (Welfare) Act* and the *College Admissions Policy*, parents or guardians of students and/or students who have reached their majority must accept the Code of Behaviour as a condition of enrolment in the school. The appropriate form must be signed and returned to the school authorities as directed.

### **The Scope of our Code of Behaviour**

The expectations set out below apply when the students are on the school premises, while on trips or outings, when engaged in extra-curricular activities or when attending functions organised by the school. School tours are regarded as an extension to the school curriculum and as such are subject to the Code of Behaviour.

In circumstances other than the above, if school management is made aware of student behaviour which does not adhere to the expectations outlined in this code, management may consult with the parent/guardians of the student.

## 1. Reinforcing Positive Behaviour

### Introduction

The Code of Behaviour has been developed at St. Brendan's to promote and support positive behaviour in the school community. Positive behaviour is defined as behaviour which supports the teaching and learning environment, which adds to a sense of community and/or emphasises the sense of respect at the heart of the College Mission. In accordance with the NEWB Guidelines this document seeks to build a culture of positive expectation, devising systems of praise and reward to inculcate the positive.

#### 1.1 Merit Cards

The Merit Card provides a method whereby staff at St. Brendan's can validate the good behaviour of students. This policy suggests the following reasons for awarding a Merit Card to a student.

- Considerable voluntary effort outside of class time.
- Students who show exceptional concern for other students and teachers.
- Students who demonstrate a high degree of co-operation, responsibility and school spirit.

#### 1.2 Progress Cards

Progress Cards may be awarded to students who show a marked improvement in work, attendance and/or behaviour in order to reinforce and promote continued improvement.

#### 1.3 Attendance Cards

Attendance Cards are rewarded each term to students with perfect attendance as recorded in the official register of the school. They are posted to the students' parents

#### 1.4 Positive Student System- School Journal Achievement Page

A *Positive Comment Record* page is included in the Student Journal which can be accessed by all staff. A **Positive Student Award** may be recorded therein. In particular this initiative is targeted at Junior Cycle students. Staff is encouraged to record Awards and send a student to the Positive Behaviour weekly meeting to record the validation. In a neatly maintained Student Journal, these achievements will lead to vouchered rewards.

#### 1.5 Awards systems

An annual Awards system serves to recognise the merits of being a positive member of the school community. These Awards, in May each year will serve to recognise pupils, past and present for excellence in a breadth of areas of endeavour in school life

#### 1.6 Hidden Heroes System

The Hidden Heroes Awards are letters and certificates of commendation issued to students who work quietly and effectively, without seeking reward or attention, in their engagement with their education.

#### 1.7 Reflection Sheets and follow up

Reflection Sheets may be used by teachers to encourage students to reflect on their behaviour, enabling them to participate actively in the process of modifying their own behaviour. The intention is to encourage students to evaluate the behaviour engaged in and to understand why they are using such behaviour. This sheet can be used instead of or in conjunction with a sanction. Reflection sheets are also used in the context of the Anti-

bullying policy to assist in resolving situations. The Reflection Sheet will be sent home to allow parents/guardians assist their son/daughter engage in the reflective process.

**1.8 Referral to pastoral care system**

Where it is deemed suitable and necessary for students, a member of the pastoral care team of the College will contact parents/guardians regarding pastoral support.

**1.9 Mentoring programmes (teacher/community/peer)**

The school operates various mentoring programmes, supporting student academic, emotional or behavioural needs as identified.

**1.10 Positive Behaviour Reinforcement Team**

This team will co-ordinate the positive initiatives ensuring a focus on reinforcing good behaviour in the school.

**1.11 Behaviour Report Cards**

The Behaviour Report Card is designed to cultivate and reinforce good classroom behaviour. A student, returning from a Suspension or whose behaviour has been significantly out of step with behaviour expectations as outlined in this Code, may be put on report. The student presents the card to each teacher at the beginning of each class period and thereby receives immediate feedback on his/her behaviour for that class. The student's progress can then be evaluated by the staff member assigned. The report card will also be signed by the parents or guardians in order to reinforce its significance.

**1.12 Attendance Reports**

Attendance Report Forms can be issued by Year Head or Deputy Principals to students who have absented themselves from class on previous occasions.

As regular attendance is vital component of good academic performance, an award for attendance will also be given at the Awards Night.

**1.13 Individual Behaviour Support Planning**

When required, an IBP will be put in place to support the behaviour of a particular student.

**1.14 Induction Days**

Induction is a gradual process, allowing students prepare for their next phase of their education. Throughout life in St. Brendan's students will be involved in a number of induction events;

- As a new entrant into 1<sup>st</sup> year following the enrolment procedure while the student is in 6<sup>th</sup> class
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year Subject Option Information Evenings
- At the beginning of Transition Year
- At the beginning of 5<sup>th</sup> Year in preparation for Senior Cycle.

