**Tralee Educate Together NS**

# **Code of Behaviour**

**Rationale**

This policy was checked in line with Child Protection Procedures. This policy was reviewed and updated during a Whole School Meeting with parents, BOM and staff held on November 11th, 2019. It was reviewed by parents, members of staff, Student Council and Board of Management. The policy aims to provide a positive and safe learning and working environment for all members of the school community. The Code of Behaviour aims to promote the ethos of the school while fulfilling the legal and ethical requirements of the school. Rules for children are kept to a minimum and promote good behaviour.

In this policy, the term ‘member of staff’ refers to teaching staff, SNA's, secretarial staff, cleaning staff, coaches, etc. that may be in the school.

Where the Principal is referred to, this also includes the member of staff who is deputising as the principal.

This policy applies not only to individual children, but also to whole classes or groups of children.

**Aims**

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Tralee Educate Together National School are:

1. To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behaviour expectations.
2. To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
3. To develop pupils’ self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour.
4. To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils based on respect, consideration and empathy towards others.
5. To facilitate the education and development of every child.
6. To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
7. To enable teachers to teach without disruption.

**Implementation**

Every member of the school community has a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. Rules will be kept to a minimum, emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the age of the pupils and to individual difference. Good behaviour as well as improved behaviour will be encouraged and rewarded. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.
Please refer to the school’s Substance Use Policy for information on substance use prevention.

**General Guidelines for Positive Behaviour**

1. Pupils are expected to treat all adults and fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. Behaviour that interferes with the rights of others to learn and to feel safe is unacceptable.
2. Pupils are expected to show respect for all school property and to keep the school environment clean and litter free.
3. Pupils are expected to take pride in their appearance, to have all books and required materials and to be in the right place at the right time.
4. Pupils are expected to follow a teacher’s instructions, to work to the best of their ability and to present assignments neatly.
5. Pupils are expected to attend every day unless there is a genuine reason for absence, in which case the school must be informed in writing, stating the reason for absence.

**Bullying**

Bullying is repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression by an individual or group against others. The most common factors of bullying are aggressive physical contact, name-calling, intimidation, extortion, isolations and taunting. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents will be expected to co-operate with the school at all times in dealing with instances of bullying in accordance with the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Affirming Positive Behaviour**

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour as well as improved behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

**Strategies/Incentives**

1. A quiet word or gesture to show approval.
2. A comment on a child’s exercise book.
3. A visit to another class or principal for commendation.
4. Acknowledge good work/behaviour in front of class group.
5. Individual class merit awards, points awards or award stamps.
6. Delegating some special responsibility or privilege.
7. Written or verbal communication with parent.
8. Buddy Bench in yard.

**Discouraging Misbehaviour**

The purpose of sanctions and other strategies is to promote positive behaviour and discourage misbehaviour. Sanctions will be applied according to the gravity of the misbehaviour, with due regard to age and emotional development. These may include:

1. Reasoning with pupil.
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve.
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class.
4. Prescribing extra work.
5. Loss of privileges (e.g. playtime/Golden Time/laptop).
6. Detention during break times. Loss of full break time is only considered by the principal for a serious offence or safety considerations, such as, vandalism of school or others property, repeated disruption of class, continuous use of disrespectful/bad language, behavior that could cause injury to others, continuous fights in yard.
7. Communication with parents.
8. Referral to principal.
9. Principal communicating with parents.
10. Exclusion (suspension or expulsion) from school (In accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

**Inappropriate Sanctions taken from TUSLA (previously NEWB) guidelines**

Inappropriate sanctions include:

1. Physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment. Physical chastisement of a student is illegal under Section 24 of the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997.
2. Ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a student’s self-confidence.
3. Public or private humiliation.
4. Applying sanctions to whole groups or classes in cases of individual or small group wrong-doing.
5. Leaving a student in an unsupervised situation (e.g. a corridor) while in the care of the school.
6. Persistent isolation of, or ignoring, a student in class.
7. Sanctions that are used in a discriminatory way. Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 require that schools do not discriminate in the use of sanctions.

Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a curricular area, except on the grounds of health/safety.

**Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter, depending on the circumstances.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child’s case.

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff, pupil or work placement student will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. The school will endeavour to offer every possible support to parents, utilising supports and links with external agencies as appropriate. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils and staff, the Board has authorised the Chairperson or principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

**Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated in the school. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the principal must be satisfied that the pupil’s reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil’s own safety or that of the other pupils or staff. The principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

**School Rules**

School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function effectively, it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and fairly.

**Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school do not accept responsibility for pupils before official opening time of 8.45 a.m. or after the official closing time of 1.25 p.m. (infants) and 2.25 p.m. (other classes) except where the pupils are engaged in an extra-curricular activity organised by the school and approved by the Board of Management. Pupils involved in such activities are expected to behave in accordance with the school behaviour policy during these times.

**Absences**

Children are required to be in school every day. The school realises that from time to time a child may miss school due to illness or another unavoidable reason, but this should be minimal.

The principal makes quarterly Returns to TUSLA (formerly National Educational Welfare Board) as is required in the Education Welfare Act 2000. A child’s absence(s) is reported to TUSLA once they have been absent for 20 days or have been suspended from school for six days or more. This reporting is done without prejudice.

Each and every absence must be reported to the class teacher upon the child’s first day returning to school. The written explanation must include the date(s) of absence and the reason for it. A phone call will not suffice. Email is acceptable to the school’s email address tralee.etns@gmail.com Any absences that are not explained in this manner will be recorded as “unexplained”.

The Principal will contact parents if s/he feels that a child’s absences are an issue for concern. This contact may be in the form of a text message, phone call, letter or call to the family’s house.

School holidays will be notified to parents at the beginning of the school year and will be placed on the school’s website. Holidays during school term are unacceptable.

**Board of Management’s Responsibilities**

1. Provide a comfortable, safe environment.
2. Support the principal and staff in implementing the code.
3. Ratify the code.

**Principal’s Responsibilities**

1. Promote a positive climate in the school.
2. Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner.
3. Arrange for review of the Code, as required.

**Teacher’s Responsibilities**

1. Support and implement the school’s Code of Behaviour.
2. Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
3. Recognise and affirm good work.
4. Prepare school work and correct work done by pupils.
5. Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
6. Be courteous, consistent and fair.
7. Keep opportunities for disruptive behaviour to a minimum.
8. Deal appropriately with misbehaviour.
9. Be thoughtful in the language used around behavior expectations and in resolving situations.
10. Keep a record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour.
11. Provide support for colleagues.
12. Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern.
13. Show respect for all members of the school community.

**Pupil’s Responsibilities** *Note: Student Council members consulted regarding the language in this section.*

1. Attend school regularly and on time.
2. Listen to their teachers and act on instructions/advice.
3. Show respect and care for all members of the school community.
4. Respect all school property and the property of other pupils.
5. Avoid behaving in any way which would endanger others.
6. Avoid all nasty remarks, swearing and name-calling.
7. Include other pupils in games and activities.
8. Bring correct materials/books to school.
9. Know the school/class/yard rules and follow them.

**Parents/Guardians Responsibilities**

1. Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves and for property.
2. Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually.
3. Be interested in, support and encourage their children’s school work.
4. Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour and support its implementation.
5. Co-operate with teachers in instances where their child’s behaviour is causing difficulties for others.
6. Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which affect child’s progress/behaviour.
7. Ensure that the children have correct materials for school.
8. Show respect for all members of the school community. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a member of staff, pupil or work placement student will not be tolerated.
9. Provide a written explanation to the class teacher on the day a child returns to school after each absence.

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn term of 2020.

**Ratified by the Board of Management on the 11th November***,* **2019**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal