



Code of Behaviour

Introductory statement and rationale

This policy was devised in consultation with all the teaching staff in our school. It was submitted to the Board of Management and Parents Association. It is being reviewed as part of the School Development Planning Process.

The broad aim of the Positive Behaviour Policy is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment.

As it's name implies, the Positive Behaviour Policy is directed towards adopting a positive approach to the question of discipline in our school. This means that there is greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions or punishments.

School Mission Statement

In Kildare Educate Together National School we aim to make our school a happy place, where children, their families, and staff feel welcomed and respected, inspired, encouraged and supported.

We aim, through teaching for learning and professional development to ensure that no child is left behind.

We want our school to be the place where children grow together allowing each to achieve their greatest individual potential.

Aims of our Positive Behaviour Policy

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our Mission Statement
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences.
- To ensure the safety and well being 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.



Guidelines for behaviour in the school

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show consideration for other children and adults.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other children's and their own.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual.
- Each pupil is expected to do their best both in school and for completion of homework..

Whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour

The elements of a whole school approach to behaviour include:

- An ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony
- A teamwork approach to behaviour
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management
- An inclusive and involved school community
- A systematic process for planning and reviewing behaviour policy by staff in conjunction with the Board of Management and Parents.

The role of the class teacher

The concept of promoting positive behaviour is based upon an empowering approach, which nurtures a culture of self-discipline among children, rather than behaviour which is tailored to please adults. An atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect is created as part of the philosophy of the school. All adults throughout their interactions with children should use communication strategies which foster co-operation, respect, tolerance and encouragement.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal. However, each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his or her own class. The teachers will:

- Endeavour to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and needs of the child thus eliminating boredom and promoting positive behaviour.
- Ensure there is a high level of supervision at all times.
- Implement a reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of serious and gross misconduct as determined by the teacher on duty.



The role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management will:

- Ensure that the school have procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion that are in line with these Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by the Patron. These will be available online for inspection.
- Ensure that all students and parents are advised about, and aware of, the school's policy for suspension and expulsion.
- Ensure that fair procedures are used for suspension and expulsion and that all staff are aware of those procedures.
- Take special care to ensure that the fair procedures are accessible to people with disabilities or those from different language or cultural backgrounds.
- Ensure that the Board of Management and the Principal are equipped for their roles in relation to the use of suspension and expulsion.

The role of the Parent

Parental understanding and support for the implementation of the code of behaviour should be strengthened through activities such as:

- An introductory meeting for parents of new students, dealing specifically with the code, school standards, expectations for students and the role of parents in helping students to meet the standards.
- Encouraging parents to share information about anything that might affect a student's behaviour in school, and making sure they know how to do so.
- Early warning systems to alert parents to concerns about a student's behaviour, so that ways of helping the student can be discussed and agreed
- Clear channels through which parents can communicate any concerns they may have about a student, and explore ways of helping the student.
- Information offered through the Parent Association, such as talks or workshops on behavioural matters and aspects of child and adolescent development.
- Parental involvement in reviewing and planning school policies, as part of school development planning.



Positive strategies for managing behaviour

School Rules

These are the Kildare Town Educate Together NS school rules which are displayed in all classrooms and in the halla.

The Golden Rules

Be Gentle

Be Honest

Work Hard

Look after Property

Respect Everyone

Circle Time

Each class has a Circle Time meeting once a week. The purpose of these meetings is to make each child feel a more valued and committed member of the class. Through shared discussion and co-operative games and activities, each child has the chance to contribute and should feel listened to.

Golden Time

This is a time of special choice that takes place once a week in each class. It lasts for 30 minutes. Children are allowed to choose activities and games. Some classes opt to use the ICT resources, the Hall for PE or the playground for their Golden Time sessions.

Each child begins the week with 30 minutes of Golden Time. Pupils may lose Golden Time for breaking a Golden Rule, but can earn Golden Time back by 'turning their behaviour around'.

Children who repeatedly and wilfully break golden Rules will lose an amount of Golden Time and their behaviour will be recorded in the Class Incident File. Loss of Golden Time will be visibly measured using a 5-minute sand-timer. Children may join Golden Time once their lost time has passed. Every child has a safeguarded 5 minutes in order that they get a taste for how special Golden Time can be. Children not partaking in Golden Time will be given work to do.