Induction will focus on developing student awareness of the practical requirements and the relevant supports pertinent to the particular year. It will focus on easing and reassuring the students in the transition into each new programme.

**1.15 Year Group Behaviour Charter**

In conjunction with the Year Head, the SPHE teacher and the class tutors, a year group Behaviour charter will be drawn up based on this code and adopted by all students in the

year group. This will be set out in sign-format and displayed in the classrooms. The agreed charter will be written into the students journals and signed by the students.

**1.16 Teaching Positive Behaviour**

Each member of staff has a role to positively model the behaviour and life skills they wish students to develop. A mutually respectful classroom improves the teaching and learning environment for all. The teaching of positive and appropriate behaviour is given specific emphasis in SPHE classes. Senior school students may also be invited to work with Junior classes in order to guide and mentor the development of an understanding of appropriate behaviour in school.

**1.17 Voucher Reward System**

Management, in conjunction with the Parents' Council will develop a bank of appropriate vouchers/tickets/tokens for distribution as concrete rewards for use by Year Heads. This system is used to emphasise positive behaviour concerning uniform, attendance, class tidiness, class behaviour and particularly in the context of an IBP. The Positive Student system in the Journal will serve as a concrete means by which the Reward system is applied.

**1.18 Positive Behaviour Leaflet**

In conjunction with staff, students and parents, an agreed Positive Behaviour Leaflet for St. Brendan's College is being developed which outlines the expected behaviours to create a positive and supported teaching and learning environment.

**1.19 Assemblies**

Assemblies are held at the beginning of each half term with each year group. College expectations will be reinforced and positive behaviours will be rewarded. In particular Year Heads and school management utilise Assemblies as an opportunity to reiterate an aspect of the College Mission or the Year Theme. The Head Prefect and the Year Captains will also engage in promoting positive initiatives at Assemblies

## **2. Behaviour Support Structures, Procedures & Sanctions**

### **Introduction**

Behaviour support structures, procedures, rewards and sanctions used in the College are designed to support students in behaviour modification. The outlined structures offer staff a graded series of procedures intended to improve behaviour throughout the College. It is intended that these support structures act to maintain the highest standard of behaviour in the College and to allow a graded intervention when behaviour falls outside the expected parameters

The staff at St. Brendan's College is further supported through external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Services, TUSLA (Child and Family Agency), Health Service Executive, Education Welfare Officer and Community Gardaí. The relationship with external agencies is mutually supportive. Engagement is based on a model of support for the whole school community, the needs of a minority of students and the particular needs of individual students as required.

### **2.1 Learning for Life**

It is an important lesson for life to realise that striving to achieve expectations and setting high standards for oneself will bring rewards. Students who consistently support the expectations and responsibilities outlined in the code will be rewarded in line with our Ladder of Reward (2.4 below).

Breaches of rules and expectations carry negative consequences. Infringements of the Behaviour Code are graded as follows;

- "An Incident" (reported to the Year head on a Behaviour Management Memo) 4 memos lead to an Evening Detention.
- "A Serious Offence"- (reported on a Behaviour Management Memo – this level of misbehaviour leads to an Evening Detention) 4 detentions may lead to a Suspension.
- "A Grave Offence" (suspension or expulsion) in increasing order of seriousness.

This Behaviour Code identifies a hierarchy of response which a teacher may use to effect change in the behaviour of a student. This Ladder of Sanction will be accessed at a level appropriate to the infringement.

### **2.2 Persistent Misbehaviour**

Students who engage in persistent misbehaviour will be referred to the Behaviour Support Team (Year Hear & (Deputy) Principal) for the year group in question, who will review the student's conduct and make a decision as to the best course of action.

### **2.3 Individual Behaviour Plans**

An Individual Behaviour Plan will be developed by the Behaviour Team for a student who continues to behave in a manner deemed inappropriate following a number of interventions. An IBP will be designed to respond to specific behaviour concerns; it will state expectations and will be co-signed by the student's parent/guardians. The IBP will also outline a period after which a review of the student's behaviour will take place and the possible sanctions, should behaviour not improve.

### **2.4 Ladder of Reward**

The community at St. Brendan's seeks to actively reward students. Positive behaviour is reinforced through the application of a series of rewards. In the delivery of such rewards a teacher employs his/her professional discretion in deciding the most appropriate method to

be used. Staff is encouraged to utilise the full range of rewards available in supporting positive behaviour in school:

- Verbal praise
- Use of journal note
- Use of Intercom or Assembly citation
- Progress Card
- Merit Card
- Hidden Heroes citation
- Notification to Year Head
- Notification to Positive Behaviour Reinforcement Teacher
- Notification to Awards Committee

## 2.5 **Ladder of Sanction**

Sanctions are applied in a systematic fashion. They are applied in accordance with a graded system, dependent on the defined seriousness of the negative behaviour. Application of a sanction is determined by the seriousness of the incident, its context and the particular abilities of the student concerned. All sanctions are applied in a restorative, formative manner, with the goal of developing a student's understanding at its core. Sanctions are never a punitive end in themselves. Where the welfare of others is a factor, the application of a sanction may be motivated by the need to protect the rights of the majority. Sanctions will only be applied to the identified individual(s).

