



Holywell Educate Together National School Positive Behaviour Policy

The aim of this 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 an environment conducive to learning. It is directed towards adopting a positive approach to the question of behaviour in our school. This means that there is greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions or punishments.

This policy is also adopted to promote a positive and safe working environment for all staff, including a positive and safe classroom environment for teachers. This Positive Behaviour Policy applies while in the school as well as on school trips, afterschool clubs, yard and any school-related activities.

Content

Introduction	2
Expectations for students, staff and parents/guardians	2
School rules	4
Classroom	4
Yard	4
Reward systems	4
Unacceptable behaviour and its consequences	5
Minor misbehaviour	6
Serious misbehaviour	6
Gross misbehaviour	7
Suspension	8
Expulsion	8
Repeated serious and gross misbehaviour	8
Persistent misbehaviour	8
Persistent serious or gross misbehaviour	9
Methods of communicating with parents/guardians	10
Raising a concern/bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter	10
Plan for reviewing the policy	10
Appendix 1- Contract of Co-operation with the Positive Behaviour Policy	11
Appendix 2- Information Sheet on Rewards and Sanctions in Holywell ETNS	12

Introduction

In order to fulfil the main aims of primary education an atmosphere conducive to learning must be maintained. This is best achieved by maintaining a discipline appropriate to the development of satisfactory attitudes and habits by the children. Teachers are in 'loco parentis' while the children are in school and they must ensure that all children behave in a manner that ensures academic success, safety and enjoyment in school. The positive behaviour of the children also ensures that all children and staff are safe.

Positive behaviour is instilled in the children by having acceptable guidelines that are determined by the whole school community. Children work well when they have boundaries and they are aware of the workings of the school, the school day and what is expected from them.

Our code of behaviour ensures that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education. Children learn about their rights through the means of the Ethics programme. Every member of staff adopts a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences wherever it is possible within the confines of the classroom situation and outside. The school also recognises the benefits of a Restorative Practice approach to behaviour in the classroom and on Yard.

This policy follows recommendations set in the relevant Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, 2008). It was devised in consultation with the teaching staff, the pupils and parents in our school and has been submitted to the Board of Management for ratification. It will be reviewed regularly.

Expectations for students, staff and parents/guardians

We believe that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school. A high level of cooperation among members of staff is necessary. Equally necessary is a high level of cooperation among staff, pupils and parents/guardians. It is hoped that all pupils, parents/guardians and staff will share a sense of responsibility about good conduct within the school.

These are our broad expectations for behaviour in our school:

- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness and transparency between all groups (children, parents, staff)
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict.
- Willingness to take correction and modify behaviour.
- Open and honest communication should be paramount with a view to the child's welfare being at the centre of all discussions. Mutually respectful relationships

balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, and consistency.

Expectations for students

The school expects engagement from students with their own learning and with that of their peers.

This engagement includes:

- doing their best at all times
- taking responsibility for their work and homework
- keeping the **school and class** rules
- helping to create a safe, secure and positive environment
- respecting all staff members and visitors
- participation in **all** areas of the curriculum and activities
- take pride in Holywell ETNS
- showing respect and other core values within the school community

All staff with the occasional input from clinicians should check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that is appropriate to the abilities of all pupils.

Expectations for staff

The concept of promoting positive behaviour should be based upon a supportive approach, which nurtures a culture of self-awareness and self-control among children. An atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect should be 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 and encouragement.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal and Board of Management. However, all staff has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within their own class. They will:

- Endeavour to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and needs of the child.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision at all times
- Create a learning environment that is interesting and engaging
- Implement reward/sanction schemes in a fair and consistent manner
- Keep a written record of all incidents of serious or gross misconduct, sanctions implemented and the outcome. (refer to levels p6&7)
- Discretion and a sensitivity towards any behavioural issues is to be encouraged in discussions with other relevant staff members and parents/guardians

Expectations for parents/guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which result in positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can cooperate with the school by:

- encouraging their children to abide by the school rules
- encouraging punctuality and regular attendance
- visiting the school and being involved in school life and activities

- talking to the members of staff and ensure that homework is allotted due time and effort
- Having a respectful attitude towards other parents/guardians before and after school drop-offs

It is imperative that parents co-operate with staff should issues arise. When parents and teachers work together, children can be supported both at home and in school thus increasing the child's success and happiness at school.

