



# CODE OF BEHAVIOUR-POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

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Ashbourne Educate Together National School is a multid denominational co-educational school that will cater for pupils from Junior Infants up to Sixth class. Our school is under the patronage of Educate Together. We strive in co-operation with parents to provide a holistic education in a caring and secure environment where each child is encouraged to realise his/her potential and achieve to the best of his/her ability.

## **RATIONALE**

This review is being carried out to ensure that our policy is in compliance with the legal requirements and the good practice standards as set out in Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for schools (2008). This document can be accessed at:

[http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines\\_school\\_codes\\_eng.pdf](http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf)

The code of behaviour at Ashbourne ETNS is based on the principle of equal respect for both children and their families and for the staff of the school, both teaching and non-teaching. The purpose of this Policy is to promote positive behaviour and to allow our school to function in an orderly and harmonious way, in line with our ethos as an Educate Together school. Children will be made aware of the code at a level appropriate to their age. The purpose of this Code is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents, pupils and other relevant persons on how we ensure an orderly climate for learning in our school.

## **The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Ashbourne Educate Together National School are as follows:**

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our educational ethos
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where all children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
- To create an atmosphere of respect, acceptance, open mindedness and consideration for others

- To develop pupils self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour
- 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
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

All members of the school community will be provided with a copy of the written document upon enrolment/employment at Ashbourne ETNS. A copy of the policy is available for the school community to view on the school website. The Special Education team and all staff have a particular responsibility to work with children with special educational needs, and their parents, to reinforce the messages being taught in the classroom about appropriate behaviour. The mentoring of new staff members is a further responsibility of the principal.

## **BEHAVIOUR AND RULES**

In order to sustain our Code of Behaviour, the school encourages and praises positive behaviours and discourages negative behaviours. There is a whole-school approach to rewarding pupils for good behaviour.

## **GOLDEN RULES & GOLDEN TIME**

The Golden Rules are taught in all classes throughout the school. They form the basis of our positive behaviour policy: These rules will be displayed in a prominent place in each class

- We listen- we do not interrupt
- We do as we are asked straight away
- We raise our hand- we wait our turn
- We are kind- we have kind words, kind hands, kind feet
- We are honest- we tell the truth
- We look after our property

Children who work hard at keeping the golden rules can earn 30 minutes Golden Time every Friday. 30 Minutes Golden Time is contingent on following the Golden Rules. (See Appendix A)

Junior – 2nd - the Golden Rules will be taught explicitly to Junior & Senior Infants

3<sup>rd</sup> Class – 6<sup>th</sup> - a class charter will be drawn up in consultation with the children.

In addition children are nominated for “Star of the Week” and are chosen at the end of each week by the class teacher. While the Golden Rules form the basis of our Positive Behaviour Policy, individual teachers may use other strategies in conjunction to promote positive behavior in the classroom

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests, in varying ways as outlined below, with all partners in our school's educational tasks i.e. the Board of Management, Principal and Teaching Staff, Pupils and their Parents or Guardians.

### **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

- Ratify the Code
- Support the Principal and Staff in implementing the Code
- Ensure that the entire school community has a safe environment
- Provision of support to the Principal and Staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.

### **PRINCIPAL**

- Provide a safe work environment
- Provide support for colleagues
- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for a review of the Code, as required

### **TEACHING STAFF**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour
- The promotion of positive behaviour through effective teaching, an inclusive and engaging curriculum and well managed classrooms with explicit teaching of the Golden Rules in conjunction with the schools traffic light system
- The use of a variety of classroom management techniques and curricular methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation and maximise positive behaviour
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- Keep a written record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern
- Respect to be shown by the teachers to other members of staff, parents, children and the wider schools community
- Report matters of serious concern to Principal or Deputy Principal
- Record incidents from yard in Yard Book and class discipline book
- Engaging with in-school reviews of behaviour (e.g. at staff meetings, Haddington Road hours)

## **PUPILS**

- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Bring correct materials / books to school
- Follow school and class rules
- Listen to teachers and act on instructions / advice
- Respect to be shown by the children to members of staff, their peers, parents and the wider school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other pupils
- Behave in a safe manner that does not endanger others
- Include other pupils in games and activities

