



Positive Behaviour Policy

Introduction

This behaviour policy was drafted following consultation with staff, children, parents and other members of the school community. It was drafted during the academic year 2016 / 2017 in response to our move to Hawkstown Road. The previous policy was drafted in 2009 / 2010.

The Code of Positive Behaviour sets out the rights and responsibilities of all school partners in respect of positive behaviour. This positive behaviour policy extends to all school trips, outings and activities organised by the school community and it is to be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Any reference to “parent” within this document shall be taken as including guardians and any reference to “parent’s children” within this document shall be taken as including children under the care of a guardian.

This policy has been drafted having regard to all legal requirements (particularly section 23 of the Education Act *to be hyperlinked*), TUSLA guidelines and good practice.

Relationship to characteristic ethos of the school

Respect, responsibility, fairness, trustworthiness, caring and citizenship are core pillars of the Wicklow Educate Together Ethos. Those pillars underline all expectations around behaviour within our school.

Aims of the positive behaviour policy

- To create an environment where all partners in the school community (i.e. pupils, staff and parents) feel safe and respected.
- To promote self-discipline by affirming that everyone’s behaviour matters and focusing on good behaviour and personal responsibility.
- To create an environment where all pupils and staff can reach their creative and intellectual potential without disruption.
- To have a framework in place to ensure that the school’s high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.
- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and support among pupils, staff and parents / guardians.
- To enable pupils to mature into responsible participating citizens.
- To help pupils to acquire and develop moral and ethical values and a respect for the beliefs and values of others.

- To promote equality for all members of the school community, to prevent discrimination and allow for appropriate accommodation of difference.
- To ensure that the school's Code of Positive Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

1. Rights and responsibilities

1.1 Rights of school partners

It is expected that all members of the school community behave in ways that show respect for themselves and others and that they have an understanding of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the Code of Positive Behaviour as outlined below:

Pupils' Rights:

Pupils have the right:

- To be respected as individuals with due regard for others within the school community.
- To be educated in a safe and secure environment.
- To grow intellectually, morally, spiritually and physically with an understanding of special needs and difference.
- To express their emotions, doubts and beliefs in an appropriate context
- To be free from all forms of abuse
- To receive information about topics and concerns affecting their lives including information on the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- To confidentiality

Teachers' Rights

Teachers have the right:

- To be respected, with due regard to their professional role
- To work in an environment free from disruption
- To voice concerns about a pupil's safety and behaviour to relevant parties
- To expect support and co-operation from parents and other members of staff for their work
- To confidentiality

Staff Rights

- To be respected, with due regard to their role in the school
- To work in an environment free from disruption
- To voice concerns about a pupil's safety and behaviour to relevant parties
- To expect support and co-operation from parents and other members of staff for their work
- To confidentiality

Parents' rights

Parents have the right:

- To respect and confidentiality
- To communication with / access to their child's teacher / principal
- To updates on the progress of their child.
- To be consulted about their child's behaviour
- To be informed when disciplinary action is being taken in respect of their serious misbehaviour
- To be apprised of any whole school positive behaviour initiatives being undertaken
- To have access to the Code of Positive Behaviour.

Board of Management rights

The Board of Management have the right:

- To respect and confidentiality
- To be informed where a referral has been submitted to the HSE
- To modify this code of positive behaviour before the review date to deal with unforeseen circumstances

1.2 Responsibilities of school partners

Pupils' responsibilities

Pupils' responsibilities include:

- Pupils have responsibility to develop empathy for others, to recognise that their actions, positive or negative, have an impact on others.
- Having strong positive respect and expectations for themselves and others' behaviour and work
- Completing their school work to the best of their ability
- Knowing and complying with school and class rules and routines
- Actively listening to classmates, teachers and members of the school community
- Behaving well in class and on the school premises
- Looking after their own property, other people's property and school property
- Playing safely
- Helping and caring for others, in particular, the younger pupils in the school
- Behaving in accordance with the Code of Positive Behaviour at all times, including when representing the school and on school outings.

