



Swords Educate Together National School

Roll Number 20145 O

Code of Positive Behaviour

Implementation Date: September 2010

Revision Date: May 2016

The SETNS Code of Positive Behaviour is the set of practices and procedures that together form our school's plan for helping students to behave well and learn well. The code of behaviour helps the school community to promote the school's unique Ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and minimise unacceptable behaviour. The code of positive behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

Our code expresses the vision, mission and values of SETNS and its Patron. It translates the expectations of staff, parents and students into practical arrangements that will help to ensure continuity of instruction to all students. It helps to foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported. **Good manners, courtesy and politeness are highly valued in Swords Educate Together National School and they are encouraged/reinforced at all times!**

The code of behaviour enables school authorities (staff and BOM) to strike an appropriate balance between their duty to maintain an effective learning environment for all and their responsibility to students whose behaviour presents a challenge to the teaching and learning process.

Maintaining a harmonious environment can present a challenge to schools, given competing needs, time pressures and varying capacities or readiness to learn. A code of behaviour that has the support of the school community can go a long way to helping schools meet this challenge successfully.

SETNS Code of Positive Behaviour was initiated in September 2009, and reviewed in 2016. It was initiated by a working group involving the Principal, Teaching/SNA staff, all school partners i.e. Management, Parents and Students were involved throughout the process.

Rationale

This policy is being reviewed at this time as part of our School Development Plan and School Improvement Plan. The review process takes account of the founding principles of Educate Together; **children-centred, democratic, equality based and co-educational**, and to ensure that the code was in line with Department/NEWB guidelines.

The National Educational Welfare Board document "**Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools**" was sent to schools in September 2008. This necessitated further review of our Code of Positive Behaviour.

1. It is a requirement under section 23 of the Education Welfare Act, 2000 that the Board of Management must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour for its students. The act requires that the school code of behaviour is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). It details in Section 23(2), that the code of behaviour shall specify:
 - A. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
 - B. The measures that shall be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
 - C. The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;

- D. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a students;
and
- E. The procedure to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

The aim of the **Code of Positive Behaviour** is to ensure that the individuality of each child is respected and that individual differences are celebrated, acknowledging the right of each child to an environment in which they can learn safely and grow. The entire school community has a part to play in contributing to this environment. The strength of this community, together with a high level of co-operation between staff, parents/guardians and children, will ensure a high standard of behaviour.

In Swords Educate Together National School we recognize that each member of the school community, staff, parents/guardians and children have the right to be treated with respect and consideration, therefore every effort will be made by all members of staff to adapt a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school. Positive techniques of motivation and encouragement will be utilized by staff, placing greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions. School rules are kept to a minimum and are there to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all members of Swords Educate Together National School.

Aims

By introducing this revised version of the school Code of Positive Behaviour our aim is:

- To ensure an educational environment that is guided by our Educate Together Ethos
- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where all children can make progress in all aspects of their development
- To create an atmosphere of respect, acceptance, open-mindedness and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognizing the differences between children and the need to accommodate and accept these differences
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the school's code of positive behaviour and to encourage 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.

Content of Policy

The policy is addressed under the following headings:

Guidelines for behaviour in the school

Whole School approach to promoting positive behaviour

- Staff
- Board of Management
- Parents
- Pupils
- School Community (Outside Agencies/Workers etc.)

Positive strategies for managing behaviour

- Classroom
- Playground
- Other areas in the school

Rewards and sanctions

- Rewards and acknowledgements of good behaviour
- Strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- Involving parents in management of problem behaviour
- Managing disruptive, aggressive or violent behaviour

Suspension/Expulsion

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Appeals

Keeping records

- Class
- Playground
- School Records

Procedure for notification of a pupil's absence from school

Reference to other policies

1. Guidelines for Behaviour in the School

The Education Welfare Act, Section 23, states that the Code of Positive Behaviour shall specify “the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school”.

- Each pupil is expected to be well behaved and to show respect for self and others, and to show kindness and willingness to help others.
- Each pupil is expected to show respect for the property of the school, other people’s property, and their own belongings.
- Each pupil is expected to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Each pupil is expected to do his/her best both in school and for homework.
- Each pupil is expected to have everything needed for class and to keep his/her personal space and belongings tidy.
- Each pupil is expected to show a readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict and to show and practise forgiveness.

