



## **Holywell Educate Together National School**

### **Positive Behaviour Policy**

The aim of this 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 an environment conducive to learning. It is directed towards adopting a positive approach to the question of behaviour in our school. The emphasis of this policy will be on developing relationships and fostering openness, honesty and discussion rather than delivering sanctions or punishments.

This policy is also adopted to promote a positive and safe working environment for all staff, including a positive and safe classroom environment for teachers. This Positive Behaviour Policy applies while in the school as well as on school trips, afterschool clubs, yard and any school-related activities.

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#### **Introduction**

In order to fulfil the main aims of primary education an atmosphere conducive to learning must be maintained. This is best achieved by maintaining a discipline appropriate to the development of satisfactory attitudes and habits by the children. Teachers are in 'loco parentis' while the children are in school and they must ensure that all children behave in a manner that ensures academic success, safety and enjoyment in school. The positive behaviour of the children also ensures that all children and staff are safe.

Positive behaviour is instilled in the children by having acceptable guidelines that are determined by the whole school community. Children work well when they have boundaries and they are aware of the workings of the school, the school day and what is expected from them.

Our code of behaviour ensures that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education. Children learn about their rights through the means of the Ethics programme. Every member of staff adopts a positive approach to the question of behaviour in the school.

The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences wherever it is possible within the confines of the classroom situation and outside. The school also recognises the benefits of a Restorative Practice approach to behaviour in the classroom and on Yard.

This policy follows recommendations set in the relevant Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, 2008). It was devised in consultation with the teaching staff, the pupils and parents in our school and has been submitted to the Board of Management for ratification. It will be reviewed regularly.

## Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice is one approach that is utilised by our school. Restorative practice provides a focus on developing positive relationships between all members of the school community. It gives opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Restorative Practice is a process whereby children are given the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how they and others have been affected by it so as to help heal broken relationships and prevent reoccurrence. Where a breakdown in relations occurs, the school will use the principals of Restorative Practice, involving all parties affected, to help repair the harm done.

### Restorative Questions

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
3. What are you thinking/feeling now?
4. Who has been affected/harmed and in what way?
5. What could have been done differently?
6. What do you think needs to happen next to move forward.

## Expectations for students, staff and parents/guardians

We believe that a high standard of behaviour requires a strong sense of community within the school. A high level of cooperation among staff, pupils and parents/guardians is required. It is hoped that all pupils, parents/guardians and staff will share a sense of responsibility about appropriate conduct within the school. These are our broad expectations for behaviour in our school:

- Respect for self and others
- Kindness and willingness to help others
- Courtesy and good manners
- Fairness and transparency between all groups (children, parents, staff)
- Readiness to use respectful ways of resolving difficulties and conflict (Restorative practices).
- Willingness to take correction and modify behaviour.
- Open and honest communication should be paramount with a view to the child's welfare being at the centre of all discussions. Mutually respectful relationships balance warmth and empathy with objectivity, professional detachment, and consistency.

### *Expectations for students*

The school expects engagement from students with their own learning and with that of their peers. This engagement includes:

- doing their best at all times
- taking responsibility for their work and homework
- keeping the **school and class** rules
- helping to create a safe, secure and positive environment
- respecting all staff members and visitors
- participation in **all** areas of the curriculum and activities
- taking pride in Holywell ETNS

- showing respect and other core values within the school community

All staff with the occasional input from clinicians should check that standards and rules are communicated in a way that is appropriate to the abilities of all pupils.

### *Expectations for staff*

The concept of promoting positive behaviour should be based upon a supportive approach, which nurtures a culture of self-awareness and self-control among children. An atmosphere of co-operation and mutual respect should be created as part of the philosophy of the school. All adults through their interactions with children should use communication strategies which foster co-operation, respect and encouragement.