Teacher's responsibilities

Teachers are responsible for:

- The pupils in their care
- Creating a positive atmosphere / environment for learning
- Being firm and fair
- Having strong positive expectations for children in respect of their behaviour and work
- Teaching children their rights and responsibilities, the class and school rules and routines
- Giving children feedback about their behaviour and work and communicating to them ways to improve where it doesn't meet the standards of the Positive Behaviour Code.

- Ensuring opportunities for disruption are minimised
- Communicating with parents on issues concerning their child's learning and behaviour
- Sharing their expertise to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help students to change behaviour

Staff responsibilities

All staff are responsible for

- The pupils in their care
- Assisting in the creation of a positive atmosphere / environment for learning.
- Having strong and positive expectations for children in the school
- Sharing their expertise to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help students to change behaviour.

Parents' responsibilities

- Providing firm guidance and being positive role models to their children
- Encouraging children to reflect on their behaviour and to do their best
- Working collaboratively and supportively with the school in respect of their children's behaviour and learning
- Attending parent / teacher meetings
- Ensuring pupils come to school on time
- Ensuring pupils have had adequate rest and nourishment
- Ensuring pupils have the necessary equipment they need for class
- Providing the school with an explanation as to a pupil's absence.
- Communicating to the school any problems which may affect a pupil's learning
- Familiarising themselves with the Code of Positive Behaviour

The Board of Management responsibilities

- Provide a comfortable, safe environment for all in the school community
- Ensure the code reflects and upholds the school's ethos, values and culture
- Make sure that all the members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in work on the Code of Positive Behaviour
- Support the Principal and staff in implementing the code
- Ratify and review the code

2. Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour

- High expectations around behaviour and learning are set for the children.
- Children are explicitly taught their rights and responsibilities through classroom discussions and whole school assemblies
- Classroom routines and whole school routines are explicitly taught to children
- Yard Rules are clearly available in each classroom.
- Children are involved in the preparation of classroom rules and class charters at the beginning of each school year

- New children are apprised of school rules and routines when they join the school
- Boundaries, rules and expectations are clear for children
- Engaging in positive everyday interactions between staff and pupils
- Acknowledging children’s behaviour and achievements, either by way of a quiet word or more publicly in front of a class or whole school assembly
- Using reward systems, which may be class based or whole-school based
- Visual displays throughout the school reminding children of the core values of respect, responsibility, fairness, trustworthiness, caring and citizenship
- Children reflect on their behaviour where it does not meet expectations and set themselves age appropriate goals for improvement
- Children are encouraged to “set right the wrong”, either by way of apology or by action
- Student Council
- Buddy system

3. Suggested Classroom Strategies used to promote Positive Behaviour

- Children are explicitly taught the speaker / listener relationship
- Using the Learn Together and SPHE curricula to explore, teach and reinforce expected behaviours
- Teaching of rights, responsibilities and rules.
- Regular reinforcement of rules
- Class routines are taught to children. (Appendix 1)
- Explicit teaching of good manners
- Explicit teaching of the core values of respect, responsibility, fairness, trustworthiness, caring and citizenship
- Individual Behaviour Plan where appropriate
- Home / School Behaviour Contract
- Use of the golden rules
- Positive Behaviour Week in September
- Teaching of yard games

4. Suggested Classroom Rewards for Positive Behaviour

Each classroom has rewards in place designed to promote positive behaviour on an individual and whole class based level. It is recognised that those rewards do not necessarily include a prize and that in some cases praise and encouragement may have a more desired effect. Teachers will choose a reward system appropriate to the class needs. Rewards will focus on children’s effort.

