

# **Positive Behaviour Policy**

## **Introduction**

This policy was devised in 2002 in consultation with all the teaching staff in our school. It was submitted to the Board of Management, Patron Executive and Parents Association. *It is being reviewed as part of the School Development Planning Process in September 2006.*

In devising this Policy, consideration has been given to the particular circumstances of CETNS in its present temporary premises. The democratic and child centred principles of the school have also influenced the development of this policy.

The broad aim of the Positive Behaviour Policy is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment.

As its name implies, the Positive Behaviour Policy is directed towards adopting a positive approach to the question of discipline in our school. This means that there is greater emphasis on rewards rather than sanctions or punishments.

## **The Role of the Class Teacher:**

The concept of promoting positive behaviour should be based upon an empowering approach, which nurtures a culture of self-discipline among children, rather than behaviour which is tailored to please adults. An atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect should be created as part of the philosophy of the school. All adults throughout their interactions with children should use communication strategies which foster co-operation, respect, tolerance and encouragement.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal. However each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within their own class. They will:

- Endeavour to match the curriculum to the abilities, aptitudes and needs of the child thus eliminating boredom and promoting positive behaviour
- Ensure that there is a high level of supervision at all times

- Implement the Reward/Sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner
- Keep a written record of all incidents of serious or gross misconduct

### **School Rules:**

*These are the CETNS school rules which are displayed in all classrooms and in the G.P. Room.*

#### **Juniors:**

- *Do your best*
- *Be fair*
- *Be safe*
- *Look after people in school*
- *Look after things in school*

#### **Seniors:**

- *Put your best effort into your work*
- *Be fair and honest with classmates and teachers*
- *Play and work safely*
- *Respect people in our school community*
- *Respect property in our school community*

#### **Playground rules:**

- *We always play safely – no rough play*
- *We keep inside yellow lines*
- *We always ask permission to leave the yard*
- *We obey the 3 bells*

### **Incentives**

Reward systems which are based on academic merit or particular extrinsic goals continuously apply to only a limited number of children and undermine the individuality of children. All children deserve encouragement to attain their own best. An approach which utilizes encouragement rather than praise should be developed.

- Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to at all times by adults in the school
- Parents will hear good news on a regular basis about their child via the incentive systems. These include the following strategies: responsibility badges, sharing work with an audience, displaying work, verbal comments to parents, inviting parents to see work, stickers awarded by adults for behaviour and work, certificates, etc.

## **Sanctions**

Three levels of misbehaviour are recognized: Minor, Serious and Gross. All everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher. In cases of repeated serious mis-behaviour or single instances of gross mis-behaviour parents will be involved at an early stage and invited to meet the teacher and/or the principal to discuss their child's behaviour

Only in cases of repeated Serious misbehaviour and failure to improve after meeting(s) between parents, teacher and principal will temporary suspension be considered. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools. In the case of Gross misbehaviour the Board of Management can authorize the principal to sanction and immediate suspension pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. Expulsion may only be considered in an extreme case in accordance with Rule 130(6).

*Please see examples of serious and gross mis-behaviour below:*

### **Examples of serious misbehaviour:**

- *Bullying –(including alienation and intimidation)*
- *Racism*
- *Verbal /physical abuse of adults and children*
- *Theft*
- *Damage to property*
- *Any behaviour which poses serious damage to the pupil or others*

### **Examples of gross misbehaviour:**

- *Assault on a teacher or pupil*
- *Serious Theft*
- *Serious Damage to property*

### **For repeated serious and gross misbehaviour:**

- *Suspension*
- *Expulsion*

*It is recognised that serious/gross misbehaviour is often the result of the child being emotionally disturbed. In these cases every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment. Where there is a need for a child to be assessed in relation to specific behavioural problems, the school should endeavour to raise concerns with parents sensitively and to give families as much support as possible.*