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the Principal and Board of Management. However, all staff 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.
- Ensure that there is always adequate supervision
- Create a learning environment that is interesting and engaging
- Implement reward schemes in a fair and consistent manner
- Ensure that there is engagement with restorative practices when dealing with conflict, in particular making use of the six Restorative Questions.
- Keep a written record of all incidents of serious or gross misconduct, steps taken in dealing with the incident and the outcome.
- Discretion and a sensitivity towards any behavioural issues is to be encouraged in discussions with other relevant staff members and parents/guardians

As outlined in our staff charter, a level of mutual respect, collegiality and professionalism between staff needs to be maintained to create a safe and enjoyable work environment for all members of staff. This applies to all teaching staff, ANA's, Ancillary staff, substitute staff, visiting clinicians/professionals and student teachers / ANAs.

### *Expectations for parents/guardians*

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children which result in positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can cooperate with the school by:

- Encouraging their children to abide by the school rules
- Encouraging punctuality and regular attendance
- Visiting the school and being involved in school life and activities
- Ensure that homework is allotted due time and effort
- Communicating with members of staff in an appropriate manner
- Having a respectful attitude towards other parents/guardians before and after school drop-offs

A level of mutual respect and co-operation at all times between staff members and parents is imperative. When parents and teachers work together, children can be supported both at home and in school thus increasing the child's success and happiness at school.

## School Expectations (rules)

Each class should agree a specific set of expectations at the beginning of each school year. These expectations should form the framework of the class's behaviour at school. Children should be reminded of these expectations throughout the school day and before different events such as trips/tours and at whole school assemblies and will be our base set of rules for how we expect students to conduct themselves in school and in the yard.

### ***Reward systems***

All children need encouragement to attain their best. In Holywell ETNS we wish every child to achieve success at their own particular level and with their own particular talents whether academic and social. Rewards should be given for effort and not only for achievement. An approach which utilizes encouragement rather than praise is developed. Please see *Overview Sheet* in Appendix 2 which will be displayed in each classroom. These include those laid out below-

- Children are encouraged and praised by school staff
- Parents/guardians will hear positive news on a regular basis about their child via the incentive systems used in Holywell ETNS.

These include the following strategies:

- Star of the week (framed photograph on display outside the classroom each week)
- Group/Table of the Week
- Writer of the Week
- Sharing work with an audience
- Messages home on 'class dojo'
- Display of good work
- Verbal comments to parents/guardians,
- Inviting parents/guardians to see work
- Tangible rewards (Stickers/stars/certificates/smiley faces/piggy banks/tokens/stamps awarded by adults for behaviour and work etc.
- 'Dojo' Points (cumulative points award 'Golden Time')
- 'Golden Time' a discrete time set aside where students may choose a curricular area as a reward, ie visual arts, drama lesson etc.

The achievements of the children may also be recognised in front of their peers during assemblies.

## Dealing with behaviours

All behaviours are considered communication and connection driven. Each individual and behaviour will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Where a student's behaviour disrupts the teaching and learning of other students or endangers the safety of themselves, other children or staff the following will apply:

Step to follow:

- Allow space and time to support self-regulation.
- Use restorative approach such as restorative questions.
  1. What happened?
  2. What were you thinking/feeling at the time?
  3. What are you thinking/feeling now?
  4. Who has been affected/harmed and in what way?
  5. What could have been done differently?
  6. What do you think needs to happen next to move forward?
- Helping the children to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others (refer to class rules/ Restorative Questions)

- 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 them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

It is critical that staff are cognisant of maintaining children's dignity at all times. Steps are followed in a clear and consistent manner.

### ***Minor misbehaviour***

Everyday instances of a minor nature are dealt with by the class teacher/staff.