## **PARENTS / GUARDIANS**

- Be familiar with the full Code of Behaviour and support its implementation-This is available on the school website [www.ashbourneetns.ie](http://www.ashbourneetns.ie)
- Sign the Code of Behaviour as outlined on the Registration form to confirm that it is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with the Code. Pupils will only be enrolled if parents / guardians agree to this in advance (See Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Section 23(4))
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's schoolwork
- Cooperate with teachers if their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others
- Communicate with the school regarding any problems that may affect their child's progress or behaviour
- Attend meetings at the school if requested
- Support children with their homework and ensure that it is completed
- Parents are expected to show understanding towards children for whom some of these guidelines may be challenging e.g. children with special educational needs.
- Respect to be shown by the parents towards members of staff, other parents and children and the wider school community

## **General guidelines for positive behaviour within the school**

The school has general standards of behaviour expectations for its pupils and staff. These standards which are regularly communicated to the pupils in the school include:

Respect, courtesy and good manners to be shown towards other children, teachers, support staff and parents, in the classroom, the playground, and on school outings, at all times.

- Respect to be shown by the children towards their own and other children's property, school property and the environment
- Respect to be shown to other children's space i.e. no verbal or physical violence or aggression, or any form of bullying behaviour (see anti bullying policy)
- Respect for each child's own feelings, i.e. It's okay to feel sad, quiet etc.
- Respect to be shown for other people's feelings
- Respect to be shown by the children to members of staff, their peers and the wider schools community

- Children are expected to use the language of good manners- please, thank you, no thank you, excuse me.
- Children are expected to come to and leave school on time. The school day begins at 8.15am for all. Children should leave promptly once school is over
- Children are expected to bring to school each day all lunches, books, copies and materials necessary to do their class work properly – this includes appropriate clothing, footwear for PE
- Children are expected to complete assigned work (written and oral) both at school and at home
- Children are expected to listen to others and take turns to speak in class
- Children must not behave in any way that endangers themselves and others
- Children are expected to be mindful of the younger children in the school
- Children are expected to include others in games
- Children must remain within the designated playground boundaries during break times: they must not go into areas that are out of sight

## **Yard**

The positive strategies which Ashbourne ETNS implements to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidents of unacceptable behaviour in the playground are:

- A Clear and concise set of rules communicated to the children, these rules are discussed at staff meetings and communicated to the children at assemblies and in individual classrooms ( See Appendix B)
- Where space allows the children will be offered activities at yard time, where it necessitates these activities will be timetabled
- Teachers on yard duty wear high visibility jackets to ensure that they are clearly visible and easily identified
- Pupils are escorted to the yard by their teachers and are collected from class lines at the end of yard time
- Incidents of misbehaviour are recorded in the yard folder and are recorded by the teacher. Incidents of misbehaviour during yard time will be dealt with by the teacher on duty and class teachers will be informed of the incident. In circumstances of serious misbehaviour the incident will be dealt with by the Principal or Deputy Principal after yard and parents will be informed in an effort to address the situation.
- Children are asked to stand out for a short period of time if they are engaging in rough or dangerous play. The teacher will issue a reminder to the child, if they partake in rough/ play a second time they will be asked to stand in the “Take a Break” area

## **Conflict Resolution-**

In our school the emphasis is on restoring relationships rather than on exacting punishments. We believe the building, nurturing and repairing of relationships is a key issue in supporting learners in schools.

In order to resolve conflict in the Junior end of the school. The children will be taught the skills to resolve conflicts through the explicit teaching of Yard lessons, the Stay Safe and SPHE programme.

Peer Mediation is a programme that the school would like to implement as the school grows

## **Bullying**

Bullying is repeated, verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common forms of bullying are aggressive contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolation and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with Ashbourne Educate Together National School Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **Affirming Positive Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

## **Strategies/Incentives**

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment on a child's exercise book
- A visit to another class or Principal for commendation
- Praise in front of class group
- Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- Written or verbal communication with parent

## **Discouraging Misbehaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development.

These may include:

- Reasoning with pupil
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve
- Traffic Light System- Children receive a warning/reminder about their behaviour, if misbehaviour continues they move through the traffic light system from green to red. This is a two way system so children have the opportunity to improve their behaviour to try and move back to the green traffic light.
- Temporary separation from peers.
- Communication with parents
- Referral to Principal
- Principal communicating with parents
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify... 'the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned' and 'the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.'

