



## **LUCAN EDUCATE TOGETHER**

### **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

#### **1. Introductory Statement and Rationale:**

This Code of Behaviour has been developed having regard to the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools.

#### **2. 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 – focussed on supporting the individual needs and promoting the welfare of every student to ensure they are happy and safe at school.
- Democratic – Staff, parents and children have all had an input into the development of this policy. Furthermore, the code affirms that everyone's contribution to our school community is valued through a fair, collaborative and consistent response to each individual's behaviour.
- Equality-based – the code aims to be non-discriminatory and respects all cultures, backgrounds and beliefs.
- Co-educational – whether male or female, each child can expect to be respected and treated equally.

#### **3. Aims:**

- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline in our pupils.
- 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 feel happy and secure, make progress in all aspects of their development and fulfil their full potential.
- To ensure that a system of rules, rewards and sanctions is implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

#### **4. General Guidelines for Behaviour in the School:**

The following four rules, taught in all classes from Junior Infants to sixth class, underpin the approach to behaviour in our school.

#### **5. Rules:**

1. Take care..... of yourself, others, our school.
2. Be on time and be prepared.

3. Know what is expected of you... when to walk, talk, listen etc.
4. Do your best at all times.

**6. Whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour:**

- School management and staff actively promote the school ethos and model practices that aim to encourage positive behaviour whilst, at the same time, preventing instances of inappropriate behaviour.
- There is regular input at assemblies and weekly meetings for year groups on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour and different positive 'values' are also explored.
- 'Friendship Week' (or similar) is celebrated during each school year. Throughout the week, positive behaviour is promoted via activities such as establishing buddy systems, examining what friendship means, how friends should treat each other and developing key messages about the positive aspects of friendship.
- Circle-Time is an ongoing and regular aspect of classroom practice. This involves exploring with the children the importance and value of school rules, negotiating with them on 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 implications of using discriminatory and derogatory language are also explored during SPHE lessons. This includes homophobic and gender or race biased language and language that is stigmatising of pupils with a disability or special educational need (SEN).
- The standards for behaviour that are set are clear, consistent and understood by staff, children and their parents.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Activities focusing on well-being and positive self-esteem are provided at each class level (using, for example, the 'Weaving Well-being' programme).
- Social skills sessions are provided to support children who need additional help in the areas of social and emotional interactions.
- In keeping with our ethos, parental support is valued and recognised as intrinsic to the promotion and the maintenance of positive behaviour.

**7. Specific rewards for/reinforcers of positive behaviour:**

Staff use a variety of methods within classrooms to reward and motivate positive behaviour choices in the children:

- As well as verbal praise, stamps, stickers, certificates, notes home, homework passes etc. are used to acknowledge and reinforce positive behaviour.
- Certificates are given to children at assembly to recognise special efforts that the children have made towards fulfilling the 'value' of the month.
- 'Golden Time' (a period set aside at the end of the week where children are rewarded with an activity of their choice) is earned by children making a consistent effort to behave appropriately during the week.
- Best line for different yards 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. This measure is used strategically/when necessary to refocus the commitment to good lining up.
- Bonus points and 'dojos' are awarded to individuals & classes at a member of staff's discretion to affirm examples of positive behaviour.
- A visual behaviour system is used in each class (see later for more details) to clearly and visibly monitor the behaviour of individuals.

#### **8. School wide response to inappropriate behaviour.**

As a school community we are aware that, whilst we expect it would be every child's desire to behave in line with agreed standards and rules, at times they will not all achieve this. As a result, we have identified a spectrum/range of behaviours that will require a strategic, consistent and positive response in order to see these diminish and replaced with positive alternatives.

##### Low-level/Moderate Behaviours:

The following are examples of what we consider as 'low-level/Moderate behaviours':

- Persistent off-task talking during teaching time.
- Running in class.
- Disrupting the class deliberately.
- Commenting disrespectfully about others.
- Persistently being unprepared for class/lunch/ start of work/ lining up.
- Wilful misuse of school property
- Dangerous or reckless play
- Once off incidents of intimidation/verbal aggression/minor injury to others
- Once off incidents of disrespect/defiance

##### Serious Behaviours:

The following are examples of what we consider as 'serious behaviours':

- 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.
- Wilful destruction of school property
- Spitting at others
- Repeated examples of disrespect/defiance.
- Deliberate sabotaging of lessons.

