



TYRRELSTOWN

Educate Together National School

Code of Behaviour

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¹ A policy is that which has been approved directly by the Board of Management.

² A procedure is that which approval of has been delegated to the Principal and staff by the Board of Management.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Our Vision

Tyrrelstown Educate Together National School (TETNS) is a Multidenominational co-educational school catering for pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class including two ASD classes under the patronage of Educate Together. We strive in co-operation with parents and guardians to provide a holistic education in a caring and secure environment where each child is encouraged to achieve to the best of his/her ability.

1.2. 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 (opens in new window)

1.3. Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit/Ethos of the School

The code of behaviour at TETNS 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 as outlined in our school mission statement. 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, on a yearly basis, at a level appropriate to their age.

The purpose of this Code is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents/guardians, pupils and other relevant persons on how we ensure an orderly and positive climate for learning in our school.

1.4. When The Code Of Behaviour Applies

The school's Code of Behaviour applies during school hours, at all extra-curricular classes, at swimming classes or sporting excursions, at all fund-raising and social events organised by the school or by the Parents Association, on School Tours and at all events organised by, on behalf of, or in the name of TETNS. Children must be accompanied at all such events and if parents are present at any of these events, they are ultimately responsible for their own children.

1.5. Aims And Objectives

By implementing this policy and the appended school rules we hope:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our vision 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 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 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

‘Fairness isn’t about giving everybody the same; it’s about giving everybody what they need’

All members of the school community will be provided with a copy of the Code of Behaviour upon enrolment/employment at TETNS. 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 and deputy principal.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

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

2.1. 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.

2.2. Principal

- 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

2.3. 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 maximise positive behaviour.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with challenging behaviour.
- Keep a written record of instances of serious challenging behaviour or repeated instances of poor behaviour on Aladdin.
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern
- Report matters of serious concern to the Principal or Deputy Principal
- Record incidents including on yard in Incident and Accident Book and/or on the online form on Aladdin.
- Engaging with in-school reviews of behaviour(e.g. at monthly staff meetings)

2.4. Pupils

- Attend school 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

2.5. 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
- Adhering to the Code of Conduct for Parents, which is as follows:

2.5.1 Code of Conduct for Parents

Parents are expected to:

- *Ensure their children attend school and are punctual*
- *Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficiently healthy lunch and are appropriately dressed*
- *Be courteous at all times towards pupils, staff and other parents*
- *Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/Principal through the office*
- *Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same*
- *Label pupils coats and other personal property*
- *Strictly supervise pre-school children/siblings, when in the school*
- *Use appropriate language on school grounds*

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health and Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested:

- *Not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises*
- *Not to approach a member of staff in a threatening manner. Any issues that may arise should be discussed calmly during a pre-arranged appointment*
- *Not to smoke or consume alcohol on school grounds*

Parents who do not comply with these requests and are deemed to pose a threat to the health and safety of our pupils/staff/parents, may be prohibited from entering onto school grounds.

As part of the whole school approach to behaviour, the following courtesies are expected from all members of the school community.

1. Greeting others with a smile and saying thank you and please, go raibh maith agat and más é do thoil é and dia duit/good morning and slán/goodbye in the afternoon.
2. Allowing others to go ahead of you through the door or gate.
3. Holding the door/gate open for others, in particular visitors, parents, someone carrying something, or for someone younger or smaller than you.
4. If you need to get someone's attention, say 'excuse me' or 'gabh mo leithséal' and then wait until the person is ready. That is unless it is urgent, (for example you need to use the bathroom or someone is injured – in which case you say 'excuse me – it's urgent')
5. Being patient if you are at the school office (e.g. if the secretary is on the phone or the door is closed).
6. Complying with requests from staff without discussions or questions as to why. If someone feels they have been treated unfairly or needs to discuss the request they should comply first and then ask to talk about it later. Pupils could discuss the issue with their parents/teacher for advice.

3. 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 positive behaviour whereby pupils are entered by means of earned tickets into a draw, which takes place at a school assembly. To encourage positive behaviour, individual teachers use various reward systems within their own classrooms, such

as Class Dojo, Table of the Week, Student of the Week, Golden Time etc. The school rules, listed below, make clear which kind of behaviours are acceptable and which are not.

3.1. School Rules

1. *Always show respect to yourself, to others and their belongings*
2. *Always be on time and prepared for school*
3. *Always be safe*
4. *Always do your best*

The aims of our school rules are to ensure that all children are:

Trustworthy, polite, punctual and prepared for school

Educated in a safe and welcoming environment

Thoughtful and respectful of each other, our space and our property

Nurtured to fulfil their potential

Satisfied they are doing their best

3.1.1 Guidelines for behaviour within the school

Our mission statement guides us in the general standards of behaviour that the school expects from pupils. 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 behave in an orderly fashion in the classroom, moving around the school and going to and from the playground.
- Children are expected to come to and leave school on time. The school day begins at 8.40am 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 classwork properly – this includes appropriate clothing and footwear and clothing 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.
- Children are expected to show understanding towards children for whom some of these guidelines may be challenging e.g. children with special educational needs.

These guidelines can also be found in the TETNS Charter of Rights and Responsibilities (which are displayed in each classroom):

I have the right to an education.

I have the responsibility to study and do my best in class.

I have the right to feel safe in school.

I have the responsibility to be friendly and include others.

I have the right to speak in class at appropriate times.

I have the responsibility to listen to others when they speak.

I have the right to be involved in all class activities.

I have the responsibility to include all my classmates.

I have the right to a clean environment.

I have the responsibility to help keep my school clean and tidy.

The teacher has the right to teach.

I have the responsibility to behave well and pay attention.



3.1.2 Our rules for behaving well

Based on our golden rules, we have come up with a more specific set of guidelines so that it makes it easier for all children to behave well.

The drop: Walk quietly towards the school every morning and line up at the correct line for your class. Junior Infant children should line up at their class line inside the yellow line. Parents should remain outside this yellow line. All other classes line up at their area on the yard. In the interests of Health & Safety, the doors are open at 8.40am, regardless of weather. No responsibility can be taken for children left before the doors are open. To avoid congestion, parents/guardians are requested to retreat outside the yellow line once their child has joined the correct line and the bell has sounded.

The collection: Junior and Senior Infants are dismissed at 1.20pm. They will be handed over to their parents by the teacher at their assigned area. Parents/guardians are requested to remain outside the school until a member of staff indicates that classes are ready to be collected. Senior classes are brought their assigned exit point where they should be met by their parents/minders punctually at 2.20pm. No responsibility can be taken for children not collected promptly at the normal closing times.

The walking: The inside of the school is a walking zone at all times. At drop off and collection times everybody is asked to walk in the yard. In particular toddlers waiting with parents/guardians or minders should not be allowed to run around.

The Climbing: No one should climb on the walls, railings or anywhere on the school premises. This includes the times before the drop and after the collection.

The left hand: Please hold the stair rail with your left hand at all times. Younger siblings should follow the same rule, for health and safety reasons. Take care when opening swing doors.

The clothing for school: Clothing should always be appropriate to the weather. This includes the drop, the collection and yard time. Children in all classes should wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes all the time as every day involves some kind of movement or physical activity. Clothes should also be suitable for arts activities. All removable clothing should be labelled. Make up should not be worn in school. Clothing should be age appropriate, for example clothing such as low cut tops, string vests and t-shirts with offensive, sexual or violent slogans should not be worn at school. It is recommended that infant children have a spare set of clothing in the school at all times, either left in the classroom or in the schoolbag.

The clothing for PE: In order to take part in PE classes, children must be wearing suitable clothing i.e. tracksuit and runners. Appropriate footwear is very important. Children should not wear jewellery and long hair should be tied back. Children who do not comply with the above will not be allowed to take part in PE and will be given an explanatory note to get signed at home. PE days will be highlighted for each class at the beginning of each year and will be published on the school website.

The never leave the school: Children should never leave the school without permission from the teaching staff.

The language: Bad language (curses and swear words) or derogatory, racist, homophobic or sexist language should never be used, in any language.

The expensive toys: Any electronic toys, including games consoles and cameras may not be brought into the school. The school is not responsible for any such toys which are lost or damaged on the school premises or during school-related activities.

The Mobile phone: We prefer that children do not bring mobile phones to school. If they need to have a mobile with them, it should be switched off and out of sight before they come into the school and not taken out until they leave the school premises in the evening. Children who do not comply will get one warning and then have phones confiscated. Parents may collect confiscated phones from the teacher or the office. The school is not responsible for any mobile phones which are lost or damaged on the school premises or during school-related activities.

The road safety: Care needs to be taken by drivers and children at all times. Parents/guardians should ensure that their children are enabled to cross the road safely. Children should take care if crossing the road unaccompanied. Parents who leave their vehicle to accompany their child in or out of the school should ensure that they are parked legally. The carpark in the school is for staff only with the exception of the disabled parking spots for those with blue badges.

3.1.2.1 Classroom Procedures:

Class rules are set in each class by the teacher and the class and are based upon our code of behaviour which set a positive atmosphere for learning. These include a procedure for leaving your seat, going to the bathroom, getting the teachers attention, keeping the room tidy and safe for everyone, changing tasks and lining up and generally looking out for one another.

A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour will operate in each class.

3.1.2.2 Our Yard Rules:

The yard rules support the Aims and Objectives of this policy as outlined in Section 1.5 of this policy.

On the yard, we always:

- Respect the boundaries of the yard
- Respect each other and our belongings
- Keep our hands and feet to ourselves

- Show respect to the adults on yard
- Tell an adult if we are hurt or upset

On the yard, we never:

- Hurt, hit, kick, spit or engage in rough play
- Leave the yard without permission

Yard time is ended by the school bell and/or adult's whistle. The first whistle means FREEZE, the second whistle or instruction means line up quietly.

Positive reinforcements such as Student/Class of the Yard and other awards, as well as sanctions such as Timeouts, are used to ensure that the yard rules are followed appropriately.

Further details on the yard rules will be available in our Yard Supervision Policy.

School related activities: The code of behaviour applies to all out of school activities, including extracurricular activities, school outings and tours.

3.2. Dealing with Day-to-day Behaviour Issues

Pupils frequently bring behaviour issues to teachers for resolution when they themselves are unable to resolve them. Teachers encourage, support and show pupils how they may be able to resolve these issues. In this way, pupils build up the skills necessary for the resolution of issues in later life. Children should be enabled to resolve conflicts with the aid of a teacher.

When the teacher judges it necessary, (s)he will become involved and help resolve a behaviour issue. The vast majority of issues will be resolved at this point. This may happen with or without consulting the parent, or principal, or other designated senior member of staff.

Parents are kept informed, as appropriate, about the resolution of behaviour issues and the teacher decides when this is appropriate, or responds to parents' queries at any time. Teachers act on the principle that it is better for parents to be aware than not aware of behaviour issues which arise. The principal may intervene informally in the resolution of minor issues, as appropriate.

3.3. Dealing with More Serious Behaviour Issues

As described above, the school seeks to resolve issues at the lowest level possible. However, when behaviour issues arise which may require a sanction, either because of the level of disruption, upset or hurt caused or because of the persistence of the disruption, upset or hurt, the teacher and/or the principal will investigate the problem and will decide on the appropriate sanction.



3.4. A Graded Response to Different Behaviour Issues

The following strategies, indicating increasing levels of seriousness, may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand, together with advice on how to improve
- Temporary separation (within the classroom) from peers, friends or others
- Instruction to carry out some useful task in the school
- Loss / withdrawal of privileges
- Detention during a break period
- Referral to Principal
- Communication with parents
- Formal report to the Board of Management
- Suspension
- Expulsion

3.5. Bullying

In dealing with any incidence of bullying behaviour, teachers have regard to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy which is available to parents via the school website or by request. Bullying is defined as repeated aggression (verbal, psychological or physical) conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour (which, of course, are not condoned) are not regarded as bullying. But when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying. The Department of Education and Science has identified a number of different types of bullying and the school accepts this definition of what constitutes bullying. It includes: physical aggression, intimidation, isolation, name-calling, and "slagging", unwarranted demands for things and damage to property.

3.6. Absences / Reporting Of Absences

- The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 (Section 18) requires parents to notify the Principal of the reasons for a child's absence. In line with Section 23 of the same act, the following procedures must be followed regarding notification of a child's absence from school:
- When a child returns to school after an absence, parents will send a letter outlining the reason(s) for absence.

- The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Section 21(4) requires a school Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if a pupil is absent from school for a total of 20 days or more during a school year.
- Section 21(4) also obliges Principal to notify an Educational Welfare Office if a child is “not attending school regularly”.
- On occasion, and for a variety of reasons, a pupil has to leave school early. Written notification of this, outlining the reason(s) must be given to the class teacher in advance. Parents, or others acting on behalf of parents, who come to collect children early, must call to reception / the school office for this purpose and will be asked to sign them out. Under no circumstances are pupils allowed to leave the school building unaccompanied to meet parents or others off-site.

4. Suspension and Expulsion

4.1. Suspension

Only in exceptional circumstances will the school consider suspending a pupil. In line with the Multidenominational values of the school, every effort will be made to bring out the best in each pupil, and we always make a distinction between disapproving wrongful actions while continuing to recognise the personal value of each individual.

However, suspension is occasionally necessary and in that situation, the school will follow the procedures below, as required under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

(Written records are kept if a pupil displays continuing negative behaviours, and a general record is kept of incidents in the yard, or in individual classrooms).

When suspension is being considered, and before any form of suspension is imposed, parents/guardians will be contacted to discuss their child’s behaviour. If the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management are satisfied with any undertaking given by the parents of the child and by the child concerned, a proposed suspension may be deferred or dropped. Any suspension to be imposed will be notified to parents in advance and a date and time for the child’s return to school will be specified. The Principal will re-introduce any suspended pupil to his or her class on a specified date. At the time of return from suspension, it will be necessary for a child and his/her parents to give a formal undertaking (in writing, dated and signed) that the behaviour which led to suspension will not be repeated. If parents decline to sign, this fact will be noted and recorded.

4.2. Immediate (or Automatic) Suspension

The Board of Management has given authority in writing to the Chairperson of the Board and the Principal, acting together, to sanction an immediate suspension in exceptional circumstances. Immediate or Automatic suspension can be imposed if the continued presence of the pupil in the school represents a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff or any other person. The Principal and the Chairperson, acting together, may, at their

discretion, remove an imposed suspension in light of changed circumstances or of representations which they believe warrant such removal.

(See Appendices A and B for list of specific behaviours which warrant immediate suspension and for procedures to be followed in all cases of proposed suspension)

4.2. Expulsion

The Board of Management has authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the Principal. Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a pupil. Procedures relating to Expulsion are set out in Appendix C.

5. Communication with parents about behaviour

The schools SPHE curriculum and the Learn Together curriculum are used to support good behaviour throughout the school. Good communication between teachers and parents is essential for optimal pupil progress. To that end teachers are committed to contacting parents with any concerns regarding a child's behaviour.

Equally we encourage parents to talk to their child's class teacher about their concerns. The homework journal or a note can be useful for this purpose. For more detailed and sensitive discussions, it is best to arrange a meeting with the class teacher. This means that both parties can sit down and discuss issues confidentially and in comfort. The afternoon is more suitable for formal meetings and appointments can be arranged with the administrator or the teacher. If it is difficult for you to get to the school, phone contact can be arranged.

Meetings with parents/guardians take place in the first term each year. The code of behaviour is explained at these meetings. Individual parent teacher meetings, usually in November, also take place and behaviour is also discussed at this meeting.

6. Children with Special Educational Needs and the Code of Behaviour

The enrolment policy of the school provides for equality of access and participation within the school. While some children come to school with additional supports ready in place, for others, their needs become more evident as they get older.

Additional staffing and resources may be put in place to help support children and assist their successful integration into TETNS. Challenging behaviour can be related to special needs. Often, while the challenging behaviour can be very obvious, the attendant special educational need may not be. It may be perceived that the child is somehow "getting away with things" or being treated more favourably (for example being allowed movement breaks). Every effort is made to deal with all children through the regular code of behaviour. Sometimes, however special additional measures and an individualised approach needs to be put in place to help children with SEN and to keep them and their peers safe and able to

access the curriculum in the school. Some children for whom special consideration is given, will also be attending clinical and therapeutic services outside school.

Part of the successful implementation of this policy will be in building a better understanding among our school community of special Educational needs, including challenging behaviour and its causes, which in turn will lead to more successful inclusion.

'Fairness isn't about giving everybody the same; it's about giving everybody what they need'

7. Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

The emphasis in TETNS is on 'catching children being good' and on the ongoing rewarding of good behaviour. We do this in a number of ways

- Reward tickets
- Star of the Week
- Student of the Yard
- Homework Passes
- Golden Time
- Bonus Points
- Plus Points
- Notes home
- and other in-class and whole school rewards

8. Procedures for responding to inappropriate behaviour.

- All observations/reports of inappropriate behaviour are investigated and dealt with by the teachers.
- Minor incidents of misbehaviour should be dealt with by the class teacher/teacher on yard duty by way of warning and/or advice in the first instance.
- The children should be spoken to directly at an early stage. In many cases the issue is resolved at this point. Sanctions should be in line with the school code of behaviour.
- Should this not resolve the issue, the advice of the principal/deputy principal is sought. Steps at this stage may include meetings with the class teacher and/or principal.