Student Council

Being in the Student Council offers children the opportunity to raise school issues and to have a voice in the running of the school. The elected members of the school council meet at least each term with teachers to raise concerns and discuss issues.



Classroom:

Golden Rules have been drawn up with each class. The aim is to decide on a code which enables all to learn well and get on well together. These rules will be displayed in each classroom and the assembly room. Golden Rules will encourage politeness, kindness, honesty, gentleness, sharing, listening and respect for all.

Yard:

The Golden Rules incorporate the principles of respect for others. Sharing and caring apply to yard rules. Again, withdrawal under supervision or Time Out will apply to any violations. Children will be encouraged to play and to ensure that no child is excluded. Children are encouraged to remember the Golden Rules at line up time and entering the yard. Jostling and overtaking is not acceptable.

Other areas in the school:

Wet Days

In the interests of safety, running in the classroom or within the building is not permitted. The same rules apply to wet days as when playing in the yard. The format of wet play depends on the teacher on yard duty. This could involve halla play or classroom dvd.

School related activities:

Standards and rules contained in the code of behaviour apply to any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school e.g. school tours, games and extra-curricular activities and other school-linked events.

Rewards and sanctions

Rewards for acknowledgement of good behaviour:

Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the individuality of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. An approach which utilises encouragement rather than praise should be developed.

- Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults/peer group in the school.
- Rewarding for academic and social achievements must hold equal status
- Parents will hear good news on a regular basis about their child via the incentive systems. These include the following strategies : responsibility badges, sharing work with an audience, displaying work, verbal comments to parents, inviting parents to see work, stickers awarded by adults for behaviour and work, certificates etc.

The use of a range of rewards is also effective. Among those used at present are:

- Comments/stickers or smiley faces in children's work



- Public praise in front of peers
- A system of merit marks
- Regular assemblies where public mention and note is made of good examples, both of work and behaviour.
- Reward certificates or stickers for particular achievements.
- Recording achievements in profiles
- Sharing achievements with parents.
- Opportunities for greater responsibilities in school.
- Specific privileges in use of school equipment or facilities.

We recognise that there will be occasions when there will be problems of behaviour, for many reasons. We will always endeavour to understand the reasons for the misbehaviour, so that we can deal with it effectively. When dealing with problems we will always label the behaviour not the child.

Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour:

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognised: Minor, Serious and Gross. All 'everyday' instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour.

Only in cases of repeated serious misbehaviour and failure to improve after meeting(s) between parents, teacher and principal will temporary suspension be considered. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools. In the case of Gross misbehaviour the Board of Management can authorise the principal to sanction an immediate suspension pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. Expulsion may only be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130(6).

Please see examples of serious and gross misbehaviour below:

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Bullying – including alienation and intimidation
- Racism
- Verbal/physical abuse of adults and children
- Theft
- Damage to property
- Any behaviour which poses serious damage to the pupil or others

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil
- Serious Theft
- Serious damage to property

For repeated serious and gross misbehaviour:

- Suspension
- Expulsion

It is recognised that serious/gross misbehaviour is often the result of the child being emotionally disturbed. In these cases every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment. Where there is a need for a child to be assessed in relation to specific behavioural problems, the school should endeavour to raise concerns with parents sensitively and to give families as much support as possible.

Involving parents in the management of problem behaviour

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy that can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings
- Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (1st -6th class)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school.
- School notice board

Sanctions (to deal with persistent minor misbehaviour):

Classroom	Yard
Step 1: Verbal reprimand or warning	Step 1: Verbal reprimand or warning
Step 2: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Loss of 5 minutes of Golden Time/ Time out (Junior Classes)	Step 2: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Time out for 1 – 5 mins for Junior Classes Time out 5 – 10 mins for Senior Classes
Step 3: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Child carries out individual work within the classroom away from their group.	Step 3: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Name recorded in incident report book
Step 4: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Child moved to another classroom for a short period. (Parents may be informed at this stage if the teacher deems it necessary)	Step 4: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Parents informed,
Step 5: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Parents informed verbally or through homework journal	Step 5: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Principal and parents meet
Step 6: Child Persists with Behaviour:- Principal reprimands pupil and if necessary meet with parents, teacher and pupil.	

