

Stepaside ETNS Code of Behaviour

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1. Introductory statement

This policy was drafted by the school Principal, Anne Carroll and the school manager Gerry McKeivitt, and it will operate until such time as a committee can be established to review its content. This policy will take effect from 3 September 2012. The policy was reviewed in 2014 in light of new anti-bullying guidelines issued.

2. Rationale

Firstly, this policy is in place to ensure equality and fairness and also to maintain standards of best practice in the school.

Secondly, this policy is in place to ensure compliance with the school's obligations under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, in particular regarding suspension and expulsion and in relation to the procedures to be followed around a child's absence from school.

Thirdly, this review was carried out to ensure our existing 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, NEWB, (2008)*. This document can be accessed at:

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

3. Relationship to the characteristic spirit/ethos of the school

The Code of Behaviour here in Stepside Educate Together National School 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. We make the assumption that children are of their nature good, kind and thoughtful; that each child is naturally disposed towards sociable and co-operative behaviour and finally that each child does their best, within the circumstances of their situation. The Code of Behaviour will be based on these assumptions.

The purpose of this policy is to promote positive behaviour and to allow the school to function in an orderly and harmonious way, in line with our ethos. Children will be made aware of the Code of Behaviour at a level appropriate to their age and development. Children will have input into the Code through their involvement in its development and review.

4. Aims of the Code of Behaviour in Stepside Educate Together N.S.

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way, so that the children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline
- To promote an atmosphere that recognises the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences
- To foster the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions is implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school
- 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

5. A whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour - roles and responsibilities

Stepaside Educate Together N.S. is committed to a whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour. A whole school approach requires the school to provide opportunities and support for each group within the school (the Board, the parents, the staff and the children) to take responsibility at the appropriate level for behaviour within the school. Teamwork, collaboration, inclusion and involvement are the hallmarks of such an approach. As the school develops this will continue to be the case and establishing such an approach from the outset is an important element of this policy.

All members of the school community will be provided with a copy of the written document upon enrolment/employment here in Stepside Educate Together N.S. It is the responsibility of the school, led by the principal, to ensure that the students are taught the behavioural and learning skills they need to respond appropriately to the Code of Behaviour. The principal leads the staff in ensuring that there are additional communication mechanisms in place, so that parents are supported in understanding the norms and values underpinning the code. These include class meetings, parent/teacher meetings, helping any other staff to build positive relationships with parents, communicating clearly and in an ongoing manner with the parents of the children in the school, and working in partnership with parents when there are difficulties. Any special education team members will 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.

The role of the Board includes:

- Regular review of the Code of Behaviour
- Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Code of Behaviour
- Provision of support to the principal and the staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour

The role of the staff includes:

- 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
- Ensuring pupils are aware of and understand the Code of Behaviour and how it may influence their behaviour
- A commitment to fully implementing the Code of Behaviour, and to applying the range of sanctions and rewards appropriately
- Communicating with parents about children's behaviour generally, both at general parents meetings and on an individual level
- Engaging with in-school reviews of behaviour (e.g. at monthly staff meetings)
- Participating in the regular reviews of the Code of Behaviour initiated by the Board of Management

The role of the parents includes:

- Being familiar with the Code of Behaviour
- Encouraging their children to meet the expected standards of behaviour
- Communicating with teachers about issues that affect their children's behaviour
- Encouraging their children to do their best and to take responsibility for their work
- Ensuring that their children attend school regularly and punctually
- Attending meetings at the school if requested
- Supporting their children with their homework and ensuring that it is completed
- Ensuring that their children have the necessary books and materials for school

- Cooperating with the rules and standards which apply to them (dropping off rule, clothing rule, etc.)