- The principal should not be involved in minor incidents of inappropriate behaviour. However, the principal may offer advice at any time to members of staff dealing with inappropriate behaviour of any sort.
- In general sanctions should be associated with the misdemeanour, for example misbehaving at PE might mean missing PE the following week; not completing homework might mean completing the work during break time, inappropriate behaviour in the yard might mean a timeout on the yard.
- If there is not clarity around the incident i.e. where it was not witnessed or where accounts vary, the “**what, where, when, who and why**” should be investigated by the class teacher and entered in to the discipline book for the class level.
- Non-teaching staff such as the school secretary, caretaker, cleaners and the special needs assistants are encouraged to report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant class teacher and/or the principal.
- Non-teaching staff should act as a prudent adult would act on observing inappropriate behaviour i.e. tell the child to stop, intervene if someone is injured or hurt. All incidents should be reported to the teacher on duty/class teacher as soon as possible. Sanctions should be overseen by the teacher on duty/class teacher, in line with the code of behaviour.
- The principal should be informed of all observed/reported incidents of major misdemeanours and of persistent minor infringements and consulted on appropriate action.
- Parents should always be informed of and consulted on persistent minor infringements.
- A written record should be kept of all major misdemeanours and persistent minor misdemeanours.
- In addition to the sanctions for the offending child, as set out in this document, support may also be offered to the child who is the subject of the incident, and to the class if appropriate. This might include a whole school/class/small group lessons dealing with respect, self-esteem, bullying, building a better understanding of special Educational needs, etc.

8.1. Examples of minor misdemeanours include:

Lack of respect, for example:

Talking out of turn, inappropriate comments, lack of attention in class or yard, distracting others in class or yard, interfering in others games in yard, leaving seat without permission, homework not done or incomplete, mobile phones out/switched on, eating during lessons, chewing gum, messing / mock fighting / jostling and pushing, shouting and loudness in class, spitting on the ground, throwing things (other than at people), climbing / running in class lines / inside the school, bad language, derogatory language, not following instructions.

8.1.1. Sanctions for minor misdemeanours include

Discussion with pupil and agreement on a more appropriate way to act in future

Verbal and / or written apology

Verbal and / or written undertaking to improve

Reasoning with the pupil

Verbal warning

Visual warning

Confiscation of item

Time out (in and out of the classroom)

Extra work

Loss of privileges, for example, not being allowed to do jobs, not being allowed to sit on the student council, reduced golden time, etc.

Loss of yard time

Communication with parents

Informal word with the principal, who has a quiet word with the child

Teachers may also use the strategy of planned ignoring (ignoring attention seeking behaviour, that is not a danger to other pupils), followed by discussion.

8.2. Examples of major misdemeanours may include

- Persistent minor misdemeanours (see above)
- Leaving the class, yard, park or activity without permission
- Abusive / threatening or violent language directed to a person
- Persistent refusal to take instructions
- Bullying (see anti-bullying policy)
- Hitting out in a threatening manner at another person
- Stealing
- Deliberately damaging property
- Bringing any dangerous objects or illegal substances to school
- Recording staff or other children on electronic devices without permission

- Sexual harassment of a person by word, action or gesture

8.2.1 Sanctions for major misdemeanours include:

Discussion with parents and staff, including the principal, to include a verbal and / or written apology, together with any or all of the following sanctions as appropriate:

- Removal from class
- Formal communication with parents / guardians by letter
- Referral to principal
- Sent home early (informal suspension) with parent
- Extended removal of privileges, including suspension/exclusion from extra-curricular activities, school outings/tours, etc.
- BOM informed
- Formal suspension for up to three days
- Immediate suspension for up to three days
- Use of the individual behavioural plan procedure (see below)
- Expulsion
- Report to or seek assistance from Gardaí

8.3. Individual behavioural plan procedure

(for the management of ongoing, serious challenging behaviour/aggression from an individual child).

Definition:

- The consistent refusal of a child to obey instructions
- Persistently seriously disruptive behaviour
- Exhibitions of unpredictable and, possibly, violent or aggressive behaviour

A team meeting to prepare an Individual Behavioural Plan shall be convened. All those involved with the child may be invited to attend (for example, the principal, teacher(s), parents, special needs assistant and school psychologist).

The agenda for the meeting shall comprise:

An assessment of the strengths and needs of the child, to include his/her academic and attainment record; behaviour record; interests; any special educational needs; temperament; priority needs; both short term and long term, in terms of learning and behaviour.

A plan shall be agreed between school and home and shall include:

- Strategies for encouraging positive behaviour (praise, encouragement, incentives)
- General strategies for dealing with poor behaviour / lack of engagement with learning
- Particular set of strategies for specific named behaviours
- Supports for staff / other children in the class
- Rewards for good behaviour both at home and at school
- Sanctions or consequences for poor behaviour both at home and at school
- Resources available (materials, personnel, equipment) to implement the plan
- Arrangements for monitoring targets
- Referral to outside agencies
- Agreed home-school communication going forward i.e. parent / teacher contact, behavioural diary
- Agreed timetable for action and date for follow up meeting

In these instances, parent shall be told that a risk assessment shall be done on all activities the child is involved with to ensure his/her safety and the safety of others. This shall apply particularly to school tours and other out-of-school-activities. This may mean the child may not be allowed to take part in some school activities for his/her safety and that of the others in the class.

Teachers should not leave the school premises, with children involved in an individual behaviour plan, without an additional staff member to support the teacher and a mobile phone.

The principal shall give a brief report to the Board of Management, in relation to all children involved in an individual behaviour plan, by way of ongoing updates on the situation.

9. Suspension and Expulsion

9.1. Suspension

Suspension is defined as 'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days' (NEWB guidelines, p.70). Exclusion for part of a school day, as a sanction, or asking parents to keep a student from school, as a sanction, counts as a suspension. Suspension will be considered as part of a range of sanctions where a student has engaged in a major misdemeanour. While suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern, a single instance of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. The decision to suspend will be based on the following grounds:

- The seriously detrimental effect on the education of the other students of the student's behaviour to date
- Whether the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for deliberately hurting any person or damaging property

The purpose of suspension includes: providing a respite for staff and students, giving the student time to reflect on their actions and giving parents/guardians and staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change their unacceptable behaviour. Suspension shall be used as part of an agreed plan to address the student's behaviour.

The procedures in respect of suspension are those outlined in section 11.5 of the NEWB guidelines for schools. The Board of Management of TETNS has delegated authority to the principal to suspend pupils for periods of up to three days. If a suspension for a longer period is being proposed, the principal should refer to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. Reports to the Board and to the relevant authorities should be made in line with NEWB guidelines.

(Refer to pages 70 – 78, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008 http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf)

9.2. 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 officer*' (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. This authority will be exercised in line with the procedures outlined on pages 80 – 87, Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008.

http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

9.3. Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) expulsion (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. Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to the parent or student. (See Circular 22/02). Parents will be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion by letter from the Chairperson of the Board / Principal. Parents will be given a copy of Circular 22/02 and related forms.

(Section 12, Circular 22/02 – Processing of an appeal)
http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guifelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

10. Keeping records

It is important for staff to keep a record of poor behaviour so that they can be confident of their accuracy when discussing the matter with parents and so that patterns in behaviour can be noted. It is the policy of the school that parents are informed of persistent minor misdemeanours and major misdemeanours sooner rather than later. Underlying this reporting should be an ongoing positive two way relationship between the parents and the school that fosters good communication and maintains high levels of parental involvement in the interests of the child. Consistency is achieved through clear adherence to this policy and regular discussion at staff meetings.

The following records are kept:

The Accident/Incident reports on Aladdin

Accident/incident reports are uploaded on Aladdin by the teacher under the child's individual profile. These reports are used to record incidents of minor misbehaviour and any other issues relevant challenging behaviour. It is also used for mention of major incidents / accidents. All recorded incidents during yard time should be reported by the teacher on duty to the class teacher at the end of break and a synopsis emailed to the class teacher for uploading on Aladdin as the teacher on duty may not have access to the pupils Aladdin account. Sanctions should be imposed by the teacher on duty and communicated to the class teacher. Serious incidents should be reported to the principal or in his absence, the deputy principal.

11. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

TETNS requires parents to inform the school of a child's absence as follows:

Short absences can be explained on Aladdin Connect, phoned or emailed to the office on the day of absence. All longer absences must be informed in writing, by email or uploaded to Aladdin Connect. The school complies with the requirements of the NEWB on reporting student absence.

(See forms on www.newb.ie)

12. Reference to other Policies

The following policies and plans are relevant to the proper implementation of the Code of Behaviour

- Learn Together Policy

- SPHE plan
- Anti-bullying policy
- Child Protection policy
- Critical Incident
- Health & Safety policy

13. Success Criteria

Success criteria establish the link between information as to how things should be and information as to how things are. The criteria are used to express the ideal. The criteria will allow the school to judge how well it is achieving its stated intention. Success can be measurable through perceptions or by using factual data.

Through the successful implementation of this policy the intended outcomes are:

- Children are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy
- Children are making informed choices about their behaviour through understanding and awareness of their role and responsibilities (as outlined in section 1)
- Children, parents and teachers understand the need for some deviations from the standards of behaviour for children with SEN and do not complain about unfairness in relation to this
- Children are responsive to positive correction, and show respect for other people
- Children are including others in their games
- Children are following yard rules
- Children are following class rules
- Children are following school rules
- School property is respected and there is no intentional damage being caused
- Children, teachers and parents are reporting any bullying behaviour (see anti-bullying code)
- Teachers are implementing the range of rewards and sanctions as listed in this policy
- Children, teachers and parents have appropriate awareness of the Code of Behaviour, are consulted about it, and reminded of its content on an ongoing basis
- Children, teachers and parents are greeting each other, saying thank you and please, allowing others to go ahead of them through the door when appropriate
- Children are getting someone's attention without being rude or interrupting