- When serious misbehaviour occurs, Step 3 and 4 may be implemented immediately.
- When gross misbehaviour occurs, Step 5 may be implemented immediately.

The following steps dealing with persistent serious or gross misbehaviour are in accordance with the Department of Education and Science guidelines and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools.

Sanctions to deal with Persistent serious or gross misbehaviour:

- Communication by Principal with parents – verbal or in writing
- Meeting between principal and parents
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed



- Parents will be requested in writing to attend school to meet the Chairperson and the principal.
- If parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil will be suspended for a temporary period. Please see next section for details.

Suspension Procedure

Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130 (5) for National Schools, which states:

Where the Board of Management deems it necessary to make provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils or with a serious breach of discipline, by authorising the chairperson or the principal to exclude a pupil or pupils from school the maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days.

A special decision of the board of management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupil's or pupils' parents or guardians. In exceptional circumstances, the board of management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed

- Suspension will be considered for gross misbehaviour or serious misbehaviour.
- Save in the case of immediate suspension, the chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the Principal. At such a meeting, the misbehaviour will be discussed and where appropriate, alternatives to suspension will be considered. This may require the parents to give an undertaking to ensure that their child will comply with the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Following such a meeting, (or if parents fail to attend without good reason, the date on which said meeting would have taken place), the pupil may be suspended for a temporary period.
- The Chairperson or the Principal is authorised by the Board of Management to sanction suspension for a period of up to three days without reverting to the BOM, but the BOM may sanction a longer period of exclusion in accordance with Rule 130 (5)
- Parents will be advised of the suspension or the possibility of suspension in writing. The terms and dates of the termination of the suspension will be communicated in writing.

Immediate Suspension

Immediate suspension for up to three school days can and may be invoked by the Principal in the case of serious misbehaviour/gross misbehaviour, which constitutes a danger to the child or others, or which is unduly disruptive to the education of other pupils.

Procedure

1. Parents will be contacted immediately to take child home. The child will be removed from the classroom and supervised until parents arrive to collect child.



2. The Chairperson of the Board of Management to be informed. The Secretary to the Board of Management will be informed if the Chairperson is unavailable.

3. At the end of the immediate suspension period, the child may be reinstated in accordance with the provisions below, or the Board of Management may approve a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.

4. Following suspension, the parent will be advised in writing of the terms and date of the termination of the suspension.

Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parents may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The parents must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Policy 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 or unduly disrupt the education of the other pupils. 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.

Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Education Welfare Act 2000 and in accordance with Rule 130(6) for National Schools, which states:

No pupil shall be struck off the rolls for breaches of discipline without the prior consent of the patron and unless alternative suitable arrangements are made for the enrolment of the pupil at another suitable school.

Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board of Management shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000

Appeal

Parents may appeal suspensions (over 20 days in any one school year) and expulsions to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended).

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought from support services within the wider community e.g. Community Care Services.

Keeping records

A standardised record system will allow the school to track an individual student's behaviour and to check whether efforts to change behaviour are working. All interventions aimed at helping the student to deal with unacceptable behaviour should also be recorded, including contact with parents or referral to other agencies.



Positive responses by a student, and evidence of changed behaviour, should be recorded, as should any sanction used, together with the reason why the sanction was imposed. Students should be told when a record is being made about their behaviour, and the reasons for keeping a record. Records should be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003. The eight rules of data protection apply to personal records kept in school:

- Obtain and process information fairly.
- Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes.
- Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes.
- Keep it safe and secure.
- Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date.
- Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes.
- Give a copy of their personal data to an individual on request.
- Records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Reference to other policies

1. Positive Language Policy
2. SPHE Plan
3. Anti-bullying
4. Enrolment
5. Health and Safety
6. Special Educational Needs
7. Attendance

Date Created	January 2015
Date of last Review	By June 2018
Date of next review	By June 2020