Due regard will be given to the age and range of abilities of the child/children in implementing the Code of Positive Behaviour.

Our revised Code of Positive Behaviour will be brought to the attention of all Parents via a written communication from the Principal. (Via newsletter and link to website). A Positive Behaviour Week, linked to our Educate Together Programme and Golden Rules, will be held in the school during the first few weeks of September each year.

2. Whole School Approach in Promoting Positive Behaviour

In SETNS we recognize that positive school ethos is based on the quality of relationships between staff and the ways in which pupils, staff and parents/guardians treat each other:

This positive ethos permeates all the activities of the school and helps in forming a strong sense of social cohesion within the school.

Staff

In our school, our aim is to treat all children with respect and dignity. There is a strong sense of community and cooperation among staff, pupils, and parents and all are agreed that their focus is primarily on the promotion and recognition of positive behaviour:

The Ethos of SETNS, the core of which is children-centred, lends itself to a spirit of close co-operation among all the partners in the education process.

- Parents/Guardians are made aware of the Positive Behaviour Policy, which includes strategies, rewards, and sanctions.
- New staff are made aware of this policy as part of an “induction pack” issued to them at the beginning of their work schedule and policy overview will be included in September Staff Meetings where applicable and included on agenda or at Croke Park day prior to beginning of the year.
- All staff has been consulted on and has agreed on the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Cognisance will be taken of behavioural difficulties that arise from Special Educational Needs of individuals. Behavioural targets and specific strategies may be included as part of an Individualised Education Plan. It is emphasized that the Code of Positive Behaviour applies to all children in the school.
- The Code of Positive Behaviour will be reviewed as necessary.

The school’s Educate Together Programme (Learn Together) and Social Personal and Health Education curriculum are used to support the code of Positive Behaviour. These curricular areas aim to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behaving, encourage forgiveness, develop resilience, and promote conflict resolution skills. They also aim to foster self-esteem and to help children accommodate differences and develop citizenship.

- Relevant policies and resources are available to all staff and are reviewed as necessary.
- Parents/Guardians of newly enrolled children are informed about the curriculum and their part in supporting it at meetings for new Parents, Parent/Teacher Meetings, curriculum meetings, progress meetings and through our School Booklet.
- A range of activities is used to develop these skills in children e.g. Circle Time, Toy Time, Golden Time, Assemblies, Lessons on Relevant topics, Stories, and Discussions.

Board of Management

The Board of Management of SETNS has an important role to play in the maintenance of acceptable standards of behaviour in the school. It should be supportive of the Principal Teacher in the application of a fair code of behaviour and sanctions used, which are part of a plan to change behaviour and to help students understand the consequences of their behaviour and to take responsibility for changing that behaviour.

- The Board of Management of SETNS is consulted in the drafting/reviewing/ratifying of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- The Board of Management, through on-going consultation, supports the staff in devising and upholding the behaviour code.
- Departmental procedures are in place for the Board of Management to deal with serious breaches of behaviour.

Parents

‘Schools need the support of parents/guardians in order to meet legitimate expectations with regard to good behaviour and discipline.’

SETNS recognizes that, in line with our school Ethos, parents work in partnership with staff to meet legitimate expectations with regard to positive behaviour and discipline.

- Co-operation and communication between staff and parents/guardians is actively encouraged through formal and informal meetings.
- Parents/Guardians of newly enrolled children are informed about the Positive Behaviour Code and their part in supporting it, at new parents’ meetings, at curriculum meetings and through our School Booklet.
- Parents are expected to support the school in the promotion of positive behaviour and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour by:
 - Encouraging their children to uphold the school’s Ethos and Code of Positive Behaviour.
 - Encouraging their children to respect all members of the school community.
 - Making themselves aware of and cooperating with the school’s system of rewards and sanction.
 - Ensuring their children are in school on time.
 - Attending meetings at the school if requested.
 - Helping their children with homework and ensuring that it is completed.
 - Ensuring their children have the necessary books and materials to complete their schoolwork and take part in school activities.