Minor Misbehaviour Examples:

- Talking
- Name-calling
- Pushing
- Non-compliance with class/yard rules
- Distracting and disrupting classmates/teachers
- Disrespect
- Dishonesty

The above incidents will be dealt with age and understanding of the child taken into consideration. These may include:

#### ***Classroom***

- Open and respectful discussion
- Use of reward system particular to that class
- Move seats within the classroom
- Complete work during 'Golden Time'
- Time out in a partner teacher's class with work assigned
- Reflection sheet to be completed to at home

#### ***Yard Time***

- Wait by the wall (for a small portion of yard time, and only for incidents which have occurred at yard time)
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### ***Serious misbehaviour***

Examples of serious misbehaviour:

- Bullying (including alienation, intimidation & cyber-bullying if occurs in school)
- Racism
- Verbal /physical abuse of adults or children
- Theft
- Damage to property
- Any behaviour which poses risk of injury to the pupil or others
- Any sexualised or inappropriate language or behaviour
- Any other misbehaviour which continuously interferes with teaching and learning process.

All matters relating to bullying will be referred to the Principal. The Board of Management will also be consulted at each meeting, as per the Anti Bullying Policy. Only in cases of repeated serious misbehaviour and/or failure to improve after meeting(s) between parents/guardians and/or a single incident of serious misconduct, the principal, under the direction of the Board of Management, will temporary suspension be considered. Suspension will be in accordance with the terms of Rule 130(5) of the Rules for National Schools.

*"Where the Board of Management deems it necessary to make provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils or a serious breach of discipline, by authorising the Chairperson or Principal to exclude pupils from school, the maximum period of such exclusion shall be three 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 pupils' parents. In exceptional circumstances, the Board may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed."*

### ***Gross misbehaviour***

Examples of gross misbehaviour:

- Assault on a teacher or pupil or any staff member or visitor to the school
- Serious theft
- Serious damage to property
- Serious incidents of bullying/cyber bullying

### **YARD/PLAYGROUND & LINING UP TIME**

Step 1: Open and Respectful conversation (Restorative Q's)

Step 2: Verbal Warning

Step 3: Thinking sheet to be completed at home

Bell 1: Freeze/Stop

Bell 2: Walk to Line

Bell 3: Standing in Line quietly.

### ***Repeated serious and gross misbehaviour***

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/guardians sensitively and to give families as much support as possible. Referrals will be made by the Principal with the support of the parent/guardian.

The following steps will be taken when serious or gross misbehaviour is persistent. These steps are in accordance with the Department of Education & Skills guidelines and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools:

- Communication by Principal with parents/guardians – verbal or in writing
- Meeting between Principal and parents/guardians
- Chairperson of Board of Management is informed
- Parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend school to meet the Principal
- Parents/guardians must endeavour to support their child and school to comply with rules and aim to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future. On failing this, the pupil will be suspended for a temporary period
- In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board authorises the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians. 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

### ***Suspension***

Examples of 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 to themselves and others in the school community.
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

- the student is responsible for a single incident of serious misconduct.

After other interventions are tried and reasons why these have not worked are reviewed, the decision to suspend a student can be made. This decision will be made by the Board of Management. Each case will be looked at individually considering the child's circumstances.

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

### ***Expulsion***

Examples of grounds for expulsion:

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

Expulsion will only be considered when the Board of Management have tried a series of other interventions and believes all possibilities have been exhausted.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence (for instance, a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff, actual violence or physical assault, supplying illegal drugs to other students).

When expulsion is considered, the following steps will be taken:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
- A recommendation to the Board of Management by the Principal.
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation, and the holding of a hearing
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.
- The decision to expel will take effect 20 days after the National Education Welfare Board has received notification in writing
- Where the school has expelled a pupil and all appeals processes both internal and external have been exhausted, the student's expulsion will be reported on the student absence report form.

## **Methods of communicating with parents/guardians**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to working with children. Parents/guardians 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/guardians are being established and will be reviewed regularly.

Parents/guardians 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> Class- 6th class)
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- Class Dojo
- Newsletters
- Aladdin
- Emails

## Raising a concern

Any parent/guardian who has concerns about a behaviour matter should bring this concern to the attention of the **class teacher**, with both parties using discretion in the presence of other children and/or parents.

## Plan for reviewing the policy

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

Ratified by the Board of Management:

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Chairperson

Date: June 2024

## **Appendix 1**

### **Contract 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.

We request that parents/guardians 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:

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

I confirm that I have read this policy with my child:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

We have talked about the contents together and we agree to uphold this policy during the coming year.

