



## Code of Positive Behaviour

### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Leixlip Educate Together NS is a newly established primary school and this initial Code of Positive Behaviour is the result of consultation and collaboration between the Principal, the school Manager and staff. It was guided by the four principles of every Educate Together school and is underpinned by these principles - Equality based; Child-centred, Co-educational and Democratically Run. This Code of Positive Behaviour takes account of all current policies, including those at draft stage, of Leixlip Educate Together NS, as well as other future policies as they become ratified. These include policies such as the, Child Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Communications Policy, Inclusion Policy, Special Needs Policy, School Attendance Strategy and Equality Policy. This initial policy will be reviewed in consultation with parents/guardians and with the first Board of Management (BoM) of the school.

The Leixlip Educate Together NS Code of Positive Behaviour is the set of practices and procedures that together form our school's plan for helping pupils to behave well and learn well. The Code of Positive Behaviour helps the school community to promote the school's unique ethos as well as relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and minimise unacceptable behaviour.

The Code of Positive Behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, pupils and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school. Our code expresses the vision, mission and values of Leixlip Educate Together NS and our patron body – Educate Together. It translates the expectations of staff, parents and pupils into practical arrangements that will help to ensure continuity of instruction to all pupils. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported. Good manners, courtesy and politeness are highly valued in Leixlip Educate Together NS and they are encouraged/reinforced at all times.

The Code of Positive Behaviour enables school authorities (staff and BoM) to strike an appropriate balance between their duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and their responsibility to pupils whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process. Maintaining a harmonious environment can present a challenge to schools given many competing needs, time pressures and varying capacities or readiness to learn. A Code of Positive Behaviour that has the support of the school community can go a long way to helping schools meet this challenge successfully.

The Leixlip Educate Together school community is one where pupils, staff and parents/guardians strive to coexist in an atmosphere of mutual respect and safety. The aim of the Code of Positive Behaviour is to promote positive behaviour using a whole school approach.

### RATIONALE

This policy has been drafted as part of our School Development Plan. It is guided by the founding principles of Educate Together - Equality based; Child-centred, Co-educational and Democratically Run, and it has been prepared in accordance with National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) guidelines, "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" (NEWB, 2008). In accordance with these guidelines, this Code of Positive Behaviour specifies:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school;
- The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil; and
- The procedure to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school

## Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

Leixlip Educate Together NS school affirms that children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds have a right to an education that respects their individual identity. The aim of the Code of Positive Behaviour is to ensure that individuality is respected and that individual differences are celebrated, acknowledging the right of each child to an environment in which they can learn safely and grow.

The entire school community has a part to play in contributing to this environment. The strength of this community, together with a high level of cooperation between staff, parents/guardians and children, will ensure a high standard of positive and respectful behaviour.

In Leixlip Educate Together NS we recognise that each member of the school community, staff, parents/guardians and children has the right to be treated with respect and consideration, therefore every effort will be made by all members of staff to adopt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. Positive techniques of motivation and encouragement will be utilised by staff, placing greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions. School rules are kept to a minimum and are there to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all members of Leixlip Educate Together NS.

## AIMS OF THE CODE

**The aims of this Code of Positive Behaviour are:**

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our Educate Together ethos
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where all children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of mutual respect, acceptance, open-mindedness and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate and accept these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the school's code of positive behaviour and to encourage their co-operation with its implementation
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

- To create an environment where all pupils and staff can reach their creative and intellectual potential without disruption.
- To help pupils to acquire and develop moral and ethical values and a respect for the beliefs and values of others.
- To promote equality for all members of the school community, to prevent discrimination and allow for appropriate accommodation of difference.
- To have a framework in place to ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all the members of the school community are widely known and understood.

# Content of Policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings:

1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school
2. Whole School approach to promoting positive behaviour
  - Staff
  - Board of Management
  - Parents/Guardians
  - Pupils
3. Positive Strategies for Promoting Good Behaviour
  - Classroom
  - Playground
  - Other areas in the school
  - School related activities
4. Rewards and sanctions
  - Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
  - Responding to inappropriate behaviour
  - Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour
  - Involving parents/guardians in the management of problematic behaviour
  - Managing aggressive or violent behaviour
5. Suspension/Expulsions
  - Suspension
  - Expulsion
  - Appeals
6. Keeping records
  - Class
  - Playground
  - School Records
  - Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school
  - Reference to other policies
7. Reference to Other Policies
8. Success Criteria
9. Implementing and Communicating the Code

## 1. Guidelines for Behaviour in the School

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the Code of Positive Behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school”.