Examples of rewards include:

- Praise and Encouragement
- Golden Time
- Reward Stickers / Stamps
- Best Table award
- Smiley faces, merits, class dojo or other system that rewards individual effort.
- Good news note in the homework journal

In accordance with our healthy eating policy sweets and treats are not used as rewards for behaviour but may be used on an occasional basis (e.g. end of term) as a class celebration. (See Healthy Eating policy on the school's website)

5. Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the school's code on Bullying, which sets out the steps to be taken where there is an allegation of Bullying.

We recognise that the majority of pupils consistently display positive behaviours in their interactions with all members of the school community and that this is done with the help of consistent and clear rules and routines in class and school. Occasional, minor misbehaviour should be dealt with routinely and effectively through the skill of the classroom teacher.

Staff will regularly share their expertise and experience to ensure a consistent, whole school approach to behaviour.

We recognise that some children need additional support and active intervention to manage their behaviour. Additional inputs or interventions might include:

- Referral to another teacher or adult who can work with the pupil
- Involving a care team (support staff / senior members of staff)
- Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them
- Behaviour contracts

We recognise a small minority of pupils may show particularly challenging behaviour. Those pupils may need a sustained and systematic response involving all the important adults in their lives. The Principal and staff will in so far as it is possible build good links with any local support services that may be able to assist in responding to the needs of a pupil.

6. Misbehaviours and Sanctions

We also recognise that where behaviours do not meet the standards expected in our school, they must be dealt with.

Inappropriate behaviour in our school is behaviour that is disruptive or disrespectful to others, interferes with a child's own learning, other children's learning or a positive school environment.

Behaviours can be minor misbehaviours, serious misbehaviours or gross misbehaviours. A one-off minor misbehaviour can become serious if repeated.

Examples of minor misbehaviours:

- Breaking agreed class rules including during lunchtime
- Breaking yard rules (Appendix 2)

- Interrupting class work which prevents others from learning
- Leaving seat without permission
- Running in school building
- Leaving litter around the school
- Shouting over / talking over other children
- Not entering / leaving by correct entrance / exit
- Not being prepared for work (age appropriate)
- Not completing work to their ability
- Isolated acts of disrespect / unkindness to any staff member / pupil / parent or visitor

Examples of serious misbehaviours

- Persistent minor misbehaviour
- Regular acts of disrespect / unkindness to any member of the school community
- Regular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting others and being inattentive
- Regularly preventing others from learning
- Deliberately refusing to co-operate with instructions
- Using a mobile phone during school hours or on school premises
- Vandalism of school property, including book rental
- Telling lies (age appropriate)
- Stealing
- Deliberately endangering self or fellow pupils during all school activities
- Leaving school premises during the day without appropriate permission
- Using unacceptable language
- Verbal abuse
- Discriminatory remarks
- Bringing weapons to school

Examples of Gross misbehaviours

- Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviours towards any staff member / pupil / parent / visitor
- Any act of assault against any staff member / pupil / parent / visitor
- Intentional damage to property

Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by

- Helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviours on others
- Providing pupils with the opportunity for reflection on their behaviour and its consequences
- Helping pupils (age / developmentally appropriate) to understand they have choices about their own behaviour and that there are consequences to their behaviour.
- Helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

A sanction may also:

- Reinforce the boundaries set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Signal to other pupils and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected
- In the case of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning to keep the pupil, or other pupils or adults, safe.

The following is a list of sanctions that are used (though not necessarily in the order below)

- Verbal reprimand, in private where practicable, to include reasoning and advising how to improve.
- Removal from the yard for part of a lunch break.
- Removal from the yard for a week. (in the case of serious incidents)
- Completion of a reflection sheet on the inappropriate behaviour.
- Withdrawal of privileges, including golden time, football, extra yard time,
- A pupil will not be deprived of access to a curricular area, e.g. P.E. However, if a pupil is misbehaving during a particular lesson, they may be given a cooling off period in which they are removed from the lesson.
- Completing incomplete work at break time.
- Sitting at another area in class.
- Sent to another class for a short period.
- Sent to another class for an extended period. (In the case of serious incidents).
- Pupils are sent to principal for continually occurring or serious misbehaviours.
- Referral to the Board of Management.
- Suspension (the grounds for which are outlined in a separate section).
- Expulsion (the grounds for which are outlined in a separate section).