Very Serious Behaviours (putting safety and well-being of self or others at significant risk):

The following are examples of what we consider as 'very serious behaviours':

- Possession of weapons/chemicals/drugs/fireworks
- Repeated examples of verbal/physical aggression towards others
- Systematic intimidation/repeated bullying
- Intentional harm/injury to others.
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Vandalism

In response to these behaviours, **sanctions** are necessary and appropriate interventions that we use to help our children understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take personal responsibility for changing this as necessary. Every effort will be made to ensure that:

- Sanctions are applied fairly and consistently (see details later in document)
- 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 – e.g. low-level/moderate/serious/very serious
- Age/developmental stage of the child
- Particular circumstances/needs of child
- The appropriateness of the sanction to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- How often the behaviour has occurred
- How the sanction will help the child to make more positive behaviour choices.

**9. Application of Class Behaviour Monitoring System:**

Each class uses a visual behaviour monitoring system. This system comprises a range of levels. Children begin on the middle (acceptable/expected) level each day. As the day progresses and depending on their behaviour, they either remain at this acceptable level or may move up or down the hierarchy (for examples of positive / less positive behaviour). In the Junior classes the cards correspond with sun, rainbow and rain cloud while in the Senior classes (3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>) the card system is coloured according to different levels of behaviour.

It is generally agreed and understood that such systems are a means to supporting the culture of positive behaviour in our school, reinforcing as they do, both collective and individual behaviour choices. (Ideally, as many children as possible should have made some progress 'up' the hierarchy in any given week).

How these systems are used in different classroom settings is dependent, of course, on the professional and ethical judgment of each individual member of staff. However, in order to ensure a degree of consistency of response, when behaviour choices are considered to be at a level where sanctions are required, the following stepped response should be used:

For Low to Moderate level behaviours:

1. As an initial step, each child will receive a formal verbal warning. The child will be reminded of the appropriate/expected behaviour by the class teacher, in a

calm and respectful tone of voice. The child will be encouraged to do his/her best to follow the expected behaviour.

2. If a second warning is required the child's name will be moved to the next level down in the card hierarchy. A further reminder will be given of the appropriate, expected behaviour (the possibility for making positive choices and as a result moving back 'up' the chart should always be a goal of this system of behaviour management).
3. In the event of the need for a third warning (and in the absence of any positive choices that enabled 'upward' movement again through the hierarchy) the child's name will be moved on to the red card/rain cloud. The following sanctions will then apply:
  - Child will be removed from group/class/activity for a short period of time to another class. He/she will be required to complete a "think sheet". The think sheet will be retained by the class teacher.
  - A note written in the journal explaining the situation for the parents to read and sign along with a copy of the think sheet.

On the rare occasions, that the examples of a behaviour persist after the red card has been reached and no progress back up the hierarchy has been achieved the child should be sent to either the Principal or Deputy Principal.

For Serious to Very Serious level behaviours (this includes once off incidents):

1. The child will be referred immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal who will explore the incident in depth with the child. The child's parents will be informed by phone call and/or e-mail. This will be logged as a permanent record of the event.
2. Detention will be implemented as soon as possible following the incident. A meeting will also be arranged with the parents and staff (and child where appropriate). At this meeting, further measures will be explored to support the child towards making more positive choices and a plan of response devised and agreed.
3. Suspension will be considered if the behaviour is deemed 'very serious' and meets the prescribed criteria (see details below).

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

- Liaising with child's parents and planning a way in which all may help the child through setting targets for behaviour and monitoring them with the child in a supportive way (e.g. through an Individual Behaviour Plan which focuses attention on both rewards and sanctions).
- Referral to Social Skills/Pastoral Care programme provided by members of the school Special Education Team (S.E.T.).
- Referral to Principal/Deputy Principal or another teacher/adult who can work with and support the child.

## **10. Children presenting with very challenging, on-going behaviour.**

If all of the steps identified in the 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 Educational Psychological Service/ National Behaviour Support Services/National Council for Special Education/ Child Guidance Services, Linn Dara Service etc..

The B.O.M. will be informed on a regular basis of any significant behavioural issues in the school. This will happen via the Principal's report at each meeting.

## **11. Specific Sanctions for Yard:**

Any child engaging in inappropriate or dangerous behaviour, on the way to or while on the yard, will be sanctioned in the following way:

- On the first incident of inappropriate behaviour the child will be spoken to by staff on supervision and reminded of the rules and appropriate play.
- If the behaviour is repeated, the child will be asked to stand out for an appropriate length of time. Timers will be used to notify children when the time out has come to an end.
- The child's name will be recorded in the yard incident folder and class teacher will also keep a record of the time out (having been informed by supervising staff).