The adults in the school have a responsibility to model the school’s standards of behaviour in their dealings with both students and each other. The ways in which Parents/Guardians and teachers interact will provide students with a model of good working relationships. This is a critical part of school Ethos and delivering our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Pupils

- Pupils are involved each September in creating a Class Charter for their own class, reflecting the school Code of Positive Behaviour. Teachers are encouraged to engage children in signing-up to their Class Charters.
- All classes, Junior Infants to Sixth, were consulted on/engaged with the writing of this policy in an age-appropriate manner. This was led by the class teachers and the Principal at Assemblies.
- Our active Student Council promotes ownership of our Code of Positive Behaviour and provides pupils with an opportunity to monitor its enactment.

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviour

‘The most effective methodology that teachers develop in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place.’

(Managing challenging Behaviour, Guidelines for Schools, INTO, 2004)

The following positive strategies will be used throughout the school to promote good behaviour and to prevent misbehaviour.

Classroom

- In September of each year teachers will discuss with the children the Golden Rules, as outlined in the SETNS homework diary, in an age appropriate way.
- Pupils, when creating their Class Charter, are encouraged to draft rules/behaviour expectations using positive language.
- Teachers will 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 is in place in each classroom.
- Teachers will implement a range of classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation.
- Teachers will timetable activities in the classroom to maximize promotion of positive behaviour.

Playground

The positive strategies, which SETNS implements to promote good behaviour, to prevent behavioural difficulties and to deal with incidences of unacceptable behaviour in the playground, are:

- A concise set of playground rules which emphasise positive behaviour and make it clear what activities are permitted. These are discussed at staff meetings, and then communicated to pupils in the individual classrooms and at whole school assemblies.
- Four teachers and Special Needs Assistants supervise the yard.
- On occasions senior children will teach games to junior children.
- Yard monitors from the pupil body will be organized and managed by the Student Council.
- The yard areas are zoned into *Walking Only*, *Active Yard*. In addition to this, the yard is also painted with a variety of children-friendly activities.
- The school logo is painted on the lower yard surface. Children, who find themselves with no one to play with, enter this **Friendship Circle** and other children are encouraged to invite them to play.
- A Friendship Stop is located on the Upper Yard and children may stand at this and other children are encouraged to invite them to play. This playground dynamic brings to life and adds meaning to our motto: **No Child is an Outsider**.
- Children are required to remain seated during indoor break. It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to ensure that the children have age-appropriate activities to keep them engaged for the duration of the break.
- Pupils are escorted to the playground by the class teacher and are collected from class lines at the end of yard time.
- To use the toilet, children take a 'leithreas' sign from one staff member on duty. Only two children may go to the toilet at any one time. Toilet use is closely supervised at all times.
- To manage incidents of misbehaviour, a record is made in the Yard Log by a supervising teacher. Such incidents will be brought to the attention of the class teacher for follow-up and the Principal, as appropriate.

Other areas in the school

All staff members are proactive in communicating rules/expectations to children in all areas of the school.

Positive behaviour by the children is acknowledged and praised, as a core aspect of our School Ethos. ***We work to raise the praise, minimize the criticise.***

4. Promoting good behaviour

Rewards and Acknowledgments of Good Behaviour

SETNS places a greater emphasis on affirming positive behaviour than on sanctions.

The day-to-day school management, classroom teaching and our Educate Together ethos will enable most students to behave in ways that support their own learning and development. Teachers and other school staff use a range of strategies for promoting good behaviour at class and school level.

Students are more likely to behave well when:

- They are given responsibility in the school and are involved in the development of the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- They are encouraged to see that the code works in a fair way to the benefit of all.
- The standards are clear, consistent and widely understood.
- Parents support the school by encouraging good learning behaviour and there are good relationships between teachers, parents and students.

Other strategies to encourage and promote good behaviour include:

- Positive everyday interactions between teachers and students.
- Good school and class routines.
- Clear boundaries for students.
- Helping students themselves to recognize and affirm good learning behaviour.
- Recognising and giving positive feedback about behaviour.
- Exploring with students how people should treat each other.
- Involving students in preparation of the school and classroom rules.

Systems for acknowledging positive behaviour are in use in classrooms and at times form part of planned intervention to help an individual student to manage their own behaviour. When using reward systems teachers are mindful that:

- Any reward systems will be used meaningfully
- Students will understand that rewards acknowledge behaviour that is valued and wanted
- Rewards can be given for effort and not only for achievement.

Systems for acknowledging positive behaviour will be inclusive and used consistently throughout the school. It is acknowledged that rewards should not become the goal of learning or result in unhelpful competition.

Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

Despite the best efforts of schools, inappropriate behaviour happens. Even minor breaches of the code of behaviour can be disruptive, particularly if they are persistent. Serious misbehaviour can be damaging and long-lasting effects including disruption of the student's own learning and the learning of others. It can cause distress and anxiety or even pose a threat to the safety of students and teachers. Our policy is to intervene early and positively when student behaviour does not meet the standards expected in the school. See **Appendix 5: Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour**.

The objective of a sanction is to help the student to learn

The purpose of sanctions is to bring about change in behaviour by:

- Helping students to understand 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 choices have consequences.
- Helping students to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Some strategies used in response to incidents of inappropriate behaviour are:

- Reminding the pupil (reflection)
- Reasoning with the pupil
- Reprimand (including advice on how to improve and may also include a warning)
- "putting it right", e.g. clean table after marking it
- Withdrawal from part lesson or peer group
- Loss of privileges, e.g. loss of golden time
- Prescribing additional work/prescribing weekend and/or extra homework
- Referral to Principal/ Deputy Principal
- Communication with parents/guardians, either oral or written
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Temporarily removing a student from the classroom to a **supervised** location may be appropriate in the interests of classroom management in order to ensure the learning of other students and to help the individual students to recognise and learn about the impact and consequences of their behaviour: Thinking Chair/Time may be classroom based or office based, as appropriate to the behaviour. However, consistently denying a student access to a particular part of the curriculum as a **general sanction** would not be appropriate.

Sanctions are used in the school as part of a plan to change behaviour. A sanction is a form of positive intervention. They are used as part of a wider plan to help the student learn. Sanctions are used in a respectful way that helps students to understand the consequences of their

behaviour and to take responsibility for changing the behaviour. In particular teachers are aware that sanctions should:

- Defuse and not escalate a situation
- Preserve the dignity of all parties
- Be applied in a fair and consistent way
- Be timely

Staff use agreed sanctions and teachers know the level of sanction they are authorized to apply. The Key values and skills of Restorative Practice will underpin the management of behaviour and associated communications in Swords Educate Together National School. **See Appendix 6.**

Application of Sanctions

Initially the teacher, by way of warning and/or advice will deal with misbehaviour. If behaviour is more serious/major or persistent, the Principal will be informed and the parents may be involved. In the case of gross misdemeanours the Principal will be informed immediately. On the Principal's judgement a case may be referred to Board of Management for consultation.

All school staff (Principal, Deputy Principal, Class teachers, Special Educational Needs teachers, Special Needs Assistants) has a shared responsibility in operating the school's Code of Behaviour. Visiting staff, student teachers etc are expected to abide by the SETNS Code of Positive Behaviour.

The staff member who has dealt with or observed the misbehaviour will communicate incidents of notable misbehaviour to the class teacher.

In addition, the school has a mentoring system to support new staff and teachers who have management responsibilities (In School Management Team) in school may provide support to class teachers in addressing behaviour issues with an individual or a class group.

Students with Special Educational Needs

Sanctions may be needed to help a student with Special Educational Needs to learn about appropriate behaviour and skills, as in the case of any student. Teachers will take particular care that they help the student with Special Needs to understand clearly the purpose of the sanction and the reason why their behaviour is unacceptable. This will form an integral part of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) writing. The school and classroom practices that support good learning behaviour are valid for all students, including those with identified Special Educational Needs.

Bullying

In SETNS bullying behaviour of any kind is unacceptable. Teachers have a professional duty of care to address bullying and the school has an Anti-bullying Policy. Action to be taken in relation to alleged breaches of the school's Anti-bullying policy are set out in this policy. ***See Anti-Bullying Policy 2013.***

Building Relationships with Parents

In SETNS we recognise the importance of building relationships with parents and so keeping problem behaviour to a minimum. Parental understanding and support for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour is strengthened through activities such as:

- A new parents' meeting giving an introduction to the school and its standards, expectations for students and the role of parents in helping students to meet the standards.
- Encourage parents to share information about anything that might affect a student's behaviour in school.
- Early communication to alert parents to concerns about a student's behaviour, so that ways of helping the student can be discussed and agreed.
- Agreed procedures through which parents can communicate any concerns they may have about a student, and explore ways of helping the student.
- Information offered through the Parent/Teacher Association, such as talks or workshops on behavioural matters and aspects of child development.
- Parental involvement in reviewing and planning school policies, as appropriate.

Involving Parents in Management of Problem Behaviour

In the case of persistent misbehaviour or a serious incident of misbehaviour, generally the class teacher will contact parents, either verbally or in writing. The Principal may also contact the parent. In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Principal, Deputy Principal, class teacher or Special Educational Needs teacher will contact parent/guardian either verbally or in writing.

Teachers will be mindful of the sensitivities of parents when meeting to discuss their child's behaviour. The Principal may also be present and the child may be included at some stage of the meeting.

Parents are encouraged to contact the class teacher if they have concerns. This may be done by making an appointment through the school office or directly with the class teacher.

Managing Aggressive or Violent Misbehaviour

- Parents and teachers will need to work together to help the student to modify behaviour and to work towards changing it. This will involve the Principal and possibly other in-school supports.
- Children who display repeated emotional disturbance in school may be referred, with Parental/Guardian written consent, for psychological assessment.
- Through the Special Educational Needs Organiser, appropriate support is sought from services available e.g. Health Service Executive, National Educational Psychological Service.
- The Principal and SETNS Special Education Teachers team may facilitate teachers in sharing practice and support in the management of challenging behaviour, if required.
- A mentoring system is in place for newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school, to support them in managing challenging behaviour.
- Teachers may avail of INTO/Education Centre seminars on managing challenging behaviour or other appropriate in-service courses.
- In the event of seriously violent or threatening behaviour causing a risk to the safety of the pupil himself/herself or the safety of other pupils or staff, steps will be taken to distance the pupil from the immediate environment of other pupils and the Principal will be notified immediately.

5. Suspension / Expulsion procedures

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.”

Procedure Employed in SETNS in Relation to Suspension and Expulsion

The Principal shall inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), by notice in writing, when a student is suspended from a recognized school for a period of not less than 6 days. **

Circular 20/90 states that ‘Parents should be informed of their right to come to the school and be invited to do so in order to discuss the misbehaviour with the Principal and/or the class teacher. This should always be done when the suspension of a pupil is being contemplated.’

Suspension

The Board of Management has the authority to suspend a student.

Grounds for Suspension:

- 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 or injury to another person/child.

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

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension will be considered. Aggressive, threatening, or violent behaviour towards a member of staff will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

The Board of Management has authorized the Principal and/or the Chairperson to exclude a pupil from the school for a maximum initial period of three school days.

Procedures that ensure fairness when excluding a pupil 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.
- A fair investigation will have taken place, taking both parents’ and pupils’ perspectives into account.

- Parents and student will be informed about the complaint.
- Parents and student will be given the opportunity to respond.
- Parents may be informed by phone or in writing.
- In the case of immediate suspension, parents will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.
- The BOM, before reaching the decision to exclude a pupil, will ensure its decision will be treated in an unbiased manner. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules of National Schools.
- Following suspension, a plan to reintegrate 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 or her parents. This will enable the school to set behavioural goals with the students and parent/s. All efforts will be made to support the student to adhere to this contract. It will be expected that the parent/s will support and maintain support at all times for their child.
- When an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal, a preliminary investigation will be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. The formal investigation will immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. In the case of immediate suspension the parents/guardians will be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.
- SETNS Suspension Form will be filled in noting which parent/guardian collected student, what time student was collected, place and time of supervision and personnel supervising whilst waiting arrival of parents/guardians.
- Parent/Guardian will sign SETNS suspension form.
- The Board of Management has authorized the Principal, with the approval of the chairperson of the Board, to impose a suspension of up to five days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion.
- The National Education Welfare Board will be notified by phone, fax, or email and using the standard form if a student is suspended for a cumulative total of six or more days.

