



Code of Behaviour – Positive Behaviour Policy

Navan Educate Together National School is an equality based co-educational school catering for students from Junior Infants up to Sixth class under the patronage of Educate Together. We strive in co-operation with parents to provide a holistic education in a caring and secure environment where each student is encouraged to realise his/her potential and achieve to the best of his/her ability.

RATIONALE

This review is being carried out to ensure that our 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 (2008). This document can be accessed at: http://www.newb.ie/downloads/pdf/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf

The code of behaviour of Navan ETNS is based on the principle of equal respect for both students and their families and for the staff of the school, both teaching and non-teaching. The purpose of this Policy is to promote positive behaviour and to allow our school to function in an orderly and harmonious way, in line with our ethos as an Educate Together school. Students will be made aware of the code at a level appropriate to their age. The purpose of this Code is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents, students and other relevant persons on how to ensure an orderly climate for learning in our school.

The aims of the Code of Behaviour of Navan Educate Together National School are as follows:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our Educate Together ethos.
- To provide a safe and happy school community, to ensure that every member feels valued and respected.

- To develop students' self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour, where each student can develop to his/her full potential.
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way, where all students can make progress in all aspects of their developments.
- To promote positive behaviour, recognising the differences between students and the need to accommodate and accept these differences.
- To foster the development of a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in students based on respect, consideration and tolerance to others.
- To assist parents and students in understanding the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and to ensure their co-operation with its implementation.
- To ensure that the system of rules, rewards and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests, in varying ways as outlined below, with all partners of our school's educational tasks e.g. The Board of Management, Principal, Teaching Staff, Students and their Parents/Guardians.

Board of Management

- Ratify the Code
- Support the Principal and Staff in implementing the Code of Behaviour
- Ensure that the entire school community has a safe environment
- Provision of support to the Principal and Staff in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour
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Principal

- Provide a safe work environment
- Provide support for colleagues
- Promote a positive climate in the school
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner and arrange for a review of the Code, as required

Teaching Staff

- Support and implement the Code of Behaviour
- The promotion of positive behaviour through effective teaching, an inclusive and engaging curriculum in well managed classrooms, using the school traffic light system and to include the explicit teaching of the Golden Rules

- The use of a variety of classroom management techniques and curricular methodologies to sustain students' interest and motivation, helping to sustain and maximise positive behaviour
- Be courteous, consistent and fair
- Deal appropriately with misbehaviour
- Keep a written record of instances of serious misbehaviour or repeated instances of misbehaviour
- Provide support for colleagues
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of mutual concern
- Respect to be shown by the teachers to other members of staff, parents, students and the wider schools community
- Report matters of serious concern to Principal
- Record incidents from yard
- Engaging with in-school review of behaviour (e.g. at staff meetings)

Students

- Attend school regularly be punctual
- Bring correct materials/books to school
- Follow school and class rules
- Listen to teachers and act on instructions/advice
- Respect to be shown by the student to members of staff, their peers, parents and the wider school community
- Respect all school property and the property of other students
- Behave in a safe manner that does not endanger themselves or others
- Include other students in games and activities.

Parents/Guardians

- Be familiar with the full Code of Behaviour and support its implementation. This is available on the school website: navaneducatetogether.ie
- Sign the Code of Behaviour as outlined on the Registration form to confirm that it is acceptable to them and that they will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that their child complies with the Code of Behaviour. Students will only be enrolled if parents/guardians agree to this in advance (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23(4))
- Ensure that children attend regularly and punctually
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work
- Co-operate with teachers, if their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others

- Communicate with the school regarding any problems that may affect their child's progress or behaviour
- Attend meetings at the school if requested
- Support children with their homework and ensure it is completed
- Parents are expected to show understanding towards children for whom some of these guidelines may be challenging e.g. Children with special educational needs
- Respect to be shown by the parents towards members of staff, other parents and children and the wider school community

General guidelines for positive behaviour within the school.

In order to sustain our Code of Behaviour, it is important that our school climate, values, policies, practices and relationships support the Code of Behaviour. The school has created the following Golden Rules, which support the overall ethos of the school and are designed to bring out the best in the students and to encourage positive behaviour. For this to happen, a whole school approach to behaviour is necessary, ensuring that it is fair and consistent.

As a school, we place a great emphasis on affirming positive behaviour than on sanctions. We believe that students are more likely to behave well when:

- The students are given responsibility in the school and are involved in the development of the school's Code of Behaviour
- The students are encouraged to see that the Code of Behaviour works in a fair way and is of benefit to all
- The standards are clear, consistent and widely understood
- The students have a strong sense of belonging to their school community
- There are good relationships between staff, parents and students

The Golden Rules

The Golden Rules are taught in all classes throughout the school. They form the basis of our positive Code of Behaviour policy. These rules are displayed in a prominent place in the school.