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show respect for self and others, and to show kindness and willingness to help others.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other people’s property, and their own belongings.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.
- Each pupil is expected to have everything needed for class and to keep his/her personal space and belongings tidy.
- Each pupil is expected to show a readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict and to show and practice understanding and forgiveness.

**Due regard will be given to the age and range of abilities of the child/children in implementing the Code of Positive Behaviour.**

All parents/guardians of current and future enrolling pupils of Leixlip Educate Together NS will be given a copy of this Code of Positive Behaviour and the Code will be published on our school website.

Prior to registration parents/guardians must confirm in writing that the Code of Positive Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with this code by their child.

## 2. Whole School Approach in Promoting Positive Behaviour

In Leixlip Educate Together NS we recognise that positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between staff and the ways in which pupils, staff and parents/guardians treat each other.

This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school. We recognise the importance of taking a whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour and have put the following measures in place, to ensure that a whole school approach will be taken.

### Staff

Teachers and other staff members have played an important role in the drafting, review and updating of the code. They brought to this work their professional expertise in understanding the links between behaviour and learning; their experience of what works to help pupils to behave well; and their knowledge of the school and of the school community. Leixlip Educate Together NS will ensure that:

- We will provide opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help pupils to change behaviour.
- New staff are made aware of this policy and the policy will be included in their ‘Policy Folder’ which will be kept on their desk at all times. A policy overview will be included on the agenda for the Croke Park day prior to beginning of the year.
- All staff have been consulted on and have agreed on the Code of Positive Behaviour.

- Staff at Leixlip Educate Together NS are aware that some pupils come to school with special educational needs. While all pupils in the school are subject to the school's Code of Positive Behaviour, staff will also take into consideration individual and complex behaviours arising from Special Educational Needs. Where a pupil with special needs is in breach of the school's Code of Positive Behaviour, the teachers will use their professional judgment in relation to the regularity and level of sanctions. While teachers must be seen to be fair in the eyes of other pupils who may have exhibited the same type of misdemeanors, they may also show a fair degree of leniency in relation to pupils with specific learning/behavioural difficulties. Parents/guardians of these pupils will be kept informed of their child's behaviour on a regular basis and may be requested to work with the school in devising effective strategies to help the pupil to improve his/her behaviour. Behavioural targets and specific strategies may be included as part of a Pupil Support Plan. The devising of such strategies may also entail contacting and meeting with relevant out of school agencies.
- Staff will also use the curriculum to support the Code of Positive Behaviour and to help pupils develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, encourage forgiveness, develop resilience, and promote conflict resolution skills. The school's Learn Together programme and Social Personal and Health Education curriculum is used to develop these skills and to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship. Parents/Guardians of newly enrolled children are informed about the curriculum and their part in supporting it, at meetings for new parents, Parent/Teacher Meetings, curriculum meetings, progress meetings and through our website.
- Relevant policies and resources are available to all staff and new staff will be informed of and supported in their implementation of these curricular areas.
- A range of activities is used to develop these skills in children e.g. Circle Time, Toy Time, Golden Time, Assemblies, Lessons on Relevant topics, Stories, and Discussions.

## Board of Management

The Board of Management has the overall responsibility for ensuring the school has a Code of Positive Behaviour. The Board of Management of Leixlip Educate Together NS has responsibility for promoting and maintaining the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies. The Board will play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's ethos and responsibilities. The Board of Management of Leixlip Educate Together NS has an important role to play in the maintenance of acceptable standards of behaviour in the school. It will be supportive of the Principal and staff in the application of a fair Code of Positive Behaviour and sanctions used, which are part of a plan to encourage positive behaviour and to help pupils understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour.

- The Board of Management of Leixlip Educate Together NS will be involved in drafting, reviewing and ratification of the Code of Positive Behaviour through a consultative process whereby each member of the Board of Management is actively involved.
- The Board of Management, through on-going consultation, supports the staff in upholding the positive behaviour code through providing opportunities for staff development and staff in-service and CPD training in relevant areas.
- The Board of Management will follow the procedures as set out in the NEWB (2008) guidelines for dealing with serious breaches of standards of behaviour.

## Parents

The Code of Positive Behaviour works best when parents/guardians have meaningful ways of contributing to the development of the code. Leixlip Educate Together NS recognises that, in line with our school ethos, parents work in partnership with staff to meet legitimate expectations with regard to positive behaviour and discipline. Parental involvement in the development of the code will allow the school to draw on their expectations, insights and experience. It will also help to underline their responsibilities for their children's behaviour.

- Co-operation and communication between staff and parents/guardians is actively encouraged through formal and informal meetings.
- Parents/Guardians of newly enrolled children will be informed about the Code of Positive Behaviour and their part in supporting it, at new parents' meetings, at curriculum meetings and through our school website and newsletter.
- Parents/guardians are expected to support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by:
  - Encouraging their children to uphold the school's ethos and Code of Positive Behaviour.
  - Encouraging their children to respect all members of the school community.
  - Making themselves aware of and cooperating with the school's system of rewards and sanction.
  - Ensuring their children are in school on time.
  - Attending meetings at the school if requested.
  - Helping their children with homework and ensuring that it is completed.
  - Ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials to complete their schoolwork and take part in school activities.

The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school's standards of behaviour in their dealings with both pupils and each other. The ways in which Parents/Guardians and teachers interact will provide pupils with a model of good working relationships. This is a critical part of school ethos and delivering our Code of Positive Behaviour.

## Pupils

Pupils are more likely to support a code of positive behaviour when they have helped to develop it.

- All classes will be consulted with future reviews of this policy in an age-appropriate manner.
- All pupils will play a part in the implementation of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Pupils are involved each September in creating a Class Charter for their own class, and a Playground Charter for the whole school, reflecting the school's Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Pupils will take part in assemblies and activities that reflect our Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Going forward, the development of an active Pupils' Council will promote ownership of our Code of Positive Behaviour and provide pupils with an opportunity to monitor its enactment.

## 3. Positive Strategies for Promoting Good Behaviour

The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. In Leixlip Educate Together NS, we believe that promoting good behaviour is the main goal of our Code of Positive Behaviour. Therefore, the school community is committed to actively

promoting a happy atmosphere and positive school environment. This includes practices and strategies to affirm and encourage positive behaviour.

Day-to-day excellence of classroom teaching and school management will enable most pupils to behave in ways that support their own learning and development. Teachers and other school staff also need a range of strategies for promoting and encouraging good behaviour at class and school level.

## Classroom

**The following is a list of some classroom strategies to promote good behaviour -:**

- Golden Rules – At the beginning of every school year, teachers will discuss Jenny Mosley’s Golden Rules\* with the children [We are Gentle, We are Kind and Helpful, We Listen, We are Honest, We Work Hard, We Look After Property] and how they can be incorporated into the classroom charter.
- Pupils, when creating their Class Charter, are encouraged to draft rules/behaviour expectations using positive language.
- Teachers will ensure that pupils understand and are reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- Every teacher will ensure that a clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour is in place in their classroom.
- Teachers will implement a range of classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation.
- Teachers will timetable activities in the classroom to maximise promotion of positive behaviour e.g. • Circle time, extra playtime, giving pupils jobs and responsibilities, teaching of good manners

\*Mosley, J. (2005). *Circle time for young children*. Routledge.