Implementing the Suspension

The principal shall notify Parents/Guardians, in writing, of the decision to suspend.

- 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 student and parents.
- Provision for an appeal to Board of Management.
- Right to appeal to the Secretary General of the DoES (Education Act 1998 section 29).

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 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))

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

Grounds for Expulsion

Before a student is expelled:

A meeting is held with parents and students to try to find ways of helping the student to change her/his 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 or injury to another person/child.
- 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 the school.***
 - ***Sexual assault.***

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) 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) 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.

Note:

- 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 of decision of the school is notified to the parents and student.
- Parents will be given a copy of the Circular 22/02.
- The Board of Management will prepare an appeal if the school is being investigated by the Dept of Education and Science.

6. Keeping Records

In line with the school's policy on record keeping, and data protection legislation, the school maintains records in relation to pupils' behaviour.

Class Level

- Children's reflections on an incident of non-compliance with our Positive Behaviour Policy will be copied and retained by the teacher. Copies may also be given to the Principal.
- A pupil will be referred to the Principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated incidents of minor/major misbehaviour.
- The degree of misdemeanours i.e. minor, serious or gross will be judged by the teachers and/or Principal, based on a common sense approach with regard to the gravity/frequency of such misdemeanours.
- Staff have a clear and consistent understanding of what constitutes excellent behaviour and what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and discuss these matters as relevant/appropriate.
- The end-of-year report includes a reference to behaviour.
- Problematic behaviour will have been discussed with parents before noting/recording on the end-of-year report.

Playground

Supervising teachers maintain written records of behaviour/incidents in the School Yard Book. This School Yard Book is returned to the office daily for the Principal's attention. The Principal responds, as necessary/appropriate.

School Records

- The class teacher maintains individual records for each child regarding misbehaviour, as required. In cases referred to the Principal, documents pertaining to that case will usually be photocopied and a copy given to the Principal.
- Formal records are maintained by the Principal e.g. factual reports of particular incidents, communication between school and home, with outside agencies, Board of Management etc.
- The Principal also maintains documentation pertaining to appeals under Section 29.

7. Procedures for Notification of Pupil Absences from School

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23(2)(e) states that the Code of Positive Behaviour must specify “the procedures to be followed in relation to a child’s absence from school”. Section 18 stipulates that parents must notify the school of a student’s absence and the reason for this absence.

- SETNS strives at all times to encourage maximum school attendance in all pupils by:
 - Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment.
 - Acknowledging good or improved attendance.
 - Adapting curriculum content and methodologies to maximize relevance to pupils.
 - Making parents aware of terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications.
- SETNS policy in relation to explanation of pupil absences is that parents/guardians submit a written note to the class teacher, informing the teacher of their child’s absence from school and the reason for this absence.
- Written notes are signed and dated by the parent/guardian. These records are kept by the class teacher and sent to the office in June for archiving. The office supplies each teacher with an Absence Note Envelope in September.
- SETNS uses the standard forms to report on pupil absences to the National Education Welfare Board. In addition to this, a letter is sent to Parent/Guardians when children accumulate ten and twenty days of absence. This is the responsibility of the class teacher. The class teacher also keeps an Absence Clipboard updated in the school office.

8. Reference to other policies/documents

Other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour are:

- Educate Together Programme
- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Parental Involvement Policy
- Health & Safety Statement
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Homework Policy
- Attendance Policy.

Success Criteria

Practical indicators of the success of this policy are:

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment.
- Consistent implementation of the policy by all staff in the school. This is at the heart of successful implementation.
- Willingness among staff to discuss and modify the policy when needed.
- Positive feedback from teachers, parents and pupils.
- Parental support.

Roles and Responsibility

- The BOM will read, discuss and officially ratify this policy.
- Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with all staff, in partnership with parents, and with the BOM.
- Principal, Deputy Principal, and In School Management Team will monitor the implementation of this policy.
- The Principal, teachers, Special Needs Assistants and all those working with children in the school have a pivotal role in ensuring that this Code of Positive Behaviour is implemented fully and positively throughout the school at all times.
- The Student Council will have an active part to play in promoting good and positive behaviour. Senior pupils in the school have responsibility in showing example to juniors. All children will play their part in promoting a positive Ethos in the school, in conjunction with the Code of Positive Behaviour.
- Seniors students will act as Yard Monitors to promote safe and responsible, respectful and acceptable behaviour.
- Parents have an important role in upholding SETNS Code of Positive Behaviour and in supporting staff and children in the implementation of this policy.