**Suspension:**

The Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), by notice in writing, when a 'student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days.' Parents should be informed of their right to come to the school and be invited to do so in order to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal and/or the class teacher. This should always be done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated.

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student.

**Grounds for suspension:**

- the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of students.
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Note: A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. A record of any suspension will be kept on file. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. The Board of Management has authorised the Principal and/or the Chairperson to suspend a pupil from the school for a maximum initial period of three school days.

Procedures that ensure fairness when excluding a pupil will include:

- Ensuring other means of intervention and dealing with the behaviour have been tried.
- Parents will have been invited to the school to discuss the intention to exclude.

Implementing the Suspension:

The Principal shall notify Parents/Guardians, in writing, of the decision to suspend. This will include:

- Letter stating period of suspension – beginning and end dates.
- Reasons for suspension.
- Any programme to be followed by student and or parent.
- Arrangements for returning to school and any commitments to be entered into by students and parents.
- Provision for an appeal to Board of Management.

- Right to appeal to the Secretary General of the DES (Education Act 1998,
- Section 29).

Following suspension, a plan to re-integrate the student will include, where possible, an arrangement for a member of staff to provide support during the re-integration process. Student contracts will, if necessary, be put in place for the student and his/her parents. This will enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and parents. All efforts will be made to support the student to adhere to this contract. It will be expected that the parents will support and maintain support at all times for their child. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended student will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the student's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other student or staff.

The Board of Management has authorised the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. The National Education Welfare Board will be notified if a student is suspended for a cumulative total of six or more days.

### **Expulsion (Permanent Exclusion):**

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, 'A student shall not be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days following the receipt of a notification under this section by an Educational Welfare Office' (Section 24(4)). It is the right of a Board of Management to take '...such other reasonable measures as it considers appropriate to ensure that good order and discipline are maintained in the school concerned and that the safety of students is secured.' (Section 24(5)).

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice this should be reserved for the BOM and not be delegated.

### **Before a student is expelled:**

A meeting is held with parents and the student to try to find ways of helping the student to change his/her behaviour:

- Ensuring the student understands the consequences of his/her behaviour, should it continue.
- Ensuring all possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies

Serious grounds are:

- Student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- The student's presence constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property

A fair investigation will have taken place, taking both parents and student's perspective into account.

Parents and student will be informed about the complaint.



Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond.  
Parents may be informed by phone or in writing.

The Board of Management, before reaching a decision to exclude a student will ensure its decision will be reached in an unbiased manner. Expulsion will be in accordance with the terms of rule 130 (5) of the Rules for National Schools.

*The kinds of behaviour that might result in expulsion for first offence:*

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school
- sexual assault

## Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents ( or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decisions of the Board of Management, including:

- 1) Permanent exclusion from a school and
- 2) Suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.

Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing by the Principal of the decision of the Board of Management to permanently exclude or suspend the student.

Parents/Guardians will be informed of their right of appeal, the associated timeframe of 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to parents and student.

The Board of Management are responsible for replying to the Department of Education and Skills if the school is being investigated and also prepare an appeal for the Department of Education and Skills.

## **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of Ashbourne Educate Together National School does not accept responsibility **for pupils before official opening times of 8.15am or after the official closing time of 12.55pm (infants) 1.55pm (other classes)** except where pupils are engaged in extracurricular activities or morning supervision from 8:05 am organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with the positive behaviour policy during these times.

## **Rules around the school**

- Pupils must walk quietly in corridors, going to and from yard, hall etc.

- Pupils must follow Principal/Teachers instructions, stay in designated areas etc.
- Pupils must play safely at all times. Anti-social, dangerous or hurtful behaviour is forbidden, e.g. wrestling, headlocks, jockey backs, bullying, intimidation, teasing, jeering, fighting, spitting, kicking, charging in groups, bad language, exclusion.
- Pupils will line up at designated area in the yard until collected by Class Teacher.

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Ashbourne Educate Together National School

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014

Signed: Barbara Nugent

Signed & Ratified: Noel Gildea

Barbara Nugent (Principal)

Noel Gildea (Chairperson)