As a general rule, repeated 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 (and these have been clearly noted in the yard book and the child has been informed about this) in ten consecutive school days will receive a standard letter home following the second incident. This letter will inform parents of the incidents and explain that their child will lose yard time for the duration of big break the Friday immediately after the incident. On receipt of the letter, parents will be asked to sign it and return it to their child's class teacher the next day. Copies of these signed letters will be kept on file.

During this loss of yard time the child will be required to complete a worksheet and discuss this in a suitable classroom setting, under the supervision of staff member. These sheets will be kept on file by the class teacher. 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.

## **12. Suspension**

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

- 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 (their own or that of others).
- The student is responsible for serious harm to another student, staff member or school property.
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

### **13. Procedures in respect of suspension**

We aim to ensure that make sure that fair and transparent procedures are followed when proposing to suspend a student.

Following an incident of serious misbehavior, the incident will be reported to the Principal/Deputy Principal who will assume responsibility for investigating the incident to clarify the facts and confirm that an incident of serious misbehavior has occurred. This will involve interviews with student/students involved and any staff who have been involved and can support the investigation process.

Once established, the student will be informed that his/her parents will be contacted and that the behaviour could result in a suspension.

Contact with the child's parents will be made initially by phone call. Parents will be invited to attend meeting to discuss the incident. Student may be asked to attend part of this meeting to discuss what has happened.

The Principal will discuss with parents the seriousness of the incident and the terms of the code of behaviour in dealing with such incidents of misbehavior.

After a full investigation of the incident and the facts having been established, the following procedures will apply:

### **14. 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.

### **15. 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 Chairperson of the Board of Management from the outset of the nature of the misbehaviour, and the rationale for the decision to suspend a student following an incident of serious misbehavior.

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. or to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills.

On returning to school, 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 Principal will report to the B.O.M. on a monthly basis on the number of suspensions since the previous meeting.

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.

**16. Reference to other policies:**

The following have a bearing on the code of behaviour:

- Social Personal Health Education plans
- Attendance Strategy Policy
- Anti-bullying
- Health and safety
- Equality
- Specific Education Needs
- Critical Incident Policy
- Staff Welfare
- Substance Use Policy

**17. 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.

**18. Children with specific education needs:**

Sometimes children with specific education needs may display challenging behaviour. This can often be 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 specific education needs, key staff will be consulted (e.g. child's class teacher, sna etc.). 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.

## **19. Communicating and affirming the Code of Behaviour in 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 parents 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 reinforced with parents at the beginning of each school year and parents will be asked to sign up to these.

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, Learn Together programme and circle time lessons will address the aspects of the code alongside school ethos 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 specific education needs may be supported in learning and following the code of behaviour with more tangible teaching methods including role-play, social stories, picture-strip scripts etc.

### 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 adhered to in a fair and consistent manner.

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

Teachers and other staff members play important roles in the work of implementing, 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 make positive behavior choices
- Their knowledge of the school and of the school community.

The management of children's behaviour is monitored on a regular basis and is addressed at staff meetings.

### Parents:

As previously mentioned, parental understanding and support for the implementation of the code of behaviour is encouraged and highly valued in our school. One element of the introductory process for parents of new children deals specifically with the code, school standards, expectations for children and the role of parents in helping the child meet these standards.

Furthermore, 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. Parents are also informed on an ongoing basis where their child/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 updated code was presented to the Board of Management for feedback in May 2019.*
- *The Board of Management submitted the code to the Executive for feedback.*
- *The final draft was presented to the Board of Management in June 2019 for ratification.*

The policy is available to the school community through the school website and a hardcopy of the policy will be sent to each family initially and to new families as they join the school.

<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Reviewed:</b>	
<b>Ratified by Board of Management:</b>	

<b>Effective from:</b>	
<b>Next Review Date: *</b>	

**\* Unless reviewed at an earlier date if deemed necessary by a change in law, Department policy, or to reflect changing school circumstances.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson:**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal:**



## Code of Behaviour Pledge

I have read and understood the Code of Behaviour and have discussed it with my child / children. I understand that, where there are breaches of the Code of Behaviour, there will be an appropriate sanction.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Child)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

