

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

### Introductory Statement:

The original Code of Behaviour was developed in 1999 and reviewed in 2010.

### Rationale:

The need to review the policy arose with the publication of the "Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post primary schools " ( 2013 ). A small working group was established to further develop the policy to ensure all new strategies for promoting positive behaviour and procedures for dealing with negative behaviour were reflected in the policy.

### Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

Our Code of Behaviour reflects the four pillars of the ethos of Lucan Educate Together.

As such it is:

- Child -centred -supporting the individual needs and promoting the welfare of every student to ensure they are happy and safe at school.
- Democratic - The children, staff and parents have each had an input into the development of this policy. Furthermore, the code affirms that everyone's contribution to the school community matters through a fair, co-operative and consistent response to each individual's behaviour.
- Multi - denominational -the code is non-racist and non- discriminatory and respects all cultures and beliefs.
- Co-educational -whether male or female each person will be respected and treated equally.

### Content of policy

- Aims :
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance, acceptance and consideration for others.

- To ensure the safety and well being of all members of our school community.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly and efficient way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development, and reach their full potential.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

#### A. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

The following four rules are taught in all classes from Junior Infants to sixth class

##### Rules

1. Take care..... of yourself, others, our school.
2. Be on time, be prepared
3. Know what is expected of you....Know when to walk, talk, listen etc.
4. Do your best at all times.

See attached sheets for detailed expectations under each heading

#### B. Whole school approach to promote positive behaviour

School management and all staff actively foster a school ethos and practices which aid in promoting positive behaviour and which aim to prevent inappropriate behaviour.

Circle - time is an ongoing and regular aspect of the classroom. This involves exploring with the children the importance and value of school rules, negotiating with them what rules are necessary for a happy and safe classroom, how we interact with one another in a caring and respectful manner and how we engage in safe and appropriate play activities during break times.

The use of discriminatory and derogatory language is also discussed during SPHE. This includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.

- All staff participate in the verbal affirmation of positive behaviour and take every opportunity to recognize and affirm this good behaviour. Visual clues are evident around the building such as how to walk safely on the stairs by holding onto the banister to remind the children of the expectations .
- There is regular input at assemblies and gatherings for year groups on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour.
- Friendship week is celebrated at the beginning of each school year. Positive behaviour is promoted throughout this week through activities such as establishing buddy systems, examining what friendship means and how friends should treat each other and developing key messages about the positive aspects of friendship.
- Staff and children are encouraged to recognise good behaviour. Praise and encouragement are an integral part of the approach to behaviour management in the school.
- Where incidents of inappropriate behaviour occur, time is spent with the child in helping him/her understand the behaviour and what they should do, should they find themselves in the same situation again.
- The staff in the school model the good behaviour that we expect from the children and are continuously mindful that the children learn from what they observe.
- The standards for behaviour that are set are clear, consistent and are understood by staff, children and their parents.
- In keeping with our ethos, parental support is valued and recognized as intrinsic to the promotion and the maintenance of good behaviour.

Specific rewards for positive behaviour....Whole School Approach.

- Staff use a variety of rewards within classrooms to reward children e.g. Stamps, Stickers, Certificates, homework pass, etc.
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- Certificates are given to children at assembly to recognise special efforts that the children have made.

- Golden time--- a period is set aside at the end of the week where children are rewarded with an activity of their choice. Golden time is earned by children making a good effort to behave during the week.
- Best line is awarded on a points system and the best line is announced to the school as a whole at the end of the week as a public acknowledgement of achievement by the class/ classes.
- Bonus points are awarded to classes at a member of staff's discretion when good behaviour is noticed.

Students who need more active intervention to manage their behaviour may be supported in a number of the following ways:

- Setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the child in a supportive way.
- Agreeing together a behaviour contract
- Referral to Pastoral Care programme
- Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal another teacher/adult who can work with the child.
- Liaising with child's parents..... Informing the parents of the inappropriate behaviour and planning a way in which all may help the child.

### Children presenting with very challenging behaviour.

If all of the steps identified in above have not been successful in helping the child to resolve his/her behaviour the school with the consent of the parents may decide to liaise with the local support services/National Education Psychological Service/ National Behaviour Support Services/National Education Support Service/ Child Guidance Services, Linn Dara Service

### C. School wide response to inappropriate behaviour

- Minor Misbehaviours.
- The following are examples of what is considered to be 'minor misbehaviours':
- Talking during teaching time.
- Leaving seat without permission.

- Running in class.
  - Talking in corridors.
  - Disrupting the class inappropriately.
  - Commenting on others.
  - Being unprepared for class/lunch/ start of work/ lining up.
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- Serious Misbehaviours.
  - The following are examples of what is considered to be 'serious misbehaviours'
  - Intentional harm/injury to others.
  - Obscene language or gestures.
  - Using discriminatory or derogatory language in school. E.g homophobic or racist language.
  - Leaving school grounds without permission.
  - Stealing.
  - Possession of weapons/chemicals/drugs
  - Vandalism
  - Destruction of school property
  - Aggression
  - Intentional intimidation/repeated bullying
  - Spitting
  - Disrespect/defiance.
  - Deliberate sabotaging of lessons.