- We are gentle and kind, we use kind words and show kindness in every way.
- We are honest, we tell the truth.
- We help to make our school safe and follow the rules.
- We listen, we do not interrupt and we wait our turn to speak.
- We show respect to everyone we meet, in everything we do.
- We are happy to learn new things in school activities.
- We are responsible for our work and always try our best.

Classroom Rules

The Classroom Rules, which encourage a learning atmosphere will be created by the teacher and the students each September. The students will be encouraged to commit to the Classroom Rules Contract. To further encourage positive behaviour, individual teachers may devise positive behaviour systems within their own classrooms, e.g. Star of the Week, Gaeilgeoir na Seachtaine, Traffic Light system etc.

The classroom school rules make clear which kinds of behaviour are acceptable and which are not. The rules promote positive every day interactions between staff members and students, establish good school and classroom routines, set clear boundaries for students and supports the acknowledgement of positive behaviour within the school.

The Outdoor Rules

The Outdoor Rules are to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every student during break times.

- Walk at all times in the school and the school grounds, except at break times, where playing is supervised. If you come by bicycle/scooter to school, you dismount the bicycle/scooter at the entrance gates.
- Stay within the boundary of your play area during yard time.
- At the end of the break routine
 1. Freeze on the spot - when the teacher blows the whistle the first time.
 2. Walk quietly to your line - when the teacher blows the whistle the second time.
 3. Stand quietly in the line – wait for the classroom teacher bring your back to the classroom.
- At home time leave the school premises calmly, staying with your teacher until the person collecting you has arrived*

*In this regard, parents/guardians MUST inform the school if there is a change of person due to collect their child/ren. Also, if you have given written permission for your child/ren to walk home from school, please submit this in writing by email or on Aladdin Connect to the Principal.

Stair Rules

To ensure the safety of all, students will be supervised at all times as they enter and leave the building. They will walk at all times on the stairs holding the rail at all times. The students will walk in single file and stay on the right.

Toilet Rules

- Only ask to go to the toilet when you need to go
- One student at a time, wait until the other student has come back.
- Go straight to the toilet and back to your own seat.

- Do not waste time in the toilet.
- Always wash your hands and dry them with a paper towel after you use the toilet, disposing of your paper towel in the appropriate bin.
- Leave the toilet as tidy as you have found it.

Bus Rules

- Always wear your seat belt.
- Be careful getting on and off the bus
- Follow the bus drivers' instructions.
- Try to be quiet and mannerly on the bus
- Never tease, jeer or call names or make personal remarks about people on the bus.
- Be polite and kind to all on the bus
- Continuous teasing and jeering and making hurtful remarks, can be described as bullying.

What happens when there is good behaviour?

We have a Positive Behaviour Programme that is a whole school approach towards recognising the efforts that the students are making in their school work and for putting the Golden Rules into practice.

Certificate, Privileges and Prizes

The students will be encouraged to implement the Golden Rules into their daily lives. The teachers will recognise the efforts that the students are making and award them 'Stamps' accordingly for their efforts. The students will collect the 'Stamps'. When the student has received one page of 'Stamps' the student will receive first their 'White Certificate', then a 'Red Certificate', then a 'Privilege' and finally a 'Prize'.

Each Friday, the students will participate in 'Celebration Assembly', during which the positive efforts that the students are making to abide to the Golden Rules will be recognised. The students will be awarded a signed Certificates, Privileges or Prizes from the Principal, in front of their peers.

Nice Box

In every classroom, there will be a Nice Box. The students will be encouraged to notice the good efforts that their peers are making to live the Golden Rules each day, in the things that they say and do, and then write these 'Nice Notes' for their classroom's Nice Box. During Celebration Assembly, a selection of 'Nice Notes' will be read aloud and the efforts of the students will be celebrated together.

Golden Time

Students who work hard at keeping the Golden Rules can earn up to 30 minutes Golden Time every Friday. Minutes can be deducted from a student's Golden Time if they do not make their best efforts to practice the Golden Rules. Each class teacher uses a point/minutes system for earning Golden Time to suit the needs of their individual class and class level.