## Playground

The positive strategies, which Leixlip Educate Together NS implements to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour in the playground, are:

- A Playground Charter, developed by the pupils that endorses every child’s right to play and to be happy
- The development of a concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted. These are discussed with the pupils in the classroom and at staff meetings
- Adequate supervision at yard time - One teacher and a Special Needs Assistant supervises the yard. As well as looking after the care needs of pupils with special educational needs, the Special Needs Assistant has a valuable role to play in encouraging the inclusion of all children in playtime activities.
- The pupils are made aware of which areas they are not permitted to access so that children are visible at all times to the adults supervising the yard.
- A variety of age appropriate toys and play equipment will be provided and activities will be organised in ways that will minimise misbehaviour.
- Playground games may be taught and staff will encourage full inclusion at playtime so that no child is left playing alone.
- Pupils line up in an orderly manner and are escorted to the playground by the class teacher and are collected from class lines at the end of yard time.
- Pupils are encouraged to use the toilet before yard-time, pupils may only leave the yard area in pairs (to go to the office/toilet) and will be supervised by a member of staff.



- On wet days, pupils will remain in their classroom and will be supervised by the teacher on lunch time supervision and a Special Needs Assistant. Pupils are required to remain seated (at their tables, or on the floor, as appropriate) during indoor break. It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to ensure that the children have age-appropriate activities to keep them engaged for the duration of the break.
- To manage incidents of misbehaviour, a record is made in the Yard Log by a supervising teacher. Such incidents will be brought to the attention of the class teacher for follow-up and the Principal, as appropriate.

### Other areas in the school

The same standard of positive behaviour is expected in all areas of the school – lobbies, toilet areas, staffroom and office.

- In the mornings, pupils hang up their coats and come straight to the classroom. Pupils are not permitted to stay in the lobby area once their parents have left.
- Pupils may not leave the classroom (to use the toilet or to wash their hands without the explicit permission of their teacher).
- When leaving the classroom with their teacher, pupils must line up and are encouraged to move around the school quietly so as not to disturb others who are working or learning.
- Only one child is permitted to be in each toilet room at a time.
- Pupils must be in pairs when leaving the classroom to go an errand for their teacher.
- The same general rules apply throughout the school to ensure that good habits/practices are developed and encouraged

### School related activities/outings:

The same standard of positive behaviour is expected in any situation where pupils are still the responsibility of the school. A School Tour Policy will be drafted which will outline specific rules for school related activities outside of the school grounds. Until this policy is drafted the following will apply:

- Pupils are expected to follow the school's Code of Positive Behaviour during school tours, games, extracurricular activities and all other school-linked events.
- Pupils are expected to follow the direction of the teacher and accompanying adults with regard to road safety. The highest standard of behaviour is necessary on all school outings because of the increased risk to the safety of the children, and to achieve the purpose of the outing. In individual cases where the teacher, in consultation with the principal, cannot be fully satisfied that such behaviour will be forthcoming on an outing with a particular child, the child will not be allowed on the outing. Particular significance will be attached to behaviour on previous outings. All staff members are proactive in communicating rules/expectations to children in all areas of the school. Positive behaviour by the children is acknowledged and praised, as a core aspect of our school ethos.

## 4. Rewards and Sanctions

### Rewards and Acknowledgments of Good Behaviour

Leixlip Educate Together NS places a greater emphasis on affirming positive behaviour than on sanctions. The day-to-day school management, classroom teaching and our Educate Together ethos will enable most pupils to behave in ways that support their own learning and development. Teachers and other school staff use a range of strategies for promoting good behaviour at class and school level.

### **Pupils are more likely to behave well when:**

- They are given responsibility in the school and are involved in the development of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- They are encouraged to see that the code works in a fair way to the benefit of all.
- The standards are clear, consistent and widely understood.
- Parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour and there are good relationships between teachers, parents and pupils.

### **Strategies to encourage and promote good behaviour include:**

- Positive everyday interactions between teachers and pupils.
- Good school and class routines.
- Clear boundaries for pupils.
- Helping pupils themselves to recognise and affirm good learning behaviour.
- Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour.
- Exploring with pupils how people should treat each other.
- Involving pupils in preparation of the school and classroom rules.

Systems for acknowledging positive behaviour are in use in classrooms and at times form part of planned intervention to help an individual pupil to manage their own behaviour. When using reward systems teachers are mindful that:

- Any reward systems will be used meaningfully
- Pupils will understand that rewards acknowledge behaviour that is valued and wanted
- Rewards can be given for effort and not only for achievement.

Systems for acknowledging positive behaviour will be inclusive and used consistently throughout the school. It is acknowledged that rewards should not become the goal of learning or result in unhelpful competition.