The Yard

- Yard routines are regularly reviewed amongst staff, e.g. taking classes out to break etc.
- Common procedures and sanctions will be adopted amongst teachers for misbehaviour on the yard. Those will be discussed and reviewed at staff meetings as is necessary.
- The agreed procedures for use of the log book are printed in each log book.
- A log book is used on each yard. The purpose of the book is to provide continuity of communication between teachers on yard duty and to record where a sanction has been given (including a reminder). Each log book contains a list of yard rules.
- The principal will regularly monitor the log book and take further action as is appropriate, e.g. speaking to children, contacting parents etc.
- The log book will also form the basis of discussion amongst teachers as to what behaviours may need to be reinforced at a class level or at assembly, e.g. not interfering with other children's games.

Recording of Class based incidents

- Serious misbehaviours will be recorded and parents contacted in this regard.
- The principal will be informed of serious misbehaviours.

- The principal should be notified immediately of any gross misbehaviours.

Communication with Parents

- Parents will be informed as soon as it is perceived that difficulties are developing with regard to their child's behaviour, either by class teacher or by the Principal. Parents may be requested to meet with the teacher and / or the Principal.

7. Children with Special Needs

In accordance with our ethos and equality legislation the Positive Behaviour policy will be applied to children with special needs in accordance with their abilities to adhere to it and their special needs.

It does not automatically follow that a child with special needs will be unable to follow the Positive Behaviour policy nor does it mean that lesser expectations in respect of behaviour will automatically apply. It does mean that proper accommodation will be given to children where it is needed.

Where a child's needs / behaviours arise from a special need and require a modified approach, professional judgement will be used in respect of the regularity and level of sanctions to be applied to children with special needs.

Where behaviour is contrary to the Positive Behaviour policy, a positive approach will be taken by the partners in a child's education (which may include outside agencies) to work together to devise effective targets and strategies to support the pupil with special needs and improve their behaviour.

Staff, particularly staff with SEN experience, will use their experience and knowledge to share good practice in respect of behavioural difficulties.

8. Coming to School on Time

School starts at 8:50. Children are expected to come to school on time. It enables children to have a calm start to their morning. It allows them time to settle into their morning routines and to have what they need for class. Younger classes have morning activities which are designed to promote children's social competences and other skills. Older classes have core subjects first thing in the morning.

Children who are routinely late miss out on these activities. Being on time shows respect for the class and other children's learning.

9. Procedure for Notification of a Pupil's Absence from School

Parents are obliged under the *Education Welfare Act* to notify the school in respect of a child's absence from school.

- Parents fill out a slip from their child's homework journal and the slip is returned to the class teacher on the first day of a child's return to school. In Junior Classes where students don't have journal, parents send a note to the class teacher.

10. Suspension

In accordance with guidelines suspension will be considered if all other interventions have failed. It will be considered if:

- the pupil's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other pupils or
- the pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety or
- the pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

The matter of suspension is a matter for the Board of Management and may be delegated to the principal.

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school will observe the following procedures:

- The pupil and their parents / guardians will be informed about the complaint, that it will be investigated and that it may result in suspension. Parents will be informed in writing (letter / email) and where practical by phone.
- Written notification will inform parents of the date the suspension ends and the date on which the pupil will return to school.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to meet with the Principal to discuss the incident and respond before any sanction is imposed, except in respect of immediate suspension.
- If the principal considers an immediate suspension is warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted. In this instance, a formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of a suspension and parents will be given an opportunity to meet with the Principal and respond to any sanction,
- In the case of an immediate suspension, parents will be notified and arrangements made for the pupil to be collected.
- A student will not be suspended for more than 3 days, except in exceptional circumstances.