Implementation Date

This policy will apply from May 2016.

Timetable for Review

The operation of this policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated where applicable.

Ratification & Communication

SETNS Board of Management officially ratified this policy in 2016.

Yvonne Coakley

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: **16/05/16**

Appendix 1: Reference

- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 Section 23 (1-5), 24 (1-5)
- Education Act, 1998 Section 15 (2(d))
- Circular 20/90 on Discipline (DES website www.irlgov.ie/educ) Also in CPSMA Handbook
- Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board) *Draft edition published for consultation in 2007.*
- Circular 22/02 Appeals Procedures under Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998. (DES website) Deals with appeals under the following headings:
 - (1) Permanent exclusion from a school
 - (2) Suspension
 - (3) Refusal to enrol
- Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour (National Education Welfare Board) *Draft edition published for consultation in 2007.*
- Department of Education and Science Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools (1993) available on DES website.
- Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes
- Management Board Members' Handbook. Revised 2007. CPSMA: A suggested Code of Behaviour & Discipline for National Schools
- INTO (2004) Managing Challenging Behaviour: Guidelines for Teachers
- INTO (2006) Towards Positive Behaviour in Primary Schools
- INTO (1995) Enhancing Self Esteem
- The Education Act 1998. The Education Welfare Act 2000. Questions and Answers, INTO
- The Principal's Legal Handbook Oliver Mahon B.L. IVEA 2002 CH. 2 School Discipline
- Responding to Bullying. First Steps for Teachers.
- Working towards a Whole School Policy on Self-Esteem and Positive Behaviour. Jenny Mosley. Positive Press 2001
- INTO Classroom Management Programme 1995-1998
- INTO Life Skills for Teaching and Learning (2002)
- Discipline with Dignity (ACAD)
- Health and Safety Authority
- IPPN website
- INTO website

Appendix 2: Suspension Form

This form is completed on a Suspension of a pupil from Swords Educate Together National School.

Pupil Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

PPS Number: _____

Class: _____

Names of Parent/Guardian Collecting Pupil from School: _____

Time Collected from School: _____

The pupil was supervised in _____ (place in school) from _____ to _____
(times). The pupil was supervised by _____.

Additional Information:

Parent/Guardian Signature/s: _____

Principal's Signature: _____

Time: _____

Dated: _____

Appendix 3: Golden Rules: A Children-Centred Approach

Swords Educate Together National School fully understands and embraces the meaning and benefits of focused praise and encouragement of positive student behaviour. Our adoption and customization of the Golden Rules (Jenny Moseley) is designed to communicate and bring to life the sentiments and aspirations of our Positive Behaviour Policy and its focus on the positive:

Raise the Praise, Minimise the Criticise.

A Large Laminated Copy of the Golden Rules is posted on every classroom wall and throughout the school.

- ✓ We are gentle – *we don't hurt others*
- ✓ We are kind and helpful – *we don't hurt anybody's feelings*
- ✓ We listen – *we don't cover up the truth*
- ✓ We work hard – *we don't waste our time or others' time*
- ✓ We look after property – *we don't waste or damage things*

- A Golden Rules Award Trophy is allocated to each mainstream classroom. A different student is awarded this trophy on a daily basis. Teachers are encouraged to communicate to the student and the class why, on any given day, the student has been chosen.
- The Principal awards Large (Whole Class) Green Cards to individual classes for demonstration of good character, expressing the sentiments of the Golden Rules. The awarding of Whole-Class Green Cards is determined by the Class Teacher/Principal.
- The Principal awards Small (Individual) Gold/Green Cards to individuals/Classes for demonstration of good characters, expressing the sentiments of the Golden Rules. The awarding of Small Gold Cards is determined by any Staff Member / Principal.
- At Weekly Assembly, two Gold Cards are awarded to two students in each class for demonstrating good character, expressing the sentiments of the Golden Rules. This will be determined by the Class Teacher.
- The Golden Rules are taught in Junior Infants and consolidated, in an age-appropriate manner, throughout the school. The Golden Rules are a recurring theme at Assemblies, in communication with Parents/Guardians and they form part of our School Booklet for Parents/Guardians.

- The Principal has a Golden Rules Stamper in the office for demonstration of good work by students. Teachers are encouraged to send students to the office with this in mind.
- The Principal also maintains a Golden Box in the School Office. Children who exhibit *'thinking outside the box'* regarding Positive Behaviour that reflects our unique Ethos get to open the Golden Box (in the office/classroom as appropriate) and award themselves a treat. The Principal maintains this box bountiful with age-appropriate treats and all staff are requested to send pupils to the office when they observe such positive behaviours.
- The adoption of the Golden Rules applies to all classrooms, Teaching Staff, SNA Staff and Support Staff. All staff are expected to reinforce good character and behaviour by referencing the Golden Rules and by making such compliance explicit in the school, either by communicating directly with the class teacher or with the office.
- Students, who require some time to reflect upon some unacceptable behaviour, get five minutes (initially) outside the Principal's office. The focus here is on getting students to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to decide on a positive course of action, while at the same time minimising negative interfacing between the adult and the child. When necessary/appropriate, the teacher, in consultation with the Principal, may decide to issue a Red Card. This Red Card will detail the unacceptable behaviour and be signed by the Reporting Teacher and Principal. It will be sent home, sealed in an envelope, signed by the Parents/Guardians and returned to school the following day. The Red Card will be retained by Principal for a ninety day period. In the absence of any repeated unacceptable behaviour, the Red Card will then be destroyed. There are two types of Red Card: A yard specific Red Card and a general Red Card.

The school's adaption and implementation of the Golden Rules will be evaluated on an on-going basis. It will be modified in a timely and necessary manner, based on on-going review.

Appendix 4: Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

LIST OF SANCTIONS

(Discipline with Dignity)

Stage 1

1. Pupil is informed that his/her behaviour is unacceptable
2. **Verbal warning** and pupil is asked to make a conscious effort to improve
3. **Move place** for the rest of the day
4. **Move place** for the rest of the week
5. **Move classroom** with work, for 30 minutes
6. **Extra Homework Sheet**
7. **Note in Journal/Phonecall home.** Note in Journal may be written as 'I' statements by the pupil, signed by the Parent and Teacher, or written in the first instance by the teacher.
8. Loss of Privilege

Note: The above are ranked in no particular order and the sanction employed will be at the discretion of the teacher.

Stage 2: Order to be determined on a case by case basis.

- 1) **Report to Principal:** (**Possible Outcome:** Revisit Stage 1 or proceed to *Number 3* Stage 2)

Note: Office 'Thinking Chair' may only be used following consultation with the Principal.

- 2) **Letter home (written by Class Teacher/co-signed by Principal)**
- 3) **Loss of privilege** (trip/tour)

Stage 3: Order to be determined on a case by case basis. Depending on the gravity of the behaviour, the entry point below may vary: from a possible entry Point 1, Stage 3 for a More Serious Misbehaviour to an entry at Point 3, Stage 3 for Major Misbehaviour.

- (1) Case conference with Pupil, Class Teacher, Principal and Parents/Guardians
- (2) Recommendation to the Board of Management for **suspension**
- (3) Recommendation to the Board of Management for **expulsion**

Appendix 5: Restorative Practice

Key Values and Skills

Creates an ethos of respect, inclusion, accountability and taking responsibility, commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgmental, collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulacy.

Advantages of Restorative Approaches

- A safer, more caring environment.
- A more effective teaching and learning environment.
- A greater commitment by everyone to taking time to listen to one another.
- A reduction in bullying and other interpersonal conflicts.
- A greater awareness of the importance of connectedness to young people. The need to belong and feel valued by peers and significant adults.
- Greater emphasis on responses to inappropriate behaviour that seek to reconnect, and not further disconnect, young people.
- Reductions in fixed term and permanent exclusions.
- A greater confidence in the staff team to deal with challenging situations.
- An increased belief in the ability of young people to take responsibility for their choices, and more people giving them opportunities to do so.