- Children are not querying the requests of the staff, as they understand requests are based on the principles of this code
- Bad language or derogatory language is not heard around the school
- The Board of Management continue to be actively involved in the promotion, implementation and review of the code of behaviour
- Behavioural plan strategies are being implemented where necessary and all relevant educational stakeholders have been part of this process
- Where cases of suspension and / or expulsion have occurred the procedures as outlined in this policy have been followed
- Teachers are keeping factual records of incidents of poor / disruptive behaviour in their classes
- Teachers are using the accident/incident book and online forms to record incidents of misbehaviour and any other observations of note in relation to the children at playtime
- Behaviour is noted in parent / teacher meetings and in end of year pupil reports
- Parents are informing the school about their child/ren's absences

14. Review and ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of TETNS on _____. A copy will be provided to all families and staff before the new school year begins. It will take effect from _____. It is acknowledged that this is a fluid document and will require regular revision to effectively fulfil the aims contained in it. Children, staff, parents and the Board of Management will engage with The Code of Behaviour on an ongoing basis as outlined below.

Children

- Standards of behaviour, with reference to our Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, sanctions and rewards as detailed in this policy will be reviewed with each class, in an age-appropriate manner, at the start of each school year
- Class rules will also be drawn up at this time
- Class rules will be reviewed after each mid-term and term break with the children
- In term three, a lesson in Learn Together will be based on the Code of Behaviour and will be used to gather any feedback from the children. This will be given to the principal.

Staff

- 'Yard' will remain a standing point on the agenda for monthly staff meetings
- One staff meeting annually will specifically address the Code of Behaviour where staff can review their responsibilities for its implementation and discuss any suggestion for change or amendment to the document

Parents

- General parent meetings will address the Code of Behaviour and will give parents a brief outline of the responsibilities of the children, the parents and the staff in ensuring the guidelines are being adhered to and fully implemented
- Parent-teacher meetings will include reference to the behaviour of the individual child
- Feedback sheets will continue to be sent to parents at the end of the year and will allow them to give any feedback about their involvement with the Code of Behaviour during the year.

Appendix A - Suspension

A.1. Authority to Suspend

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a pupil and may do so for up to ten consecutive school days at one time or for a total of twenty days in a full school year. The authority to suspend a pupil for up to three consecutive school days has been delegated by the Board of Management in writing to the Principal. Such suspension will only be imposed on the grounds listed below.

A.2. General Considerations

Whenever suspension is being considered, and before any form of suspension is imposed, parents/guardians will be invited to attend at the school to discuss their child's behaviour. If the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management are satisfied with any undertaking given by the parents of the child, a proposed suspension may be deferred or dropped.

Before proceeding with any proposed suspension, parents will be notified in advance and a date and time for the child's return to school will be specified. On return to school, the Principal will re-introduce any suspended pupil to his or her class on the date specified. At the time of return from suspension, it will be necessary for a child and his/her parents to give a formal undertaking (in writing, dated and signed) that the behaviour which led to suspension will not be repeated.

Appendix B - Procedures

B.1. Procedures for Immediate (or Automatic) Suspension

The Principal and, in his absence, the Deputy Principal, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Management, have been authorised in writing by the Board of Management to impose immediate suspension for a maximum of three days.

This will only be done when the continued presence of the pupil in the school represents a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff or any other person, or for any one of the following behaviours:

- The use of an offensive weapon or material to inflict injury or harm on another person or to threaten to inflict injury or harm on another person.
- The defiant refusal to carry out the instructions of a teacher.
- To protect the safety of the pupil or other pupils or staff.
- The deliberate destruction of school property.

When an immediate suspension is imposed, the parents will be notified immediately and arrangements made with them for the pupil to be collected. No pupil will ever be sent home alone.

When an immediate suspension is considered by the principal to be warranted for one or more of the named behaviours, a preliminary investigation will first be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Subsequently, a formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension, during which the suspended pupil will be invited to the school to be interviewed, in the presence of his/her parents.

B.2. Procedures for Non-Immediate Suspension

When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Principal will.

- Inform the pupil and parents about the complaint by phone or in writing.
- Give the pupil and the parents an opportunity to respond.
- Remove the pupil from his/her class peers to an appropriate location under staff supervision until a determination is made about suspension.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to respond, to make their case for lessening the sanction and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the pupil's behaviour.

B.3. Duration of Suspension

A pupil will not be suspended for more than three days except in exceptional circumstances. The Board of Management considers that the Principal would be justified in recommending a suspension of five days in the following circumstances.

- When the pupil fails to recognise or acknowledge the seriousness of the events leading to a proposed suspension.