Sanctions are positive interventions that are used to help children understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take personal responsibility for changing their behaviour, where necessary.

Every effort will be made to ensure;

- sanctions are applied fairly and consistently,
- they are used to defuse the situation
- to ensure the child and other children are kept safe
- Children understand the purpose of the sanction

In deciding on the particular sanction used the following factors are considered

- Nature of misbehaviour - minor/serious
- Age/developmental stage of the child
- Particular circumstances/needs of child
- The appropriateness of the sanction to the nature and seriousness of the misbehaviour, how often the negative behaviour has occurred and how the sanction will help the child to return to positive behaviour.

### Application of Class Sanctions

Each class uses card system..... Green, Yellow and Red. In the Junior Classes the cards correspond with sun, rainbow and rain cloud. Each child is given a peg with his/her name on it. At the beginning of the day all pegs are placed on the green card/sun

- Each child is allowed one verbal warning. On second infringement of rules child's peg is moved on to yellow card/rainbow. The child is reminded of appropriate behaviour by the class teacher, in a calm and respectful tone of voice. The child is encouraged to do his/her best. In the event of a further infringement of the rules, the child's peg is moved on the red card/rain cloud. The following sanctions will then apply:
- Loss of all or part of Golden Time. Child is encouraged to win back partial or all of Golden Time in the course of the week.

#### Second Infringement;

- Child is withdrawn from group/class/activity for 10-15 mins. He /she will be requested to complete a "think sheet". Think Sheet will be signed by child/parent and class teacher. Think sheet will be retained by class teacher.

### Third Infringement:

- Communication with home via letter/phone call etc informing parent of difficulties child is experiencing and agreeing together steps to be taken to resolve the behaviour.
- Loss of privileges - trips/computer time etc.
- Formal meeting with parent/child to agree attainable goals and specific rewards for achievement. Specific sanctions for misbehaviour will also be agreed at this meeting.

The B.O.M. will be kept informed on an ongoing basis of behavioural issues in the school.

### Specific Sanctions for Yard

A child engaging in inappropriate or dangerous play in the yard will be sanctioned in the following way;

On the first incident of misbehaviour the child is spoken to by staff on supervision and reminded of the rules and appropriate play. If the behaviour persists, the child will be asked to stand out for five to ten minutes. The child's name will be recorded in the yard incident folder and class teacher will also keep a record of the time out.

As a general rule, behaviour which places a child or other children at risk of being hurt, or disrespectful behaviour towards other children or adults will warrant time out.

Children who have had two time out periods in ten consecutive school days will receive a standard letter home following the second incident, informing parents of the incidents and that their child will lose playtime for the duration of big break the following day. On receipt of the letter, parents are asked to sign it and return it to their child's class teacher the next day.

During this time out the child will be required to do a worksheet in classroom, under the supervision of staff member. In some circumstances of serious misbehaviour, a single incident may lead to a child being withdrawn from the yard if there are concerns for his/her safety or the safety of others.

## Suspension

Suspension is defined as:

'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'.

During the period of suspension, the student retains his/her place in the school.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

The Student's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on other students.

The Student's continued presence in the school at the time constitutes a threat to safety.

The Student is responsible for serious harm to another student or school property.

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

## Procedures in respect of suspension

Schools are required by law to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. When a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehavior, the following procedures will apply:

### Inform the student and parents

Student and parents will be informed by the Principal about the complaint, how it will be investigated and that it could result in suspension. Initial contact with parents will be by phone call. This will be followed by letter, confirming nature of complaint. Board of Management will be informed.

### Give an opportunity to respond

Parent and Student will be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed.

### Implementing the suspension

The Board of Management of Lucan Educate Together N.S. has delegated responsibility to the Principal, to take the decision where necessary, to suspend a student. The Principal will inform the Board of Management from

the outset of the nature of the misbehaviour, the decision and rationale for the decision to suspend and the duration of the suspension The Principal is also required to report suspensions to the National Education Welfare Board [Education Welfare Act 2000. Section 21[4][a].

The Principal will notify the Student and Parents in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm;

The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.

The reasons for the suspension

Any study programme to be followed, while the student is out of school.

The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.

The provision for an appeal to the B.O.M.

The right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

The school will have a plan in place to support the student to re-integrate when he/she returns to school and to catch up on work missed. The student will be given every opportunity and support to make a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, once the sanction is completed the school will expect the same behaviour of the student as all other students.

The maximum period for suspension of a student is three days, except in exceptional circumstances where the Principal considers that a period of suspension longer than three days is needed in order to achieve a particular objective. If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter will be referred to the B.O.M. for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and expected outcomes.

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

## Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school

Parents must notify the class teacher of the reason for their child's absence from school, following his/her return to school. This may be done through written note which is then placed in the child's personal file. If a child is likely to be absent for a significant period of time, parents are advised to inform the school by phone call so that the necessary information can be communicated to the class teacher. This should be followed by a written note when the child returns to school.