The role of pupils includes:

- Taking a full part in formulating the classroom rules
- Behaving well and encouraging others to behave well
- Informing staff of inappropriate, dangerous or bullying behaviour
- Recommending strategies or rules to promote positive behaviour

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

- Greeting others with a smile and saying thank you and please, go raibh maith agat and más é do thoil e and dia dhuit/good morning and slán/goodbye in the afternoon
- Allowing others to go ahead of you through the door or the gate
- Holding the door/gate open for others, in particular visitors, parents, someone carrying something or someone (for example, a baby or a large parcel), or for someone younger or smaller than you
- Looking at people and giving them full attention when they are speaking to you
- If you need to get someone's attention, say excuse me or gabh mo leithsceal and then step back and wait until the person is ready. That is unless it is urgent (for example you urgently need to use the bathroom or someone is injured) – in which case you say excuse me, it's urgent
- Complying with requests without discussion 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 and get their advice

6. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

The general standards of behaviour which are regularly communicated to the children 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 environment
- Respect to be shown for other people'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 is 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 yard
- Children are expected to come to and leave from school on time. The school day begins at 8.30am for all. Children should leave promptly when school is over
- Children are expected to bring to school each day all books, copies and materials necessary to do their class work 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 to take turns to speak in class
- Children must not behave in any way which endangers themselves or others
- 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

7. Our rules for behaving well

We have agreed the following rules to help organise life in school so that it makes it easier for everyone to behave well:

Our school rules

The drop off rule

Wait **quietly** at the gate/in the yard in the morning. The school door is opened in time for children to be in their classes for **8.30am**. No responsibility can be taken for children left before the door opens. All children should have had time to settle in and get organized for the day in time for the beginning of formal lessons at 8.50 am.

The collection rule

Junior Infants are dismissed at **1.10 pm**. They will be handed over to their parents/ minders by the teacher at the school door. No responsibility can be taken for children not collected promptly at the normal closing times. From first class on pupils are dismissed at **2.10 pm**.

The walking rule

The inside of the school is a walking zone at all times. At drop off and collection times, everyone is asked to walk in the yard too.

The climbing rule

No one should climb on the gates in the yard, including toddlers waiting for older siblings, at any time.

The clothing for school rule

Children should wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes all the time, as every day involves some movement and physical activity. Clothes should also be suitable for arts activities. All removable clothing and footwear should be labelled. Make up should not be worn to school. Low cut tops, string vests and t- shirts with offensive or violent slogans should not be worn to school.

The clothing for PE rule

In order to take part in PE classes, children must be wearing suitable clothing i.e. *tracksuit and runners*. Appropriate footwear is especially important. Skating shoes are not appropriate or safe for PE. Children should not wear jewellery unless they are able to remove it themselves prior to their PE class. Long hair should be tied back.

NB: Children who do not comply with the above will not be allowed to take part in the PE class and will be given a note to get signed at home.

The never leave the school rule

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

The language rule

Bad language (curses and swear words) or derogatory language (words like dork, nerd, crap, losers etc.) should never be used.

The expensive toys rule

PSPs, Nintendo DS, game boys and other small electronic toys should be left at home as they can get lost or damaged, as well as creating difficulties at playtime.

The school telephone rule

Children are not permitted to use the school phone except for genuine emergencies such as cancelled activities/ matches and illness.

The mobile phone rule

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 safe driving rule

Please co-operate by driving slowly in to and out of the school grounds.

Our classroom rules

- Class rules are set in each class, by the teacher and the class, which are consistent with the ethos as expressed in the Code of Behaviour and which set a positive atmosphere for learning. These might include a procedure for leaving your seat, going to the bathroom, getting the teacher's attention, keeping the room tidy and safe for everyone, changing tasks, lining up and generally looking out for each other.
- Teachers will endeavour to ensure that pupils understand and are frequently reminded of how they are expected to behave.
- A clear system of acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and sanctions for misbehaviour will operate in each class.

A set of classroom rules drawn up by a class with their teacher might look like this one for infants:

Our classroom rules:

*Nice listening
Hands up
Gentle play
Be kind
Try your best
Be tidy*

Our yard rules – so that playtime is safe and fun for everyone (see yard policy)

- You have **no permission** to leave the yard – you must speak to a teacher first
- First whistle: **FREEZE**; second whistle: **WALK** quietly to your **LINE**
- If you get an injury, make sure to tell a teacher on duty
- If you are not happy, tell the teacher on duty or tell the class teacher when you go back to class and they will help to sort it out
- If you run into someone, check that they are okay. If they are not okay, tell a teacher
- If you see rough play, tell a teacher
- If someone seems lonely, ask them if they would like to play with you and/ or tell a teacher
- If you have ideas to make yard time better, tell the teachers or the principal

School related activities (See Extra-curricular policy)

The Code of Behaviour also applies to all out of school activities, including extra-curricular activities, school outings and tours.

8. Our Approach to Managing behaviour

- Introduction
- Communication with parents about behaviour
- Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour
- Children with special educational needs and the Code of Behaviour
- Procedures for responding to inappropriate behaviour
- Description of minor misdemeanours and suitable sanctions
- Description of major misdemeanours and suitable sanctions
- The individual behavioural plan procedure (for the management of ongoing serious challenging behaviour/ aggression from an individual pupil).

Introduction

The school's SPHE curriculum is used to support the code of behaviour throughout the school. It aims to help the children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, and conflict resolution skills. It also aims to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship. The emphasis in line with our ethos is on rewarding good behaviour, rather than on imposing sanctions i.e. 'catching them being good'.

Communication with parents about behaviour

Good communication between parents and teachers 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 would encourage parents to talk to staff about their concerns, no matter how small. The period between 8.30am and 8.50am is a useful point of contact for incidental matters and clarification and for the arrangement of meetings. For more detailed or sensitive discussions, it is best to arrange a meeting with the class teacher. This means 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 secretary. If it is difficult for you to get to the school

phone contact can be arranged or email contact.

Class meetings take place in late September each year. The Code of Behaviour is explained at that meeting. There is also an opportunity for individual questions with the teachers after the meetings. Individual parent/teacher meetings take place during November each year and behaviour will also be discussed at that meeting.

Children with special educational needs and the Code of Behaviour

The enrolment policy of Stepside Educate Together N.S. provides for equality of access and participation in the school, whatever a child's social, religious, cultural and racial backgrounds and whether or not they have a disability or special education need. While some children come to school with additional supports ready and in place, for others, their needs become more evident as they get older.

There may be a range of needs at any one time in the school such as children with general learning disability, Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders, including Asperger's Syndrome, specific learning disability, children with attention deficit disorders, dyspraxia, emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems, Down Syndrome and speech and language disorders. Additional staffing and resources would be provided as the need arises to help support these children and to ensure their successful integration in Stepside Educate Together N.S.

Challenging behaviour can be related to special needs. Often, while the challenging behaviour is very obvious, the attendant special educational needs may not be. It may be perceived that somehow, the child is 'getting away with things' or being treated more favourably (for example, being allowed movement breaks). Every effort is made to deal with all the children through the regular Code of Behaviour. Sometimes, however special additional measures and a more individualised approach needs to be put in place to support children with special needs and to keep them and their peers safe and able to access the curriculum in school. In general, children for whom special consideration is given, in terms of behaviour, will also be attending clinical and therapeutic services outside school.

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

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

Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

The emphasis in Stepside Educate Together N.S. is on 'catching children being good' and on the ongoing rewarding of good behaviour. The following range of rewards and strategies could be used in Stepside ETNS:

- Praise and encouragement
- Notes Home
- Golden time – computer time, sand time, games, free choice, extra yard time, extra PE, video time, etc.
- Name in the principal's merit book
- Pick a treat/prize from the box
- Sticker charts – pupil(s) are rewarded with stickers for positive behaviour. When a sticker chart is completed the pupil(s) receives a reward
- Stars/stamps
- Quiz time
- Yard points/group points

- Homework pass
- Class Mascot, e.g. teddy bear to take home and keep for a day

Note: sweets are not used as treats, except for special occasions such as end of term parties

Procedures for responding to inappropriate behaviour

- All observations/reports of inappropriate behaviour are investigated and dealt with by the teachers
- Minor 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 child(ren) involved 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 is sought. Steps at this stage may include meetings between parents and the class teacher and/or the principal
- The principal (unless operating as teaching 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 handing up homework might mean completing the work during break time
- If there is no clarity around an incident, i.e. where it was not witnessed or accounts vary, the “what, where, when, who and why” of the reported incident should be investigated by the class teacher/teacher on duty in the first instance and a written report compiled
- Non-teaching staff, such as special needs assistants (SNAs) and the secretary 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. to tell the child to stop, intervene if someone is being injured or hurt. All incidents should be reported to the teacher on duty/class teacher as soon as possible. Sanctions should be imposed 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 major misdemeanours and 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 whole school/class/small group lessons dealing with respect, self-esteem, bullying, building a better understanding of special educational needs, discussion around how specific incidents are managed, etc. Written records will be stored on the Aladdin schools system.
- Where misbehaviour might have an impact on the rest of the class, the principal or the class teacher may inform the rest of the parents of the children in the class by letter/email. For example, where children in the class witnessed a fight in the yard
- The Board of Management will be kept informed of all major misdemeanours and persistent minor misdemeanours

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), unsupervised climbing/running inside the school, bad language, derogatory language, not following instructions.

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
- Name on board
- Confiscation of item
- Time out (in and out of the classroom)
- Extra work
- Loss of privileges, for example not being allowed to do jobs
- 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.

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

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
- 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 Gardaí

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

Individual behavioural plan procedure

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 Chairperson of the Board of Management, 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 approved by the Board. The plan 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, parents shall be told that a safety 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 regular brief report to the Board of Management, in relation to all children involved in an individual behaviour plan, by way of ongoing updating on the situation.

9. Suspension and Expulsion

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 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 serious damage to property

The purpose of suspension includes: providing a respite for staff and students, giving the student time to reflect on their actions and the 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 Principal can 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)

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

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/guidelines_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 yard book

The yard book is used to record incidents of minor misbehaviour and any other issues relevant to playtime. It is also used for mention of major incidents/accidents. The record book or the pupil report file will contain the full report. Yard books are given out by a designated SNA at the beginning of each break and returned to the office after break.

All recorded incidents during yard time should be reported by the teacher on duty to the class teacher at the end of break. Sanctions should be imposed by the teacher on duty and communicated to the class teacher. Serious incidents should be reported to the principal.

The class record book /Aladdin system

The class record book or Aladdin system is used to record incidents of misbehaviour/other issues and patterns of behaviour in the class, the yard and/or the school. Incidents should be recorded by the teacher who has dealt with the problem. All reports should be concise, dated and signed, indicating action taken. Books are kept securely in the classrooms. They are reviewed by the principal monthly.

Pupil files

More serious incidents that take place in the yard or during class time should be recorded on a sheet and placed in the child's file. Incidents should be recorded by the teacher who has dealt with the problem. All reports should be concise, should indicate the action taken, be dated and signed. Parents should always be informed of such incidents promptly. In addition, the formal parent/teacher meetings each year shall include reference to a child's behaviour in school. The end of year report also includes a section on behaviour – both in the classroom and in the yard.

11. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

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

Short absences can be phoned or emailed to the office on the day of absence. Alternatively a note can be sent with the child on return to school. This is placed in the child's file. All longer absences must be informed in writing, by email or letter. The school complies with the requirements of the NEWB on reporting student absence.

(See forms on www.newb.ie)

Early collections of pupils from school must be recorded by the person collecting the pupil in the 'Early Leavers' book in the secretary's office. The reason for the early leave must be recorded as the school has to be able to account for all non-attendance in school.

12. Reference to other Policies

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

- o Anti-bullying policy
- o Substance use policy
- o Enrolment 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 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 sanctions and rewards 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 these 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 yard book to record incidents of misbehaviour and any other observations of note in relation to the children at playtime
- Serious incidents or issues are recorded in the pupil files

- 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.

10. Review and Ratification

A copy of this policy will be provided to all families and staff at the beginning of the school year. It will be in effect from 3 September 2012. 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, 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 SPHE will be based of the Code of Behaviour and will be used to gather any feedback from the children. This feedback will be given by the principal to the Board.

Staff: (As the school develops)

- '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 suggestions 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 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

The Board of Management:

- The Board of Management will be kept informed about any major breaches of the Code of Behaviour in monthly meetings throughout the year
- The feedback from any staff meetings, the written feedback from the parents and feedback from the children will be presented to the Board annually by the principal

Review

This policy was reviewed during the 2013-2014 school year in light of the new anti-bullying guidelines. The views of the whole school community were sought. Following this, it will be regularly reviewed in line with the priorities set by the Board of Management.

Signed

Principal

Chairperson

Date