- Where injury has been inflicted on another person sufficiently serious as to warrant medical attention beyond first aid and /or a visit to a doctor.
- Where the pupil continues to display belligerence, hostility or aggression.

If a suspension longer than three days is recommended by the principal, the matter will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes. The Board of Management may authorise the principal in writing, to impose a suspension of up to five days – with approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management – in circumstances where a meeting of the Board of Management cannot be convened in a timely fashion, subject to the guidance already provided to the principal concerning such suspensions.

The Board of Management will not impose a suspension of more than ten consecutive school days on a pupil at any one time.

B.4. Appeals against Suspension:

The Board of Management will offer an opportunity to appeal the principal's recommendation to suspend a pupil for three days. If an appeal is made before a suspension is to take place, then the pupil will be separated from classroom peers, under staff supervision, until the appeal is complete and the appeal decision is relayed to parents. If the appeal is not upheld or if the period of suspension is altered but not set aside, then the suspension will begin as soon as practical after the decision on the appeal is relayed to parents, normally starting the next school day. This applies to suspensions up to twenty days in total for one or more separate periods of suspension in any given school year. The Board of Management will formally review any proposal to suspend a pupil, where the suspension would bring the number of days for which a pupil has been suspended in the current school year to more than twenty days. Where the total number of days for which a pupil has been suspended in the current school year reaches twenty days, the parents may appeal the suspension under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

B.5. Notification of Suspension

The principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend their child and the letter will confirm the following.

- The duration and the start/end dates of the suspension
- The reason(s) for suspension.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitment to be entered into by the pupil and the parents (see 4.1. p.6)
- The right to appeal to the Board of Management, and/or to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science.

Suspension may be removed or altered either immediately or retrospectively if the Board of Management decides, or if the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science directs it to be removed under section 29 of the Education Act 1998 as amended by the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

B.6. Reintegrating The Pupil And Re-entering with dignity:

The principal will arrange for a member of staff to provide support for the pupil during the reintegration process. The pupil will be given the opportunity and needed support for a fresh start. The school will then expect the same behaviour of this pupil as of all other pupils.

B.7. Recording and Reporting:

A record of the behaviour and sanction imposed will be kept, to include the following:

- The investigation including notes of all interviews held.
- The decision-making process.
- The decision and the rationale for the decision.
- The duration of the suspension and any conditions attached to the suspension.

If the principal acts on the written delegated authority to suspend, he will report all suspensions to the Board of Management with the reasons for and the duration of each suspension. The principal will also report suspensions to the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in accordance with NEWB reporting guidelines (Education Welfare) Act 2000, section 21(4)(a)

The Board of Management will review the use of suspension in the school at regular intervals to ensure that its use is consistent with school policies, that patterns of use are examined to identify factors that may be influencing behaviour in the school and to ensure that the use of suspension is appropriate and effective.

Appendix C - Expulsion

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a pupil. This authority is a reserved function of the Board of Management and is not delegated to the principal.

C.1. Expulsion Only In Exceptional Circumstances

Before expelling a pupil, the school will have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of the pupil including, as appropriate:

- Meeting with the parents and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the pupil to change his/her behaviour.
- Making sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of the behaviour, if it should persist.
- Ensuring that all possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies if appropriate.

C.2. Grounds for Expulsion

A proposal by the Board of Management to expel a pupil will only be made on serious grounds, such as:

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

The Board of Management reserves the right to expel a pupil for a first offence for the following misbehaviours. Pending the outcome of the procedures listed below, a pupil may incur immediate suspension on health and safety grounds.

- A serious threat of violence against another pupil or member of staff.
- Actual violence or physical assault.
- The supply of illegal drugs to other pupils in the school.
- Sexual assault

C.4. Procedures for Expulsion

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion, the following steps will be taken: (these procedures may need to be accelerated, depending on the seriousness of the offence and relevant circumstances)

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the principal

(a copy of the principal's report to be made available to the parents concerned)

- Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing, to which parents will be invited

- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations with parents and relevant teaching staff arranged by an Educational Welfare Officer of the National Education Welfare Board
- Confirmation of the decision to expel will be given to parents/guardians orally and in writing

C.5. Appeal against Expulsion

In accordance with the Education Act 1998, Section 29, a parent or guardian may appeal a decision to expel to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science. An appeal on behalf of a pupil may also be brought by the National Educational Welfare Board.

C.6. Review of the Use of Expulsion

In accordance with the NEWB guidelines (12.6), the Board of Management will, at regular intervals, review the use of expulsion in the school (if it has been used) in order to ensure that expulsion is used appropriately.