Signed by Parent/Guardian:

Name  
(please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

# In Holywell, we should:

## Children

- have respectful words, actions and attitudes
- always try your best, to be your best
- show enthusiasm for your learning by always listening and participating
- exercise inclusion and acceptance within our community

## Parents

- have respectful words, actions and attitudes
- be regularly part of your child's learning journey
- engage in open communication with the school, when appropriate
- always act with discretion when discussing sensitive school matters

## Staff

- have respectful words, actions and attitudes
- participate collaboratively with interest, in varied aspects of school life
- use positive and open communication during professional discussions
- always act with discretion when dealing with school matters

### Appendix 3- Positive Behaviour Framework

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Reteach	Reframe	Relocate	Restore
<p>Reminder of expected behaviour</p> <p>Use positive language</p> <p>Model expected behaviour</p>	<p><i>'Be curious not furious'</i> (ask questions to gain perspective)</p> <p>Regulation breaks</p> <p>Decrease demands or expectations</p> <p>Use Restorative Questions</p> <p>Give a Choice card</p>	<p>1. Remove Distraction</p> <p>2. Stay within the classroom</p> <p>3. Conference outside</p> <p>4. Move pupil to co-teacher classroom for set period</p> <p>-Work to be given but not enforced.</p> <p>-It is <b>not</b> the responsibility of the co-teacher to conference regarding behaviour, but to remain neutral.</p>	<p>Conference with student to see if they are ready to return.</p> <p>Send reflection sheet home for completion with parents.</p> <p>Use Restorative Circles</p> <p>Refer to step 1</p> <p>Start afresh</p>

Do !.....	Don't ! .....
<p><b>September:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use clear and agreed classroom expectations from September (Class Charter)</li> <li>• Use class reward system – dojo, golden time, stickers</li> <li>• Use Star of the week photo frame</li> <li>• Introduce choice card and reflection sheet</li> </ul> <p><b>Yard:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After warning on yard, if behaviour continues – 5mins on wall from 2<sup>nd</sup> –6<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Standing at wall (<b>Yard behaviours only</b>) Pupils cannot stand on yard regarding behaviour from a previous yard time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Classroom:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Restorative questions - Open communication with respectful two-way conversation.</li> <li>• Conferencing outside classroom where appropriate.</li> <li>• Threatening and aggressive behaviour - children to complete reflection sheet in another class for a set period. (Use same agreed co-teacher)</li> <li>• <b>Earn</b> golden time over week – 5 minutes a day</li> <li>• If child is extremely dysregulated, class can be removed from the room</li> <li>• Positive Dojo note home from class teacher</li> <li>• Ask for support from colleagues (Management to arrange class cover where appropriate)</li> <li>• Reflection sheets can be given if class behaviour is consistently not meeting expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave a child standing alone outside a classroom</li> <li>• Exclude a child from yard time for behaviours occurring within a classroom.</li> <li>• Punish a class for individual behaviours/ incidents</li> <li>• Remove rewards</li> <li>• Shout</li> <li>• Shame a child for their behaviour</li> <li>• Give lines as punishment</li> <li>• Exclude from other subjects (P.E, Art etc)</li> <li>• Hold a grudge</li> <li>• Be afraid to try different approaches.</li> </ul>

**Remember:**

- Follow 6-steps
- Separate the behaviour from the child
- Use positive reinforcement
- Follow steps
- Allow space and time for pupils to process feelings
- Recognition of specific needs of individual children
- Recognise when we as a staff are wrong and apologise



## Restorative Reflective Sheet

Q1. What happened?

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Q2. What were you thinking at the time?

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Q3. What have your thoughts been since?

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Q4. Who has been affected and in what way?

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Q5. What could you have done differently?

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Q6. What needs to happen next?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

What Happened

What were you thinking/feeling  
at the time

What were you thinking/feeling since and now

Who has been hurt/ who is sad?

What needs to happen to  
make it better