Responding to inappropriate behaviour

As a school we strive to be progressive in meeting the needs of the student's and always endeavour to ensure that the student is aware that the teacher or Principal will listen to them regarding any problems they may be experiencing. Should a student feel they need to speak to the teacher or Principal, they inform the teacher/Principal and an appropriate time is made available to deal with any issues that the student is experiencing. (for example, while the class are eating their lunch or at a quiet time when the class is engaged in independent work).

Despite the best efforts of school, inappropriate behaviour happens. There are a series of sanctions for misbehaviour. The sanction used depends on the degree of the seriousness of the behaviour. Sanctions for infringements of the rules have been set out by the school staff in an agreed procedure. This ensures the standardising of sanctions across classes and make it easier for students to accept the fairness of sanctions. Repeated misbehaviour will involve increasingly serious sanctions.

The sanctions of misbehaviour are as follows:

1. Reasoning with the students
2. Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve their behaviour
3. Traffic Light System – Students receive a warning/reminder about their behaviour, in line with the Golden/Classroom Rules. If misbehaviour continues the student moves through the traffic light system, from green to red. This is a two-way system so students have the opportunity to improve the behaviour and move back to the green traffic light.
4. Temporary separation from peers and/or less privileges.
5. Referral to Principal. Communication with parents, either by written letter or verbally, depending on circumstance.
6. Report card given to student. 5 Report cards warrants suspension for 1st time.
7. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by the Circular and Education Welfare Act 2000).

Examples of misbehaviour are*:

1. Serious continuous verbal abuse of others
2. Very aggressive behaviour

3. Behaviour by a student that poses a serious danger to themselves or to others. Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour, depending on circumstances.
4. Theft – because this can occur for a number of reasons, each case will be dealt with individually,
5. Serious damage to property
6. Bullying/Alienation/intimidation, either physical, verbal or through the use of technology, phone. Please note that the school has a separate Anti Bullying Policy document.
7. Defiance of Staff Instruction
8. Use of phones/internet devices to cause abuse/offence. In these instances of serious misbehaviour parents will always be informed.

*This list is not exhausted or limited to

Recording

In line with the school's policy on record keeping and data protection legislation, records are kept in relation to pupils' behaviour both at class and school level. These records are written in a factual and impartial manner.

Teachers will keep a written record of all instances of serious misbehaviour. This recording system will allow for the school to track, systematically and consistently, any student's behaviour that is a cause for concern. Any tried interventions or improvements in behaviour can also be recorded and put in the child's file.

Before resorting to serious sanctions, such as suspensions, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Parents will be involved at an early stage, rather than as a last resort. The parents of the student concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case.

Pupils with Special Needs

All pupils are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However, the school recognises that pupils with special needs may require assistance in understanding certain rules. Planning to encourage positive behaviour will be included in the pupil's IEP, which is drawn up in consultation with parents/guardians and the class teacher, special education teacher and/or the Principal. Staff will work closely with the home to ensure that optimal support is given. Cognitive development will be taken into account at all times. Professional advice from psychological assessments will be taken into consideration.

The children in the class or school may be taught strategies to assist a pupil with special needs adhere to the rules and thus provide peer support. This will be done in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals.

Suspension and Expulsion

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, stipulates that a code of behaviour shall specify... 'the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned' and 'the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student'.

Suspension

Before serious sanctions such as Suspension or Expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between the school and parents will be utilised, where feasible.

Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

There may be times where, when there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, that 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. If the parents do not give an undertaking that the student will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the student may have to be suspended for a temporary period.

Suspension is defined as '*requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified limited period of school day*' (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 a suspension.

Suspension will be considered as a 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 student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property

The procedures in respect of suspension are those outlined in *section 11.5 of the NEWB guidelines* for schools.

If a suspension is being proposed, the Principal should refer to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. Reports to the Board of Management and to the relevant authorities should be made in line with the 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)

Procedures that ensure fairness when excluding a student will include:

- Ensuring other means of intervention and dealing with the behaviour has been tried.
- Parents will have been invited to the school to discuss the intention to exclude.

Implementing the Suspension:

The Principal shall notify Parents/Guardians, in writing, of the decision to suspend. This will include:

- Letter stating period of suspension – beginning and end dates.
- Reasons for suspension.
- Any programme to be followed by student and/or parent.
- Arrangements for returning to school and any commitments to be entered into by students and parents.
- Provision for an appeal to Board of Management
- Right to appeal to the Secretary General of the DES (Education Act 1998, Section 29).

Where the Board of Management deems it necessary, to make provision in the Code of Behaviour to deal with continuously disruptive students, or with a serious breach of discipline, authorisation is given jointly to the Principal and Chair Person, to exclude a student or students from school for a maximum initial period of 3 school days.