### **Strategies for Acknowledging Good Behaviour**

The following strategies will be used by all teachers:

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval;
- A comment in a child's exercise book;
- A visit to another class, to another member of staff or to the Principal for commendation;
- A word of praise in front of a group or the class;
- A reward system – pupil of the week/occasional treats;
- Special mention at assembly;
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege;
- A mention to parents – either written or verbal communication

### **Strategies for Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour**

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour happens. Even minor breaches of the Code of Positive Behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Where a pupil's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of other pupils, school authorities have to weigh the needs of that pupil with the needs of other pupils and staff. Serious misbehaviour can be damaging and lead to long-lasting effects including disruption of the pupil's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a

threat to the safety of pupils and teachers. Our policy is to intervene early and positively when pupil behaviour does not meet the standards expected in the school. In Leixlip Educate Together NS, a whole school approach is used in response to inappropriate behaviour. Elements of this approach include the use of a problem-solving approach when dealing with inappropriate behaviour, agreed ways of describing behaviour, a ladder of intervention, agreed arrangements for recording behaviour and the use of sanctions.

A problem-solving approach is taken by the teacher and/or the principal to respond to the unwanted behaviour using some or all of the following steps, not necessarily in the order outlined below.

- Gather information - try to understand the context and the factors that may be affecting behaviour.
- Generate ideas about possible solutions that take account of the reasons why it may be happening.
- Decide and agree on specific strategies.
- Implement the agreed strategy consistently.
- Review progress: evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the intervention.
- Throughout, keep the relationship with the pupil as positive as possible; involve the pupil and parent.

The nature of the behaviour and the age of the child will determine the nature of the response. Sanctions will be applied in order to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping pupils (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.

**The following measures may be taken if a pupil fails to observe the standards of behaviour that the school has outlined.**

- Reasoning with pupils including advising them about the consequences of their actions;
- Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve);
- Time out (age appropriate, including advising the pupil to reflect on their behaviour).
- Temporary removal from group (within the class)
- Temporary removal from class
- Verbal communication with parents/guardians
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Recording instances of repeated misbehaviour and referral to the Principal;
- Formal written communication with parents/guardians;
- Referral to the Principal and the Chairperson or other member of the Board of Management;
- Formal meeting with between Principal and/or Chairperson of the Board of Management and parents/guardians;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion

Initially, instances of misbehaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher. This will include children being advised about their behaviour and about how to improve. Discussion about behaviour and its consequences will form part of SPHE lessons and of the Learn Together curriculum. Teachers will actively promote good behaviour and

aim to “catch” incidences of positive behaviour where they can give positive feedback, thus promoting better behaviour.

However, where these strategies have failed and where misbehaviour is more serious or persistent it will be necessary to involve others including the Principal, parents/guardians and the Board of Management. The Principal and staff may also seek assistance from NEPS, SESS, HSE or other agencies.

Applying sanctions will also reinforce the boundaries set out in the rules and signal to other pupils and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected. In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning, and to keep the pupil, or other pupils or adults, safe. Sanctions should be used in a respectful way that helps pupils to understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour.

## Types of Misbehaviours

Misbehaviours may be categorised as minor, serious or gross misbehaviours.

### Minor misbehaviours

The following are examples of minor misbehaviour:

Breaking the agreed class rules, including during lunchtime / Interrupting class work / Regularly arriving late / Running in the school building / Littering around the school / Being discourteous or unmannerly / Not completing homework without good reason (to include a note from a parent/guardian) / Inappropriate behaviour or gestures / Name calling / Minor infringement of the school rules / Talking out of turn / Isolated acts of disrespect/unkindness to any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor

Teachers will take the following steps when dealing with minor misbehaviour (not necessarily in the following order)

- Reasoning with the pupil
- Verbal reprimand;
- Time out
- Verbally informing parent of the misbehaviour
- Note in homework journal from class teacher to be signed by parent;
- Noting instances of yard misbehaviour in the incident book and informing the class teacher.

**Regular occurrences of Minor Misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows, using one or more strategy:**

#### Phase 1

- Temporary separation from peers (within the classroom);
- Referral to another teacher/classroom with specific work when privileges are withdrawn
- Reflection exercise (describing incident, scribed by teacher where appropriate) signed by parents/teacher/pupil (kept on pupil’s individual file by class teacher until end of school year)

#### Phase 2

- Child will be sent to the Principal in office

- Formal letter from school Principal informing parent/guardian of continuous misbehaviour
- Exclusion from participation in some class activity (where deemed necessary and appropriate by principal in consultation with class teacher and parents) e.g. trip to park, school tour;
- Class teacher and/or Principal will meet with one/both parents/guardians;
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed. The parents/guardians will be requested to meet with the Chairperson (or another designated Board member) and the Principal.

## Serious misbehaviour

The following are examples of serious misbehaviour:

Constantly disruptive in class / Telling lies / Stealing / Persistently not working to full potential / Damaging others' property / Bullying / Answering back a teacher / Endangering self or fellow pupils in the class or the yard / Using unacceptable language / Deliberate, continual disobedience / Regular acts of disrespect/unkindness to any member of the school community / Regular instances of speaking out of turn, interrupting others and being inattentive / Regularly preventing others from learning/ Vandalism of school property / persistent minor misbehaviours

*All incidents of bullying will be dealt with as outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying policy. (See paragraph below and separate policy Anti-Bullying Policy)*

Teachers will take steps as outlined for Phase 1 above, but depending on the misbehaviour may proceed to the following steps when dealing with Serious Misbehaviour

- Child will be sent to the Principal;
- An account of all incidents will be entered in the relevant Incident book;
- Formal letter from school Principal informing parents/guardians of misbehaviour;
- Exclusion from participation in some class activity (where deemed necessary and appropriate by the Principal in consultation with class teacher and parents) e.g. trip to park, school tour;
- Class teacher or Yard duty teacher and Principal will meet with all parents/guardians;
- Chairperson of Board of Management informed and parents/guardians requested to meet with Chairperson (or other designated Board member) and the Principal.
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**Regular occurrences of Serious misbehaviour will be dealt with as follows:**

- Parents/guardians will be invited to meet class teacher, the Principal and/or the chairperson to discuss repeated serious incidents of misbehaviour;
- Suspension will be used as a sanction **where all attempts at reasoning with the pupil have failed and where all other efforts of the school in consultation with the parents or guardians** of the pupil have failed to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. Communications to parents/guardians regarding the suspension of a pupil, or the possibility of considering suspension as a sanction, will be in writing (copies of all correspondence will be retained).

## Gross misbehaviours

The following are examples of gross misbehaviour:

Persistently engaging in activities which have been identified by members of staff as dangerous or inappropriate / Leaving school premises without permission / Deliberately injuring any member of the school community /

Malicious and permanent damage to school property / Intentionally interfering with safety mechanisms (fire equipment etc) / Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff or a pupil; (e.g. physical violence, striking, nipping, biting, spitting). / any act of assault against any staff member/pupil/parent/visitor / Bringing dangerous objects or substances to school / willful damage to property

Persistent incidents of serious misbehaviour and bullying will be classified as gross misbehaviour.

Gross misbehaviour may lead to suspension or expulsion.

### **Involving parents/guardians in management of problem behaviour**

Issues of concern involving a particular pupil are communicated verbally (in person or by phone), in writing (email or letter)

- Contact can be made with parents/guardians by a teacher or the Principal.
- For gross misdemeanours, the pupil and their parents/guardians are invited to meet with the class teacher and Principal. It is communicated to the parent/guardians that the purpose of the meeting is for the benefit of the child.
- The child may be present for part or all of the meeting at the discretion of the Principal, class teacher or parent/guardian(s).
- All parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school with their concerns, by phone, in person or in written form.