Within St. Brendan's, effecting modification to negative behaviour is addressed by the implementation of the ladder of sanction. Depending on the level of misbehaviour and the response to initial strategies, a member of staff uses his/her professional discretion in deciding the most appropriate course of action. A serious or grave offence may require immediate application of an appropriately weighted intervention. This hierarchy of response begins with:

- Verbal intervention
- Use of classroom strategies
- Use of Keyword sheets
- Use of journal notes system
- Use of generic post home notes
- Use of Lunch Time Detention/loss of privilege/confiscation of item as per code
- Memo to Year Head – Behaviour Management Memo
- Detention Notice
- Use of Reflection Process/Restorative Practices
- Behaviour and/or Pastoral Support Team intervention
- Use of Community Service options (if deemed appropriate)
- Individual Behaviour Plan
- Suspension
- Report Card
- Board of Management intervention
- Exclusion

## 2.6 **Behaviour Support Teams**

A Behaviour Support Team will exist for each year group, consisting of the Year Head and the (Deputy) Principal. The Behaviour Support Teams will administer the behaviour code for the respective year group. Each Behaviour Support Team will meet once a week to deal with issues arising in the management of behaviour within the particular year group.

Referral to the Behaviour Support Team will be at the discretion of the Year Head and will normally occur in the case of three or more repeat offences, or in the case of a serious or grave offence.

2.6 a Interpretation and application of this Code of Behaviour is a matter for the Behaviour Support Team and/or the Principal or Deputy Principals. An appeal of a decision of the Behaviour Support Team or the Principal or Deputy Principals can be made, as outlined below (Section 8.2).

2.6 b In the case of a serious or grave offence or a disputed offence, the Behaviour Support Team, having been notified of the alleged offence, shall interview the student as soon as practicable, following notification of the alleged offence. The student, at the interview, shall be notified of the allegations and shall be given a full opportunity to comment on the allegations made. The Behaviour Support Team, following such an interview, shall determine whether the student has committed a serious or grave offence and, should this be the case, shall apply the appropriate behaviour management procedures outlined in the code.

2.6 c The Behaviour Support Teams will have authority to make recommendations regarding particular students or incidents to the Principal. The Teams have the authority to recommend suspension to the Principal. Only the Principal or Acting Principal may suspend a student.

As a consequence of the weekly meeting, the Teams will liaise with the Positive Behaviour Reinforcement Teacher or Year Head to ensure that students whose actions are positive and noteworthy are acknowledged in a formal manner.

The Teams will also liaise with the Pastoral Care Team in the College and refer individual students to the Pastoral Care Team for support or counselling. The Pastoral Care Team will process all referrals for counselling, including the obtaining of parental consent for support or counselling, in accordance with the College's Pastoral Care Policy.

## 2.7 **Lunch time Detention /Community Service**

Lunch time detention or community service may be utilised by Year Heads as a sanction for persistent low level breaches of the code of behaviour including:

- Persistent lateness at morning or afternoon lessons.
- Persistent failure to bring required materials, texts.
- Persistent failure to wear full uniform
- Persistent low level disruption
- Persistent failure to meet deadlines regarding project work.

"Persistent" is defined as the ongoing failure or refusal to modify behaviour despite three or more interventions by staff.

Lunch time detention/community service is normally applied to a student on the day of the incident. At the discretion of the Behaviour Support Team for the specific year, having taken cognisance of the nature of the offence for which he/she is detained, a student may be put on lunch time community service clean-up duty. This community service activity may occur for engagement in any littering, graffiti or low level act of vandalism.

## 2.8 **Evening Detention**

Supervised evening detention will take place for an hour once a week at a time after the normal hours of school to be determined by the staff. Administered by the Behaviour Support Teams, Principal or Deputy, students will be detained for four reported Incidents or

one serious offence. Advance notice of detention will be given to the parents or guardians by letter so that arrangements can be made to collect students.

Parents of students who fail to attend for detention, without prior explanation or arrangement, will be contacted by the school authorities to discuss this grave offence for which suspension will be imposed.

If a student has been detained three times within the period of an academic year and then receives a fourth behaviour management memo, the sanction of suspension is imposed automatically.

## 2.9 Homework Detention

1. Should a student be unable to complete a homework assignment, a Parent/Guardian should write a brief note to the teacher. Where no explanation is given teachers will record the non-completion of homework in the student's Homework Journal. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should discuss this serious matter with the student and sign the Journal.
2. Should a student again fail to complete homework without explanation (again recorded in the Journal) on two further occasions then the student's name is placed on the STAFFROOM DETENTION LIST and the student attends the study hall until 3:40 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon as a sanction. The teacher involved will use the generic letter to inform parents.
3. This detention is a time where students will be asked to do *catch up* work given **by teachers** in order to complete missed assignments

## 2.10 Restorative Practices

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy, where the Behaviour Support Teams deem it appropriate, they will utilise Restorative Practices to help students who engage in negative, hurtful and/or offensive behaviour take responsibility for their actions, understand the consequences of their behaviour and restore a positive relationship with those affected by their actions.

Mediation between pupils, giving opportunity for reflection, acknowledging what has happened, what harm has been done and what can be done to put it right, apologising and finally agreeing a way forward is at the heart of this practice.

Where a student has a particular or sensitive concern he/she should always approach his/her Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, a staff member that they trust or a member of Management.

### 3. General Behaviour Expectations

#### Introduction

All members of the school community of St. Brendan's College are expected to show respect and courtesy for each other- students, staff, parents and visitors - within the school, while outside school grounds at lunchtime and while on work experience, extracurricular (including school tours) or representative activities. It is our expectation that all members of St. Brendan's College will consciously uphold the good name of the College.

It is our expectation that:

- 3.1 Students must show care at all times for their own property, for property of teachers and other students, books, desks and all equipment of the school.
- 3.2 Students are responsible for their own property and must ensure that it is secure at all times. Students should have their name on their school bags, schoolbooks and other property.
- 3.3 Students must use their own designated toilets only with permission of their teacher and never between classes. A Permission Pass must be signed in the School Journal. Each student must have his/her Journal with him at all times.
- 3.4 In order to be organised for class, and to minimise disruption of their own teaching and learning, students will only use lockers in the morning before assembly, and during mid-morning break and lunchtime and again in the evening.
- 3.5 All students are expected to take care of their school environment, ensuring, by taking personal responsibility, that the school, its environs and class rooms remain litter free.
- 3.6 In the interests of health and safety and in order to maintain an orderly teaching and learning environment, each student is expected to be in class unless he/she has permission from his/her teacher using the Permission to Leave Class section of the College Journal
- 3.7 At break-time students must circulate in the assigned area for their year group:
  - 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year in General Purpose Area
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> Year in Canteen
- 3.8 Students should queue for canteen/tuck shop services in an orderly fashion, mindful of the welfare of others and in co-operation with those supervising.
- 3.9 It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to ensure that an ethos of mutual respect be fostered and that the health, dignity and personal safety of all members of the school community be maintained. In particular respectful language is always the expectation between members of this school's community.
- 3.10 Possession of and/or circulation of any indecent, degrading or socially objectionable material is forbidden in school.
- 3.11 It is our expectation that the teaching-learning environment be free from distraction. As mobile phones and mobile electronic devices (MEDs, iPods, MP3 players etc) disrupt student concentration and may be used to impinge upon the dignity and/or privacy of other members of the school community, **the use of mobile phones is banned in school and in the**

**school grounds from arrival time in the morning until school finishes. (This includes use of the phone at break and lunchtime on school grounds) On a first occasion the device will be withheld for a period of five days (it may be collected by a parent on a first occasion by calling to the office) On a second or a subsequent occasion the device will be held for five days (a parent/guardian may collect the device after three days)** St. Brendan's accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to any MED.

Students may receive messages or make telephone calls from the office during school hours in exceptional or emergency cases.

Students who engage in behaviour whilst involved in activities indirectly related to St. Brendan's College (which has a direct negative impact on the school) may be sanctioned by the management in accordance with the expectations outlined in this policy.

#### **4. Class Behaviour Expectations**

##### **Introduction**

**While teaching and learning occurs throughout a student's school day, primary learning takes place in the classroom in a partnership between staff and students. By taking personal responsibility for behaviour, students commit to a positive teaching and learning environment in each classroom. It is our expectation that students will be positive and task oriented in class, promoting the student's own learning and the learning of others and also serving to assist the teacher in his/her role. In relation to assigned work, it is our expectation that students understand the importance of homework as a critical reinforcement of classroom learning.**

Therefore it is our expectation as a school community that:

- 4.1 Students will be on time for class
- 4.2 Students will take responsibility for their own learning by bringing the correct text books and materials, endeavouring to complete all tasks in class to the best of their ability.
- 4.3 Students will have their St Brendan's College Journal with them at all times. In order to support organised learning, students must record all homework, written and oral, in the Journal.
- 4.4 Students will participate and engage with the activities of the class, cooperating fully with the teacher's directions at all times.
- 4.5 Students will be respectful of the rights of other students, especially the right of the students to learn and the teacher's right to teach in an environment free from distraction.
- 4.6 Students will endeavour to complete homework tasks, assigned in class, to the best of their ability, and will be supported by parents in facilitating this important work.
- 4.7 Students may only eat at break or lunch-time. Should a student wish to rehydrate, he/she may do so with the permission of his/her teacher at the end of class (from a bottle no larger than 500ml) At all other times bottles must be stored in a student school bag or locker

## 5. Health and Safety Expectations

### Introduction

**As a College which offers our students a broad range of healthy activities and options and seeks to educate our students towards making health-promoting life choices, we seek to organise our school community in a manner which protects the health, safety and welfare of all. Through the curricular and extracurricular programme, and in conjunction with parents, these options are presented to our community. All members of our school community are entitled to teach and learn in an area devoid of unnecessary health and safety risk.**

- 5.1 It is our expectation that all students will be vigilant at all times so as to ensure their own health & safety, the safety of the other members of the school community or any visitors to the school and the safety of all property therein.
- 5.2 It is our expectation that each member of the school community will act in a manner which promotes the dignity of all members of the community.  
Anti-social acts against any member of the school community such as bullying, intimidation, extortion, rough conduct, harassment (because of gender, marital status, family status, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation) teasing and exclusion are not acceptable in the context of a school which promotes the dignity of each individual in our College. Breach of this rule may be handled in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy in the school. Any act of assault or violence against any member of the school community will be considered a grave offence.
- 5.3 It is our expectation that students and staff will uphold the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002 in relation to cigarette smoking which is illegal on school premises.  
Section 47(b) of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002 states that fines of up to €3,000 can be incurred by persons smoking in a prohibited area. Such an action will be considered a grave offence. E-cigarettes or such devices are prohibited on the grounds of the school. E-cigarettes will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian.
- 5.4 It is our expectation that students will uphold the Misuse of Drugs Act 1984, and the Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Act 2010 in relation to possession, consumption, inhalation or otherwise taking of drugs or alcohol or any harmful substances.  
Any attempt to encourage or involve others in such activities is strictly forbidden. Breach of this rule will be considered to constitute a grave offence. (*c.f. the school Substance Abuse Policy for a full account of procedures in relation to the use/abuse of controlled substances.*)
- 5.5 In the interest of the welfare of all, students must only use equipment and materials as directed, especially in the Specialist Rooms (Science Labs, Woodwork Room, Art Room, P.E. Facilities) where Health and Safety of all is of particular concern. This also applies to Agricultural Science, Biology and Geography Field Trips, or attendance at any event organised by the College.
- 5.6 Students are expected to be conscious of the welfare of others while moving between classes and at break times, and while on the school grounds. In the interests of safety, students are requested to walk on the right hand side of the corridor at all times and to move with special care and in the designated direction on the stairwells.

- 5.7 It is our expectation that students will in no way interfere with fire extinguishers or the fire alarm system which would be consider a grave offence.
- 5.8 It is our expectation that students will not bring any potentially dangerous implements or objects (as determined by the school authorities) onto the school grounds or with them while on extracurricular or representative activities.
- 5.9 In the interest of health, safety and hygiene, students must only eat in the designated areas. (The GP area or the canteen) (No eating in the locker areas)
- 5.10 In the interest of the school environment, students are expected to use the appropriate bins for all items of litter.
- 5.11 Bicycles may only be locked to the bicycle racks provided.
- 5.12 All students who wish to drive to school must present to the Principal/Deputy Principal his/her full driving licence and written parental consent. Please also include make, model and car registration in the letter of consent.

**Any student taking a lift from another student must have a written consent from his/her parent/guardian in advance of such an arrangement.**

**No student may use their car at lunch time without the expressed permission of the Year Head or a member of Management.**

Students must travel to all open days, matches or school events in the transport provided by St. Brendan's College. No student may use private or public transport in such a situation. A maximum speed limit of 15 kms per hour must be observed by all members of the school community and due care must be observed for all pedestrians and cyclists on College grounds. Pedestrians are asked to use the pedestrian gate at the New Road entrance.

## 6. Punctuality and Attendance Expectations

### Introduction

At St. Brendan's College, we are extremely mindful of the strong correlation between attendance, punctuality and academic achievement. It is our expectation that each student will understand the importance of regular attendance at school and at each lesson as a fundamental element of the education process. It is our expectation that students will have a clear understanding of the NEWB requirements concerning attendance.

It is also our expectation that students understand that punctuality minimises disruption, contributes to effective management of health and safety in the school environment and is critical in promoting a positive teaching and learning setting. Punctual attendance is a matter of personal responsibility for each student.

It is our expectation that:

- 6.1 Students will be in school at least ten minutes before school begins in the morning and at the end of lunchtime each afternoon. This allows a student be organised for the next set of lessons and to arrive punctually for each class.
  - 6.2 Students will cooperate fully with staff as they encourage students on corridors and locker and toilet areas to arrive for class promptly
  - 6.3 Students move promptly between classes and must arrive punctually at each lesson.
  - 6.4 Students must make every effort to maximise attendance- for example-appointments (with doctors/dentists/physiotherapists etc) should be outside of school hours if possible. Repeat Sixth Year students must be in attendance for the mandatory school day as defined by the timetable.
- 6.5 a Withdrawal by a parent- procedures when a student is absent for a period during the day**

Where a student must leave the College during tuition time,

- I. **written permission is required from a parent/guardian**
- II. **This must be signed by the Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Head. (An appointment card may also apply)**
- III. **The pupil should then proceed to the office to sign the 'sign out sheet', await collection by parent who co-signs the "sign out sheet" in the presence of a member of staff**
- IV. **On returning to the school, students must sign back in at the office.**

**Where a student absents himself from the school without the knowledge and permission of the Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal and the written permission of a parent/guardian, he will be in grave breach of the Code of Behaviour. An automatic 1 day suspension will be imposed. Repetition of this behaviour will lead to a more serious sanction.**

Where a student absents himself from class without the permission of the teacher/Year Head, Deputy Principal or Principal a 1-day suspension will be imposed.

6.5 b Where a student leaves the school grounds by climbing over the boundary wall he will be in grave breach of the Code of Behaviour on health and safety grounds and will be subject to a suspension.

**6.6 Withdrawal by a staff member**

Where a student is withdrawn from class by a member of staff, the class teacher will be given a written explanation for the student's absence from class by the person who withdraws the student from class.

**6.7 Student absence from school for a day or longer**

On return to school after an absence of a day or more a student must present a note of explanation to the school office signed and dated by parent(s)/guardian(s).

*Procedures in this section are established to comply with the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Section 18 imposes a duty on parents to inform the school of the reasons where a child is absent from the school during part of a school day or for a school day or for more than a school day. Under section 21(1) of the said act, the school is obliged to keep a record of attendance for each student for each school day which must specify the reasons for any absence. Pursuant to section 21 (4) of said act where the aggregate number of school days on which a student is absent is not less than 20 or where a student, in the opinion of the Principal, not attending school regularly, the Principal is obliged to so inform, by notice in writing, an Educational Welfare Officer.*

**6.8 Procedures when a student arrives late to school**

On arriving late to school, a student must report to the office and must register at the office. Students are expected to hand in a note signed by a parent or guardian explaining the reason for the late arrival. **Failure to register attendance will be deemed a grave act as it undermines the accuracy of the Official College Register**

**6.9 Procedures at lunchtime**

All Junior Cycle students are expected to remain within school bounds. Transition Year, fifth and sixth year students must behave appropriately at all times while off campus and must return to the College five minutes prior to class resumption. Failure to abide by this expectation will lead to the withdrawal of this privilege.

**6.10 Visiting St. Brendan's**

All visitors to the College campus must first sign-in at the Reception area where he/she will receive the required Visitor's Badge.

All contact with staff and/or students must occur through the College Reception. Under no circumstances may a visiting person access any area of the College campus without staff accompaniment.

## 7. Uniform and Appearance Expectations

### INTRODUCTION

The wearing of the College uniform promotes respect for self and one's peers. Wearing the St. Brendan's College uniform serves to increase a sense of community and identity. While in uniform our students represent the College community, we expect our students to be aware of the proud educational heritage of St. Brendan's. This awareness should be reflected in the respect shown to the uniform. Please refer to the Appendix in the Code of Behaviour which outlines the complete uniform as required

- 7.1 It is our expectation that all students will wear the official St. Brendan's College uniform in school, at lunchtime and on extracurricular school trips (unless otherwise indicated by the organising staff members) Uniform is to be worn without modification at all times. All students are expected to wear the St. Brendan's College jacket as part of the uniform.
- 7.2 Out of respect for themselves and others in the community, students must present themselves in a neat and tidy manner in terms of dress and appearance. Wearing any form of piercing-earring/facial etc is prohibited while at school.
- 7.3 All students are expected to keep their hair in a neat and clean condition. (The management of the school reserve the right to set standards appropriate to the culture of St. Brendan's College in this regard)

## 8. Suspension Procedures

8.1 The purpose of suspending a student from the College is to provide the student with time for reflection, to emphasise the seriousness of specific misbehaviours and to give staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour.

8.1 a The Board of Management has delegated authority to the Principal to suspend a student for a period up to and including three days. If a suspension for longer than three days is being proposed the matter must be referred to the Board. In such a case, having sought approval from the Chairperson of the Board, the Principal may suspend for up to five days to allow for time to convene a meeting of the Board of Management. The Board will not normally impose a suspension of more than 10 consecutive school days.

8.1 b Suspension will normally be imposed for a grave offence as defined in this policy. Where in the opinion of the Behaviour Team for the student's year and/or Principal or Acting Principal, detention or warning are an inadequate disciplinary procedure for serious offences, or in the instance of repeated serious offences, the sanction of suspension may be imposed

Such misbehaviour may include:

- A threat to the health and safety of himself or others.
- Persistent disruption of teaching and learning
- Deliberate damage to, or theft, of property
- Misuse of technology
- Substance abuse (including smoking)
- Persistent breaches of the Code of Behaviour which have not been rectified by the normal school interventions.

8.1 c Before a suspension is imposed the Principal will have considered the seriousness and context of the behaviour; the impact of the behaviour on the other members of the school community; the interventions that have already been tried with the student involved; the likely impact of the suspension on the particular student. Care will be taken to ensure that the academic progress of the student will not be adversely affected by the suspension.

8.1 d Suspension Procedures.

Following a thorough investigation of the incident, if the Principal decides it is appropriate to suspend a student, the following procedure will be used:

The student will be informed and given an opportunity to respond.

The student's parents will be contacted and the matter will be explained. The suspension will not be implemented until the parents have been fully informed both of the circumstances of the incident and of their right to appeal the decision to suspend to the Board of Management.

Every effort will be made to request and to facilitate the student/ parent/ guardians to meet with the Principal and/or Acting Principal and Year Head at a specified time acceptable to all parties so as to afford them a full opportunity to comment on the disciplinary action being considered.

If the student/parents/guardians fail to attend such a meeting and fail to provide a reasonable explanation for not doing so, the matter will be determined in their absence and the suspension carried out.

The student and parents/guardians will be informed in writing that the suspension has been imposed, the date from which the suspension takes effect and the period of the suspension.

In the event of the student/parents/guardian attending such a meeting, if having heard the student/parents/guardians, the Principal considers that it is proper and necessary that suspension be imposed, s/he may suspend on such terms as s/he considers appropriate.

Confirmation in writing will be given to the student/parents/guardians that suspension has been imposed, the date from which such a decision takes effect and the period of the suspension.

Without prejudice to the foregoing, where the Behaviour Team and/or Principal has been notified of an alleged grave offence and where immediate suspension is deemed necessary for Health and Safety reasons, the Principal, without having interviewed the student and without prior notice to the students/parents/guardians, may suspend a student with immediate effect for such a period as is deemed appropriate, pending investigation of the allegation of an offence. In such a situation a parent/guardian will be asked to remove the student from the College.

Official notice of such suspension will be confirmed by post to the student/guardians/parents/ and the period of the suspension indicated.

The Behaviour Team shall, as soon as practicable, notify the student of the allegations made, investigate the matter and interview the student, keeping detailed written record of all interviews. The interview shall give the student a full opportunity to comment on the allegations made. Following that interview, the Behaviour Team shall decide whether the student has committed an offence that warrants suspension and recommend suspension or otherwise to the Principal. The relevant procedures outlined above will be followed.

8.1 e The Principal will notify the Board of Management of the suspension. Under Section 21(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, where a student is suspended for a period of not less than six days, the Principal will forthwith so inform the Educational Welfare Officer by notice in writing.

8.1 f Following a period of suspension, the student, accompanied by his/her parent/guardian, is required to present himself/herself to the Principal or Deputy Principal on returning to the school, before going to any class. At this meeting the Principal/Deputy Principal will review the case decide what structures are required to support the student in returning to school and in addressing the behaviour which led to the suspension. A student will be required to go on Report for a minimum period of five days following a suspension.

## 8.2 Appeals of suspension

A suspension imposed by the Principal can be appealed to the Board of Management as follows:

8.2 a An appeal should be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Management within 5 school days of the imposition of the suspension and should set out the parent's case against the suspension.

8.2 b At its next meeting the Board will nominate two members, neither of whom should have any involvement in the case, to investigate the issue and report back to the Board with its findings and recommendations.

8.2 c If this investigation recommends that the Board remove the suspension, the record of the suspension will be removed from the student's file. If the investigation approves the suspension then the suspension will stand.

8.2 d There is no further right to appeal unless the student's cumulative suspensions in any one year exceed 20 days, in which case there is a right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Dept. of Education and Skills. The Principal must inform the parents and the NEWB if this 20 day limit has been reached.

### 8.3 **Review**

The Board will monitor the frequency of the use of suspension as a disciplinary measure and will regularly review the procedures to ensure that it is being used fairly and appropriately and in the best interests of the entire school community.