A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the student's or students' parents or guardians. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a further period of expulsion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed (Rule 130(5)).

No student will be struck off the roll for the breaches in discipline without the prior consent of the Patron and unless alternative arrangements are made for the enrolment of the student at another suitable school. (Rule 130(6)).

Suspension may be lifted in situations where:

A student shows signs of understanding the situation and the capacity and commitment to change.

Parents indicate that the child has understood the situation and they have co-operated with the resolution.

There is concern that the suspension has the potential to put the child at risk. In this situation an alternative solution will be found.

Re-integrating the student

Following suspension, a plan to re-integrate the student will include, where possible, an arrangement for a member of staff to provide support during the re-integration process. Student contracts will, if necessary, be put in place for the student and his/her parents. This will enable the school to set behavioural goals with the student and parents. All efforts will be made to support the student to adhere to this contract. It will be expected that the parents will support and maintain support at all times for their child.

Clean slate

Following suspension, the student will be given the opportunity and support for a fresh start. Although a record is kept of the behaviour and any sanction imposed, the school will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

Expulsion

Under the Education Welfare Act, 2000, 'A student cannot be expelled from a school before the passing of twenty school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer receives in writing notification' (Section 24(4)). It is the right of the 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) Subsection 4).

The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. As a matter of best practice this should be reserved for the Board of Management and not be delegated.

Before a student is expelled:

A meeting is held with parents and the student to try to find ways to helping the student to change his/her behaviour:

- Ensuring the student understands the consequences of his/her behaviour, should it continue.
- Ensuring all possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of support agencies.

Serious grounds are:

- Student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- The student's presence constitutes a real and significant threat to safety.
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

The kinds of behaviour that might result in expulsion for first offence:

- a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
- actual violence or physical assault
- supplying illegal drugs to other students in school
- sexual assault

The purpose for the sanctions includes:

- Helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- Helping students to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others

- Helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all the choices have consequences
- Helping the student to take responsibility for their behaviour

A sanction may also:

- reinforce the boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption to teaching and learning
- keep the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Good practice in the use of sanctions:

A sanction is a form of positive intervention. However, sanctions are unlikely on their own to change behaviour. They should be used as part of a wider plan to help the student learn. Sanctions are part of a plan to change behaviour.

Procedure:

- A fair investigation will have taken place, taking both parents and student's perspectives into account.
- Parents and student will be informed.
- Parents and student will be given an opportunity to respond.
- Parents may be informed by phone or in writing.
- The Board of Management, before reaching a decision to exclude a student will ensure its decision will be reached in an unbiased manner. Expulsion will be in accordance with the terms of rule 130 (5) of the Rule for National Schools.

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parent (or students who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills against some decision of the Board of Management, including:

1. Permanent exclusion from a school and
2. Suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.

Parents/Guardians will be informed in writing by the Principal of the decision of the Board of Management to permanently exclude or suspend the student.

Parents/Guardians will be informed of their right of appeal, the associated timeframe of 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was notified to parents and student.

The Board of Management are responsible for replying to the Department of Education and Skills, if the school is being investigated and also prepare an appeal for the Department of Education and Skills.

Absences

Under the Education Welfare Act 2000 section 23(2)(e) & section 18), the school must be notified of a pupil's absence from school.

As a school, we are obliged to notify the National Education Welfare Board, if we are concerned about a student's attendance or if the student has missed a total of 20 days in the school year.

As Parents/Guardians you may notified the school of any absences either by using the Aladdin Connect App or by contacting the school office by telephone on the first day of your child/rens' absences. Very often, there will be good reasons for the absences, a child may be sick or there might be a family difficulty; when notifying the school of your child/rens' absence either using the Aladdin Connect App or by contacting the school office, it is essential to provide the school with the appropriate reason. In the case, where your child/ren have to attend medical appointments, a medical certification is appreciated upon the child/rens' return to school.

Success Criteria

- Observation of positive and improved behaviour in classrooms, corridors, playground and school environment.
- Practices and procedures listed in this policy being consistently implemented by teachers.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents/guardians and pupils.

Implementation Date

This policy will be implemented immediately from school opening. It is reviewed regularly and all members of the school community will be informed of any changes. The policy is available publicly on the school web site. Any changes are ratified by the Board of Management and dated.

Review

This policy was reviewed and updated by the Board of Management in September 2020. It will be reviewed in 2023 or sooner if deemed necessary.

Signed by: Eleanor Barker

Principal

Date 23rd September 2020

Signed by: Anthony Mackey

Chairperson

Date 23rd September 2020