11. Appeal

- The Board of Management will hear any appeals from a decision by the Principal to suspend a pupil.

- Where a pupil has been suspended for a total of 20 days in a school year, parents may appeal a suspension under *section 29 of the Education Act 1998, as amended*, to the Department of Education and Science.

12. Expulsion

A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from a school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 200

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

Expulsion of a pupil is a very serious step and would only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. A proposal to expel a pupil would only arise if

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

In addition to factors such as the seriousness of the behaviour and persistence the Board of Management will have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a pupil should be expelled for a first offence. Those may include

- A serious threat of violence against another student or staff member
- Actual violence or assault
- Supplying illegal drugs to other students in the school

Procedures for Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment confirms serious misbehaviour that would warrant expulsion, the procedural steps will include:

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer
6. Confirmation of the decision to expel.

Parents will be notified of their entitlement to appeal to the Department of Education and Skills and how to go about such an appeal. The guidelines set out in the NEWB *Developing a Code of Positive Behaviour; Guidelines for Schools (2008)* in respect of suspensions and expulsions will be followed.

Success Criteria

On review in May 2018, this policy will be considered a success where

- Positive behaviour is observed in classrooms, the yard and school environment.
- The practices and procedures listed in this policy are consistently implemented.
- Positive feedback is received from teachers, staff, parents and pupils.

Implementation Date

This policy will be implemented in May 2017 having been communicated to the school community.

Responsibility for Review

A review of the implementation of the Positive Behaviour policy will take place in the academic year 2018 / 2019 by the Board of Management. Appendices to the policy may be amended from time to time as is necessary and will be published on the website.

Ratification and Communication

This code was ratified by the Board of Management on the 3rd of May 2017

This code will be communicated to the school community via

- School website
- Email
- Staff meetings
- In the school
- A link to the website in the newsletter
- New parents will be given a copy of the code and in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 will be required to confirm in writing that the Code of Positive Behaviour is acceptable to them and they will make all reasonable efforts to make sure their child complies with the Code.
- New teachers will be given a copy of the Code when they start working in the school.

Appendix 1 School Rules

School Rules

Safety: For my own safety and the safety of others –

- I will be careful coming to and going from school;
- I will always walk while in the school building;
- I will always show respect for my fellow pupils;
- I will bring a note of explanation following every absence;
- I will never leave the school grounds without the permission of a teacher.

Caring for Myself:

- I will respect myself and my property, always keeping my school bag, books and copies in good order;
- I will always endeavour to have my clothes clean and tidy;
- I will be in school by 8:50AM am each day;
- I will always line up after play when I hear the school bell;
- I will always try to bring a sensible, nutritional lunch to school. Chewing gum, fizzy drinks and crisps etc. are not permitted;
- I will always do my best in school by listening carefully, working as hard as I can and by completing my homework.

Caring for Others:

- I will be kind and respectful to teachers, other school staff, fellow pupils and visitors to the school by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by remaining orderly in my class and in the line;
- I will listen and behave well in class so that my fellow pupils and I can learn;
- I will obey my specific class rules and all rules or policies agreed by the school community;
- I will always show respect for my school by being careful not to damage furniture or any part of the building or the school grounds. I will always keep my school clean by bringing unfinished food and drinks etc. home and by placing litter in the appropriate bin;
- I will show respect for the property of the teachers and of my fellow pupils;
- I will be truthful and honest at all times.

Bullying:

- I will never bully others. I will never allow others to bully me and if it happens I will tell my parents and my teacher. Bullying is always unacceptable.

Appendix 2
Form to be signed by new parents

I have read / am aware of the contents of the Positive Behaviour Policy and I confirm that it is acceptable to me and I will make all reasonable efforts to make sure my child complies with the Behaviour Policy.

Child's Name: _____

Parent's / Guardian's Name: _____

Date: _____