

**CODE OF BEHAVIOUR-POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

Ashbourne Educate Together National School is a multidenominational co-educational school catering initially for pupils in Junior Infants (and eventually up to Sixth class) 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>

The code of behaviour at Ashbourne ETNS is based on the principal 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 develop pupils self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour
* To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and tolerance of others
* To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment
* To enable teachers to teach without disruption
* To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects in their development
* 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. 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.

**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 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
* The use of a variety of classroom management techniques and curricular methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation and maximize 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
* 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, Croke Park 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
* Show respect for all members of the 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 Code of Behaviour and support its implementation
* Sign the Code of Behaviour to confirm that it is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure 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
* Attending meetings at the school if requested
* Supporting children with their homework and ensuring that it is completed
* Cooperating with the rules and standards which apply to them (dropping off rule, clothing rule etc.)

**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 whereby pupils are nominated for “Star of the Week” and are chosen at a school assembly. To encourage positive behaviour, individual teachers use various reward systems within their own classrooms, such as Star Charts, etc. The school rules make clear which kind of behaviours are acceptable and which are not.

**SCHOOL RULES**

School rules and sanctions will be devised by the school staff and children. They will also be discussed and evaluated with the parents in conjunction with the PTA. They are based on the Golden Rules devised by the school. The rules are as follows:

* We listen
* We do as we are told straight away
* We are kind
* We care for others
* We try our best
* We tell the truth

**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 co-operation 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.
* 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 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 turn 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.
* 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
* Children are expected to show understanding towards children for whom some of these guidelines may be challenging e.g. children with special educational needs.

**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’s 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
* Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class. Time out.
* Prescribing extra work
* 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/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as Suspension or Expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with Teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

**Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil’s reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil’s own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

**School Rules**

School Rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

**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 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.

Ashbourne Educate Together National School

Signed: Signed & Ratified:

Barbara Nugent (Principal) Noel Gildea (Chairperson)