School rules

The HETNS Rules have been drawn up for Holywell ETNS. This acronym was devised by the Positive Behaviour Policy Committee, with a consultation and voting process completed by all school staff, parents and the Student Council. While each class has a particular set of classroom rules, this acronym will be displayed throughout the school, will be used in Assemblies and will be our base set of rules for how we expect students to conduct themselves in school and in the Yard.

Honest and helpful

Everyone works together

Think before you act

Notice others and show respect

Safe and sensible

Reward systems

All children need encouragement to attain their best. In Holywell ETNS we wish every child to achieve success at their own particular level and with their own particular talents whether academic and social. Rewards should be given for effort and not only for achievement. An approach which utilizes encouragement rather than praise is developed. Please see *Overview of Rewards and Sanctions Information Sheet* in Appendix 2 which will be displayed in each classroom. These include those laid out below-

- Children are encouraged and praised by school staff
- Parents/guardians will hear positive news on a regular basis about their child via the incentive systems used in Holywell ETNS. These include the following strategies:
 - Star of the week
 - Group/Table of the Week
 - Writer of the Week
 - Sharing work with an audience
 - Letters home
 - Display of good work

- School App
- Class blogs
- Verbal comments to parents/guardians,
- Inviting parents/guardians to see work
- Tangible rewards (Stickers/stars/certificates/smiley faces/piggy banks/tokens/stamps awarded by adults for behaviour and work etc.
- ‘Dojo’ Points (cumulative points award ‘Golden Time’
- ‘Golden Time’ a discrete time set aside where students may choose a curricular area as a reward, ie visual arts, drama lesson etc.

Unacceptable behaviour and its consequences

Where a student’s behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of other students or endangers the safety of themselves, other children or staff the following will apply:

Sanctions will be applied in order to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is not acceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others (refer to class rules)
- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Applying sanctions will also reinforce the boundaries set out in the rules and signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected. It is critical that staff are cognisant of maintaining children’s dignity at all times. Sanctions are given in a clear and consistent manner.

The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students, including those with identified special educational needs.

Minor misbehaviour

Everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher/staff. In cases of repeated serious misbehaviour or single instances of gross misbehaviour parents/guardians will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child’s behaviour.

Minor Misbehaviour Examples:

- Talking
- Purposefully excluding pupils from games etc..
- Name-calling
- Pushing
- Non-compliance with class/yard rules
- Distracting and disrupting classmates/teachers
- Ridiculing
- Disrespect
- Dishonesty

Sanctions imposed for the above are dependent upon the age and understanding of the child. These may include:

Classroom

- Verbal reprimand
- Use of reward system particular to that class
- Move seats within the classroom
- Complete work during 'Golden Time'
- Sit on the 'thinking chair'
- Unfinished classroom work to be completed as homework (within reason)
- Opportunity to re-do unsatisfactory work
- Note home to parents
- Phone call to parents
- Meeting with parents

Yard Time

- Thinking time by the wall
- Thinking Sheet given

(Sanctions that contravene the **Educate Together ethos** of child-centeredness, inclusion and respect will **not** be used in the school, such as writing lines, raising voices at children, ridiculing, demeaning children, calling children by their surname instead of forename, using sarcasm etc.)

Serious misbehaviour

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Bullying (including alienation, intimidation & cyber-bullying if occurs in school)
- Racism
- Verbal /physical abuse of adults or children
- Theft
- Damage to property
- Any behaviour which poses risk of injury to the pupil or others
- Any sexualised or inappropriate language or behaviour
- Any other misbehaviour which continuously interferes with teaching and learning process.

All matters relating to bullying will be referred to the Principal. The Board of Management will also be consulted at each meeting, as per the ABI (Anti-Bullying Institute) Programme implemented in Holywell ETNS. Only in cases of repeated serious misbehaviour and/or failure to improve after meeting(s) between parents/guardians and/or a single incident of serious misconduct, the principal, under the direction of the Board of Management, will temporary suspension be considered. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools.