Children's attendance is closely monitored. Details of children who exceed 20 days absence are forwarded to the National Education Welfare Board as set out by the Education Board.

### F. Reference to other policies.

The following policies have a bearing on the code of behaviour:

Social Personal Health Education plans

Anti-bullying

Health and safety

Equality

Special needs

Critical Incident Policy

Staff Welfare

Substance Use Policy

### When does the code apply

The behaviour of the pupil is under the code of behaviour for all activities where the child is under the supervision of the school staff, this includes;

Class based activities.

Yard Time

School tours

Sports day

Trips to sports tournaments/ cultural events etc..

Where after school activities are being run by external personnel, inappropriate behaviour should be sorted between parent, child and personnel involved in organising the activity.

### Children with special needs:

Sometimes children with special needs may display challenging behaviour. This can often be as a result of difficulties associated with their conditions and so situations must be responded to in an appropriate manner. The individual profile of the child involved should influence any measures taken to address these incidences. With regard to procedures for noting and reporting incidences of challenging behaviour involving a child with special needs, key staff must be consulted ( e.g. child's class teacher, sna, ). Staff will work in close consultation with parents to ensure the child understands the nature of their actions, its consequences and any sanctions imposed. While appropriate sanctions may be imposed, a more effective and proven approach is through the use of positive behaviour programmes. A support plan will be established to enable the child to reduce the incidences of challenging behaviour and encourage more positive responses.

### Communicating the Code of Behaviour to the wider school community

In order to communicate the code of behaviour to each family, a copy of the code will be provided before registration to the child's parent's in the school. To aid in family's understanding of the code of behaviour, the code will be made public on the LETNS website. The code will also be written in plain language which is easily understandable by both students and parents/guardians. The school will try to ensure that translations are made available in the languages needed by the school community. The main points of the code will be re-inforced with parents at the beginning of each school year.

To teach the code to the student body, the code will be implemented across curriculum and classes. Firstly, school rules will be posted in each classroom.

Content of Social Personal Health Education, Ethical Core Curriculum, and circle time lessons will address the code of behaviour and school norms and expectations. These lessons will be made appropriate to class level. The code will be discussed regularly at assemblies and referred to regularly in classrooms including what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour from the students. Students with special needs may be supported in learning and following the code of behaviour with more tangible teaching methods including role-play, film, or pictures.

### The Principal and Deputy Principal

Leading the audit and review of the code of behavior, and ensuring that it is implemented in the school, are important leadership tasks. It is the responsibility of the Principal/Deputy Principal, under the direction of the Board, to ensure the code of behavior is implemented on a consistent basis in the school.

### Teachers, S.N.A.s and other staff members

Teachers and other staff members play important roles in the work of implementing the code and also in reviewing and updating of the code. They bring to this work their:

- professional expertise in understanding the links between behaviour and learning;
- their experience of what works to help students to behave well
- their knowledge of the school and of the school community.

The management of children's behaviour is consistently monitored and addressed at every staff meeting.

### Parents

Parental understanding and support for the implementation of the code of behaviour is encouraged and highly valued in the school. There are clear channels through which parents can communicate any concerns they may have about their child and explore ways of helping him/her. See attached flow chart in relation to procedures for addressing complaints. Parents are encouraged to share information about anything that might affect their child's behavior in school. The introductory meeting for parents of new

children deals with specifically with the code, school standards, expectations for children and the role of parents in helping the child meet the standards. Parents are informed on an ongoing basis where children are having difficulty in managing their behaviour. Steps are agreed and put in place to enable the child to overcome these difficulties.

### The Board of Management

The overall responsibility for ensuring that a code of behaviour is prepared in the school rests with the Board of Management. Lucan Educate Together has its own unique identity, ethos, values and culture. The Board and the Executive has particular responsibility for the ethos of the school, as well as having overall responsibility for school policies. The Board play an active role in exploring the kinds of relationships and behaviours that will reflect the school's ethos and responsibilities. The Board make sure that all the members of the school community have the opportunity to be involved in work on the code of behaviour. The Board of Management formally record the implementation of the code of behaviour, the commencement date and decisions about when the code will be reviewed.

### The Patron - Executive Committee

Under the provisions of the *Education Act 1998*, each school has a Patron who carries out certain functions specified in the Act. The Board of Management manages the school on behalf of the Patron and for the benefit of the students and their parents. The Board must:

- uphold the characteristic spirit of the school and be accountable to the Patron in this respect
- consult with and keep the Patron informed of decisions and proposals
- publish its policies on admissions, participation, suspension and expulsion in a manner that has been agreed with the Patron (section 15(d), *Education Act 1998*).

In order to comply with these provisions, the Board of Management should submit the code of behaviour to the Patron for approval.

### Implementation of Code

- The code was presented to the Board of Management for feedback in February 2015.
- The Board of Management submitted the code to the Executive for feedback
- The final draft was presented to the Board of Management in March 2015 for ratification.

The policy is available to the school community through the school website.

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Tina Stallard  
Chairperson B.O.M.  
Lucan Educate Together N.S.