## 9. Expulsion Procedures

- 9.1 Only the Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. This authority will not be delegated.
- 9.2 Expulsion of a student is a very serious step and will only be taken by the Board in extreme cases or as a last resort after intervention have failed as follows:
- 9.2.1 Where there is significant and continuing disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- 9.2.2 Where there is a serious threat to the health and safety of the student themselves, other students or members of staff.
- 9.2.3 Where the pupil is uncontrollable and is not amenable to any form of school authority.  
Where parents refuse to exercise their responsibility for the pupil in accordance with this Behaviour Code
- 9.2.4 Where the pupil's behaviour is detrimental to sustaining the ethos of the school In cases of specific behaviour such as:
- 9.2.5 Actual violence or physical assault.
- Supplying illegal drugs.
  - Sexual assault.
  - Deliberate serious damage to property.
  - Grave misuse of technology.
- 9.3 Before considering expulsion the school will have taken significant steps to address the student's behaviour. These steps may include:
- 9.3.1 Meeting with parents and the student to try and find ways of helping the student to change his/her behaviour.
- 9.3.2 Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of his/her behaviour, if it should persist.
- 9.3.3 Ensuring that all other possible options have been tried to bring about an improvement in behaviour, including IBP intervention
- 9.3.4 Seeking the assistance of support agencies as appropriate (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, TUSLA, South West Counselling Centre, Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).
- 9.4 However there may be exceptional circumstance where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence. Due process and fair procedures will be followed in all cases and the principles of natural justice will apply.

## 9.5 Procedure for expulsion

- 9.5.1 The Principal will ensure that there is a thorough investigation of the incident. The student may be suspended from the College while this investigation is taking place.
- 9.5.2 The Principal will inform the student and the parents, in writing, of the details of the alleged misbehaviour and the possibility that it could result in expulsion.
- 9.5.3 The student and parents will be given every opportunity to respond to the complaint before a final decision is made. If the final decision is that the Principal intends to recommend expulsion to the Board of Management then the parents will be invited to a meeting with the Principal before the recommendation is taken to the Board.
- 9.5.4 The Principal will provide the parents and the Board of Management with records of the allegations, the investigation and also the grounds on which the Board is being asked to consider expulsion.
- 9.5.5 The parents will be notified of the date of the Board of Management hearing and will be invited to attend. They will be given adequate notice of the meeting and will be informed that they may make a written and oral submission to the Board. The written submission may be made in advance.

## 9.6 The Board of Management Hearing

- 9.6.1 The Board will ensure impartiality and a Board member who has had any involvement in the circumstances of the case will not take part in the hearing.
- 9.6.2 At the hearing the Principal and the parents, or a student who is eighteen years or over, will put their case to the Board in each other's presence.
- 9.6.3 Parents may wish to be accompanied at such hearings and the Board will facilitate this; legal accompaniment is not acceptable at this stage.
- 9.6.4 Neither Principal nor parents will be present when the Board is making its decision.

## 9.7 Following the Board Decision

- 9.7.1 Where the student and his/her parents/guardians attend the meeting with the B.O.M., and the Board, having heard the student and/or his/her parent/guardian, form the view that it is necessary and proper to impose the sanction of expulsion, the Board, before making the decision to expel the student, will notify, in writing, the Educational Welfare Officer of its opinion and the reasons therefore, in accordance with Section 24(1) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.  
*Where the student/parents/guardians do not attend the meeting:*  
If the student or his/her parent/guardian fail to attend the meeting with the B.O.M. and fail to provide a reasonable explanation for not doing so, the B.O.M. may determine the matter in their absence. Before making a decision to expel the student, the Board will notify, in writing, the Educational Welfare Officer of its opinion and the reasons therefore, in accordance with Section 24(1) of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

9.7.2 Where it is decided to impose the sanction of expulsion, the student and his/her parent/guardian will be informed by letter by the Board that the sanction of expulsion has been imposed and the date from which decision will take effect. The student will not be expelled from the school before the passing of 20 school days following the receipt by the Education Welfare Officer of the notification. In the interim, the Board may, in accordance with Section 5 of the Education (Welfare) Act, suspend or make other arrangements to ensure that 'good order and discipline are maintained in the school'.

9.7.3 The parent/guardian may appeal the decision to exclude to the Board of Management within 20 days of the notification of the decision.

## 9.8 **Involvement of the Education Welfare Officer**

9.8.1 Within this twenty day period, the Education Welfare Officer will convene meetings with relevant parties to ensure that arrangements are made for the student to continue in education.

9.8.2 While these negotiations are taking place, and before the expulsion is finalised, the Board may consider it necessary to continue the student's suspension from school. This task may be delegated to the Principal or Chairperson.

9.8.3 After the twenty days has elapsed, where the Board remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the decision will be formally confirmed to the parents and the student in a registered letter signed by the Chairperson and the Principal.

9.8.4 The parents will be told of the right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 and supplied with the appropriate form. This appeal is made to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.