“Where the Board of Management deems it necessary to make provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils or a serious breach of discipline, by authorising the Chairperson or Principal to exclude pupils from school, the maximum 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 pupils’ parents. In exceptional circumstances, the Board may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.”

Gross misbehaviour

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil or any staff member or visitor to the school
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Serious incidents of bullying/cyber-bullying

Persistent misbehaviour

Sanctions to deal with persistent minor misbehaviour are as follows:

CLASSROOM

Class rules are based on collaboration with the children and class teacher which may vary from class to class. Each Teachers class rules may vary. Procedures include:

- Verbal Warning
- Informal Meeting with Teacher and Parents
- Written communication to Parents
- Formal Meeting with Parent
- Formal Meeting with Parent and/or Deputy Principal and/or Principal

YARD/PLAYGROUND & LINING UP TIME

- Step 1: Verbal Warning.
- Step 2: 5-minute Time Out on Wall
- Step 3: Pupil’s name noted by member of Senior Management. A Thinking Sheet will be given to the student. Child persists after 5 Thinking Sheets = parents/guardians informed, Principal meets with parents/guardians and pupil for further steps.
- Bell 1: Freeze
- Bell 2 : Walk to Line
- Bell 3: Standing in Line quietly. Thinking Sheet given to pupil who is not lining up quietly.

Repeated serious and gross misbehaviour

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/guardians sensitively and to give families as much support as possible. Referrals will be made by the Principal with the support of the parent/guardian

The following steps will be taken when serious or gross misbehaviour is persistent. These steps are in accordance with the Department of Education & Skills guidelines and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools:

- Communication by Principal with parents/guardians – verbal or in writing
- Meeting between Principal and parents/guardians
- Chairperson of Board of Management is informed
- Parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend school to meet the Principal
- Parents/guardians must endeavour to support their child and school to comply with rules and aim to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future. On failing this, the pupil will be suspended for a temporary period
- In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board authorises the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians. The maximum initial period of suspension is three school days
- The Board of Management can authorize a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupils or pupils parents/guardians
- In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management will authorize a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed

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

Suspension

Examples of grounds for suspension:

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

After other interventions are tried and reasons why these have not worked are reviewed, the decision to suspend a student can be made. This decision will be made by the Board of Management. Each case will be looked at individually taking into account the child's circumstances.

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

Expulsion

Examples of grounds for expulsion:

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

Expulsion will only be considered when the Board of Management have tried a series of other interventions and believes all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour have been exhausted.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence (for instance, a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff, actual violence or physical assault, supplying illegal drugs to other students).

When expulsion is considered, the following steps will be taken:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation, and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.
- The decision to expel will take effect 20 days after the National Education Welfare Board has received notification in writing
- Where the school has expelled a pupil and all appeals processes both internal and external have been exhausted, the student's expulsion will be reported on the student absence report form.

Methods of communicating with parents/guardians

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to working with children. Parents/guardians and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which 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/guardians are being established and will be reviewed regularly.

Parents/guardians 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 Class- 6th class)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School App
- Newsletters
- Text messaging (From school to parents/guardians)
- Emails

Raising a concern/bringing a complaint about a behaviour matter

Any parent/guardian who has concerns about a behaviour matter should bring this concern to the attention of the **class teacher**, with both parties using discretion in the presence of other children and/or parents.

Plan for reviewing the policy

This Positive Behaviour Policy will be reviewed and evaluated **regularly** and any training needs arising from implementing such a policy will be addressed.

Ratified by the Board of Management:

Chairperson

Date: June 2018

Contract of Co-Operation with the Positive Behaviour Policy

The safety and wellbeing of all children attending our school is of the utmost importance to us. With this in mind, a Positive Behaviour Policy has been put in place and ratified by the Board of Management.

We request that parents/guardians read the policy carefully with their child/children and discuss the contents. Please sign the following undertaking and return this form to the school by:

Date: _____

I confirm that I have read this policy with my child:

Name: _____

We have talked about the contents together and we agree to uphold this policy during the coming year.

Signed by Parent/Guardian:

Name
(please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please keep the policy document safely at home for future reference .