



# St Patrick's & St Brigid's College

## Parental Guidance Policy

At St Patrick's & St Brigid's College we are very fortunate to have a parent body which is supportive and friendly. We recognise that the success of the college is dependent on a strong partnership between all members of the school community: pupils, parents, staff and other agencies. This partnership must be based on a polite, positive and respectful relationship. For this reason, we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school. Any reference in this policy to a "parent", includes any parent, guardian, carer or other individual with "parental responsibility" (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a pupil of St Patrick's & St Brigid's College.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder about the expected conduct from our parents and visitors. We ask that all members of the school community follow these principles:

***We all respect the caring ethos of our school.***

***Both parents and staff need to work together for the benefit of the pupils.***

***All members of the school community should be treated with respect and, therefore, we must all set a good example in our own speech and behaviour.***

In this context, threatening, violent or abusive behaviour, against any members of our school community, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All members of our community have a right to expect the school to be a safe place in which to work and learn. Where the behaviour of parents or visitors falls below expected standards, the school will take appropriate action.

### **Parental conduct**

Parents are asked to communicate with each other and with other children, as well as all members of staff in a respectful and courteous manner; a manner in which they themselves would wish to be addressed.

### **Parental access and communication**

Access onto the school property is by appointment only. Parents who need to consult with a member of staff should begin by requesting a telephone communication with their child's form teacher initially. Should the matter remain unresolved a meeting can be requested with the relevant Head of Year and should the matter still remain unresolved, a meeting can be arranged with an appropriate member of SLT. Serious Child Protection and/or Safeguarding issues will be dealt with by the Designated Teacher or Assistant Principal (Pastoral Care) or Principal. Formal complaints about a member of staff should be put in writing to the Principal, in line with the college's Complaints Policy/Procedures.

### **Behavioural Incidents**

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school cannot accept parents or visitors exhibiting the following:

- Conduct which undermines the safe and calm environment in school, either in the school buildings, around the school site, immediately outside the school or anywhere the school is being represented (sports and educational fixtures /school journey/day trips etc.)
- Using loud or offensive language, such as swearing.
- Displaying an unacceptable amount of anger and aggression.
- Threatening physical violence to a member of the school community.
- Damaging school or personal property.
- Abusive telephone calls, emails, letters or other forms of written communication.
- Defamatory comments about school staff, governors or other parents on social media sites.
- Sexual abuse
- Racial abuse
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of one's own child.

- Approaching someone else’s child in order to chastise them.
- Entering the school premises without authorisation.
- Unrealistic expectations and demands which cause members of staff undue stress.

Any example of such behaviour shall, for the purposes of this policy, constitute a “Behavioural Incident”. If any such incidents are reported by a parent to the school, but haven’t been witnessed by a member of staff, evidence will be required to substantiate these claims.

### **INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, principals, school staff, school governors and in some cases other parents/pupils.

The Senior Leadership Team & Governors of St Patrick’s & St Brigid’s College consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

### **PROCEDURES**

The school has processes in place for dealing with Behavioural Incidents. Any Behavioural Incident will be reported to the Principal, and the appropriate procedures will be followed. In the event that the Behavioural Incident was aimed at the Principal, the matter will be reported to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

The college will always seek to secure a quick resolution, which can normally be achieved through respectful discussion. Where this has not been possible or where this action has failed to result in an effective outcome, the college has the right to impose any of the following:

- The parent will only be permitted to meet with the staff member concerned, in the company of a member of the college’s leadership team.
- The parent will only be permitted to meet with the staff member concerned, in the company of a member of Board of Governors.
- All communication with the parent concerned will be in writing (for an agreed period)
- The parent may be banned from being on school premises.
- At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behaviour to the Police. The school has a responsibility to ensure that any act of actual or threatened violence is referred to the Police immediately.

.....  
*Ratified by Board of Governors*

*Date:*

*Chairperson’s Signature:*