### **Managing aggressive or violent misbehaviour**

The following strategies are used for dealing with serious emotional and behavioural problems:

- Children who are emotionally disturbed are immediately referred for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, NEPS - This will include S.E.N personnel who may facilitate a teacher in sharing practice and support in the management of a challenging behaviour.
- Specified teachers may act as mentors for pupils who exhibit aggressive or violent behaviour, or may assist other teachers in the creation of individual behaviour plans for such pupils.
- Professional development is available to staff e.g. NCSE supported courses, PDST, Colleges of Education and the Education Centres
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself or the safety of other pupils or staff:
  - The child is sent home for the rest of the day (or for a number of days until agreement of appropriate behaviour is accepted by child and parents)
  - Temporary exclusion while consultation with SENO and/or EWO takes place about appropriate resourcing, alternative placement

### **Bullying**

Bullying is a serious matter and the term, "bullying", should only ever be used in the correct context. The definition of bullying is quite clear:

"Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, can scarcely be described

as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.” (Department of Education, 1990)

In summary, bullying is **sustained**, **prolonged** and **targeted** behaviour towards an individual or group. Bullying has a pattern, and isolated incidents over a long period of time do not constitute the term “bullying.” Bullying is a very strong term to use and should not be confused with inappropriate behaviour.

When a child feels they are being bullied, the school will investigate this. If the school defines the behaviours as bullying, the Anti-bullying policy will be implemented. In other cases, this policy will be implemented.

## 5. Suspension / Expulsion

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify... ‘*the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned*’ and ‘*the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student.*’(Sections 23(2) c, d)

### Suspension

The principal shall inform the education welfare officer, by notice in writing, when *a student is suspended from a recognised school for a period of not less than 6 days.* (Sections 21(4) a )

Circular 20/90 states that ‘*Parents should be informed of their right to come to the school and be invited to do so in order to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal Teacher and/or the class teacher. This should always be done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated.*’

The school’s procedure in relation to suspension and expulsion require the following steps to be taken:

- When a serious/gross misconduct (outlined above) occurs, a child may be temporarily excluded from school.
- The Board of Management will authorise either the Principal or the Chairperson to exclude a pupil from the school for a maximum initial period of three school days.
- This will only occur if procedures were followed to ensure fairness when excluding a pupil and the following criteria have been acknowledged:
  - Have all other means of dealing with the behaviour been tried?
  - Has there been previous communication with parents/guardians regarding misbehaviour?
  - Have parents/guardians been invited to the school to discuss the intention to exclude?
  - Has a fair investigation taken place, taking parents’ and pupil’s perspective into account?
  - If the Board of Management is likely to reach a decision to exclude a pupil, how will it ensure the decision will be reached in an unbiased manner? *c/f NEWB Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour*
  - What facility is there to allow a pupil return to school before the period of suspension is over? (Section 23(2)d)
  - In certain and extreme cases of Gross Misconduct, immediate suspension may be warranted and suspension will have to occur without exploring other avenues.
- If a child is to be temporarily excluded from school, a letter must be sent to the parents/guardians signed by the Principal and/or Chairperson. This letter will outline the dates where the child has been excluded from class and is stored in his/her permanent record.
- When the period of suspension is over, the pupil, parents/guardians and staff should be aware that the incident will not be used to “pigeon-hole” the child. He/she will return to school on a “clean sheet”.
- If a period of suspension in excess of three days is intended, a special decision of the Board of Management is required. This decision can be made by the Chairperson of the Board.
- Where a student has been suspended for a cumulative total of six or more days, the National Education Welfare Board is notified using the standard form. Forms are available on [www.newb.ie](http://www.newb.ie)

### 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))*

Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student’s behaviour. Expulsion of a student is a very serious step, and one that should only be taken by the Board of Management in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour. The school should have taken the following significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion of a student including, as appropriate:

- meet with parents/guardians and the pupil to try to find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- made sure that the pupil understands the possible consequences of their behaviour if it should persist
- ensure that all other possible options have been tried
- sought the assistance of support agencies (e.g. National Educational Psychological Service, Health Service Executive Community Services, and The National Behavioural Support Service. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education).

A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such that;

- the student’s behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of other 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

The grounds for expulsion may be similar to the grounds for suspension. In addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that, where expulsion is considered, school authorities have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the student’s behaviour.

**In all cases of suspension or expulsion, the guidelines as set out by the NEWB (2008) will be followed.**

### **Appeals Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998**

Parents/guardians (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) 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) 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.