**Sanctions (to deal with persistent minor mis-behaviour):**

<b>CLASSROOM</b>	<b>PLAYGROUND</b>
<b>Step 1:</b> <i>Verbal reprimand or warning</i>	<b>Step 1:</b> <i>Time-out for 10 minutes</i>
<b>Step 2:</b> <i>Child persists with mis-behaviour= Yellow card, child moved within classroom</i>	<b>Step 2:</b> <i>Child persists = Name recorded in incident report book</i>
<b>Step 3:</b> <i>Child persists with mis-behaviour = Red Card – child moved to another classroom</i>	<b>Step 3:</b> <i>Child persists = parents informed, Principal meets with parents and pupil</i>
<b>Step 4:</b> <i>Child persists with mis-behaviour = Parents informed by note in homework journal</i>	
<b>Step 5:</b> <i>Principal reprimands pupil, Principal meets with teachers, parents and pupil</i>	

- *When serious mis-behaviour occurs, Step 3 and 4 may be implemented immediately*
- *When gross mis-behaviour occurs, Step 5 may be implemented immediately*

The following steps dealing with persistent serious or gross misbehaviour are in accordance with the department of Education & Science guidelines and Rule 130 of the Rules for national Schools:

Sanctions to be dealt with:

## **Persistent serious or gross misbehaviour:**

- Communication by Principal with parents – verbal or in writing
- Meeting between principal and parents
- Chairperson of Board of management informed
- Parents will be requested in writing to attend school to meet the Chairperson and the principal
- If parents do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil will be suspended for a temporary period
- In the case of gross misbehaviour the Board authorizes the Chairperson or principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents. The maximum initial period of suspension is three school days
- The Board of management can authorize a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupils or pupils parents/guardians
- In exceptional circumstances, the Board of management will authorize a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed
- Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care Services.
- In accordance with the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, a pupil will not be expelled except according to the schools published policy
- Where the Board of management is of the opinion that a pupil should be expelled the Board will inform the national Education Welfare Board of its decision and the reasons in writing
- The decision to expel will take effect 20 days after the NEWB has received notification in writing
- Where the school has expelled a pupil and a all appeals processes both internal and external have been exhausted, the students expulsion will be reported on the student absence report Form

## **Methods of Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with children. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour,

The following methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Informal parent/teacher meetings
- Formal parent/teacher meetings
- Through children's homework journal (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> class)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- CETNS weekly newsletter

### **Classroom**

Golden Rules have been drawn up with each class. The aim is to decide on a code which enables all to learn well and get on well together. These rules will be displayed in each classroom and the staffroom.

Golden Rules will encourage politeness, kindness, honesty, gentleness sharing, listening, etc.

### **Yard**

The Golden Rules incorporating the principles of respect for others. Sharing and caring apply to yard rules. Again withdrawal under supervision or Time Out will apply to any violations. Children will be encouraged to play and to ensure that no child is excluded. Children are encouraged to remember the Golden Rules at line up time on re-entering the yard. Jostling and overtaking is not acceptable.

### **Wet Days**

In the interests of safety running in the classroom or within the building is strictly forbidden. Children will sit in their classrooms. They will choose an activity with which they can play or they will follow an activity proscribed by the teacher. Children will be encouraged to bring in board games which can be kept in a box for playing with on a wet day.

## **Stairs**

To ensure the safety of all, children will be supervised at all times as they enter and leave the building. They will walk at all times on the stairs. They will go down on the right hand side holding the rail and they will come back up on the left hand side. Where a class is leaving for PE or swimming they will enter and leave with minimum noise so that the work in other classes will not be disturbed.

This Positive Behaviour Policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly and any training needs arising from implementing such a policy will be addressed.

## **Certificate of Co-Operation with the positive Behaviour policy**

*The Safety and wellbeing of all children attending our school is of the utmost importance to us. With this in mind, A positive Behaviour Policy has been put in place and ratified by the Board of Management in September 2006.*

*We request that parents read the policy carefully with their child/children and discuss the contents. Please sign the following undertaking and return this form to the school by \_\_\_\_\_*

*I confirm that I have read this policy with my child \_\_\_\_\_ that we have discussed the contents together and that we agree to uphold this policy during the coming year.*

*Signed by Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_*

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

***Please keep the policy document safely at home for future reference.***