Note:

- Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing by the Principal of the decision of the Board of Management to permanently exclude or suspend the pupil
- Parents/Guardians will be informed of their right of appeal, the associated timeframe of 42 calendar days from the date of decision of the school is notified to the parents/guardians and pupil.
- Parents/guardians will be given a copy of the Circular 22/02.
- The Board of Management will prepare an appeal if the school is being investigated by the Dept of Education and Skills.

## **6. Keeping Records**



In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, the school maintains records in relation to pupils' behaviour.

### **Class Level**

Teachers will keep records of repeated incidences of minor non-compliance with our Positive Behaviour Policy. These may be recorded in a pupil's individual class profile or in a teacher's observations' notes. They will not be permanently stored. Copies of records/notes may also be given to the Principal as required.

- Single incidences of serious or gross misdemeanours will be recorded by the teacher and may warrant an incident report sheet.
- The end-of-year report includes a note on behaviour.
- Problematic behaviour will have been discussed with parents before noting/recording on the end-of-year report.
- Substitute teachers will leave a record of incidences of misbehaviour for the class teacher

### **Playground**

- Playground supervising teachers maintain written records of behaviour/incidents in the School Yard Book. Incidences of serious or gross misbehaviour and brought to the Principal's attention. The Principal responds, as necessary/appropriate.

### **School Records**

- · The class teacher maintains individual records for each child regarding misbehaviour, as required. In cases referred to the Principal, documents pertaining to that case will usually be photocopied and a copy given to the Principal.
- · Formal records are maintained by the Principal e.g. factual reports of particular incidents, communication between school and home, with outside agencies, Board of Management etc.
- · The Principal also maintains documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29. 20 7.

*All records and notes are stored and disposed of in accordance with the school's GDPR policy.*

### **Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School**

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23(2)(e) states that the Code of Positive Behaviour must specify "the procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school." Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a pupil's absence and the reason for this absence.

· Leixlip Educate Together NS strives at all times to encourage maximum school attendance in all pupils by:

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment.
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance.
- Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximize relevance to pupils.
- Making parents aware of terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.

· Leixlip Educate Together NS policy in relation to explanation of pupil absences is that parents/guardians submit a written note or email to the class teacher, informing the teacher of their child's absence from school and the reason for this absence.

- Written notes are signed and dated by the parent/guardian. These records are kept by the class teacher and sent to the office in June for archiving.
- Leixlip Educate Together NS uses the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board. In addition to this, a letter is sent to parents/guardians when children accumulate fifteen and twenty days of absence. This is the responsibility of the class teacher.

## 7. Reference to other policies/documents

- Other school policies / draft policies that have a bearing on the Code of Positive Behaviour are:
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Learn Together Programme
- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Parents/Guardians Involvement Policy
- Communications Policy
- Health & Safety Statement
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Attendance Strategy
- Communications Policy
- Equality Policy

This list is not exhaustive, and other future policies may also have a bearing on our Code of Positive Behaviour.

## 8. Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of this policy are:

- Observation of positive behaviour in classrooms, playground and school environment.
- Consistent implementation of the policy by all staff in the school. This is at the heart of successful implementation.
- Willingness among staff to discuss and modify the policy when needed.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents/guardians and pupils.
- Support of parents/guardians

## 9. Implementing and communicating the code

Parents/guardians will be provided with a copy of the code prior to registering their child. Acceptance of this Code of Positive Behaviour is a condition of enrolment in Leixlip Educate Together NS.

The code will be communicated to the school community in a variety of ways including

- Information pack for new parents/guardians
- on the school website

- at Information Meetings for parents/guardians
- at Staff Meetings

### Next review date

This Code of Behaviour will be reviewed in the school year 2021/2022 or sooner if deemed necessary.

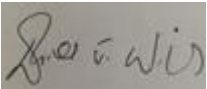
### Code submitted to Patron

The Code of Positive Behaviour was submitted to and approved by the Patron in September 2020.

### Ratification by the Manager / Board of Management

This Code of Behaviour was formally ratified by the Manager/ Board of Management on September 16th 2020

Signed: M. McDowell Date: September 16th, 2020  
Principal

Signed:  Date: September 16th, 2020  
Chairperson / Manager Board of Management