

# Esker ETNS

## Code of Behaviour



Ratified by BOM on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### **Introduction:**

This code of behaviour endorses the binding principles of Educate Together schools and expresses the vision, mission statement and values of the school and its patron. The principles of multid denominational, co-educational and child-centred education in a democratic environment underpin the ethos of our school and all school policies. This policy was drafted as a result of review process that began at a staff meeting in April 2009. The democratic principle has been invoked by the inclusion of parents, teaching and ancillary staff and the student council in the process.

The code of behaviour was ratified by the Board of Management in September 2020. The Code of Behaviour and the Procedures for Implementing Suspension /Expulsion will be regularly reviewed. The next review will take place during the school year 2023 / 24, unless previously undertaken.

**Dissemination of Policy:** All parents, existing and new, will receive a copy of this revised code and be asked to sign up to supporting the code. The code will be available in the school office and will be posted on the school's website. The Board of Management is committed to having the code translated into the five most commonly used languages of our families. This code should be read in conjunction with the school's Anti-bullying, Anti- racism, Homework, Punctuality/Attendance and Health/Safety Policies.

### **Aim:**

The overall aim of the Code of Behaviour in Esker Educate Together is to ensure the development in the children a good understanding of the need for acceptable behaviour for the good of the whole school community and of the consequence for others and for themselves of unacceptable behaviour. Good behaviour will be noted and praised and children who misbehave will find that sanctions are applied in a fair and consistent manner and that their own potential for good behaviour is affirmed even as the behaviour itself is rejected. Adults in the school, all staff and parents, are expected to model the school's standards of behaviour, in their dealings with each other and with the pupils.

This code was developed with the following objectives in mind.

- To create a positive learning environment in which the overall aims and objectives of the school can be realised.
- To foster self-discipline and a sense of responsibility in pupils and promote courtesy and good behaviour patterns based on consideration of, and respect for, the rights of others.
- To ensure that school discipline allows for the smooth operation of an effective learning programme for all pupils.
- To ensure the safety and well being of all children, teachers and staff
- To maintain a consistent and fair approach regarding rules, rewards and sanctions within the school
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour, and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.
- To follow NEWB (National Educational Welfare Board) Code of Behaviour guidelines 2008

### **Classroom**

To maintain the classroom as a safe, positive, learning environment children are expected to:

- Respect each child's right to learn.
- Respect each other's property and that of the classroom.
- Listen and respond attentively and courteously to their teacher and to each other.

A classroom code of behaviour (charter) will be drawn up each year by the pupils with the teacher as co-ordinator. Rules will be kept to a minimum and be written in clear, simple language. They will generally be stated positively, telling pupils what to do as well as what not to do. They will be communicated and referred to regularly. Reward systems may be used as part of a class strategy or may be used as part of a planned intervention with a particular child.

### **Playground**

All children have the right to a happy and safe break time. There are two playgrounds, a senior yard for 2<sup>nd</sup> class to 6<sup>th</sup> class and a junior yard for infant classes to 1<sup>st</sup>. Some classes may be split on a rota basis between the two play areas in order to maximise safety. Other areas of the school environment are out of bounds for safety reasons. Children are not allowed to re-enter the building during break times without the specific permission of the teacher on yard duty. This will be regularly communicated in a clear manner to the children

- Running dangerously and playing dangerously are not allowed. Activities such as chasing and racing are not permitted.
- Deliberate interference in other children's play is unacceptable.
- Offensive language in any form is unacceptable.
- Littering is unacceptable.

- Children should freeze at the first bell and walk to their line at the second bell. Children are expected to line up in an orderly fashion in the morning before school and when the bell goes after breaks.

○

Monitoring: The teacher on playground duty will monitor incidents of misbehaviour. Minor incidents will be recorded in the Minor Incident book. Serious incidents will be noted in the Accident/Incident book and the principal/deputy principal will be informed. (See also sanctions)

## **Bullying**

Definition: Bullying is repeated aggression –verbal, psychological, or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Repeated deliberate exclusion also constitutes bullying. Please see comprehensive Anti Bullying policy on our website – [www.eskeretns.ie](http://www.eskeretns.ie).

**Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time. The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:**

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying
- Cyber bullying
- Identity based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. However, in the context of this policy, placing a once off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and / or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

The focus of our policy is on prevention through the raising of awareness and the promotion of a positive school culture and climate, which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity; encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non- threatening environment; and promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

All reports of bullying will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teacher in charge and referred further if necessary. Children are encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour. Incidents deemed to constitute bullying will be recorded in the incident book, referred to the principal and parents will be informed. (See Anti-bullying policy)

## **Outings**

The highest standard of behaviour is necessary on all school outings because of the increased risk to the safety of the children and to achieve the purpose of the outing. If a child misbehaves on a school trip sanctions will be applied and his/her participation in future trips will be reviewed. Where a teacher, in consultation with the principal, cannot be fully satisfied that a good standard of behaviour will be forthcoming from a child on an outing, that child will not be allowed on that trip. Where a child is to be excluded from a school trip, parents will be informed of the reasons for that decision.

## **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones must be switched off for the duration of the school day. If a child uses a mobile phone during the school day, the phone will be confiscated and will not be returned to the child until a parent comes to the school or requests its return in writing. Serious misuse may result in immediate confiscation of the mobile phone, to be returned at the end of the school year.

## **Bicycles**

Bicycles must be parked in the designated area only. Cycling, skate boarding and roller blading etc are not permitted within the school ground for safety reasons. Children using scooters and bicycles must wear protective helmets. Bicycles must be locked during the school day.

## **Classroom charters**

Each class teacher will devise classroom rules and sanctions in a democratic discussion with the children, in accordance with our school ethos. Whilst it is acknowledged that the classroom charter will be individual to classes and may involve rewards and sanctions, this code of behaviour and procedures will be distributed to all teachers to ensure consistency of sanctions throughout the school.

Children will be reminded regularly of school standards, rules and procedures. If sanctions are applied, children will be warned of the consequences if their inappropriate behaviour continues.

While it must be acknowledged that persistent misbehaviour is usually caused by deeper and more serious difficulties, negative behaviour will be dealt with in a consistent way according to agreed procedures. Within the resources of the school every effort will be made to help children who constantly engage in disruptive/anti-social behaviour to become more self aware and to change the pattern of their behaviour. Class teachers and SET teachers and SNAs will ensure that standards of behaviour and school rules are communicated in such a way that students with special needs can understand.

## Classroom behaviour

Classroom Behaviour	Sanction
Minor disruption in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Reminder from teacher/SNA of expected behaviour or oral reprimand</li> </ul>
Repeated disruption over a limited period (one or more of these sanctions may be applied)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Reflective sheet written by child and signed by parent</li> <li>v. Separation from peers</li> <li>v. Note to parent from teacher</li> <li>v. Alternative work</li> <li>vi. Referral to deputy principal or principal.</li> </ul>
Repeated disruption over a longer period (one or more of these sanctions may be applied)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Separation from peers up to a day.</li> <li>v. Separation from peers for more than one day and parents will be contacted by a note or orally by class teacher</li> <li>v. Referral to deputy principal or principal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sanctions will be carried out in the order outlined. Following discussion with all parties, the principal will decide whether or not to refer the matter to the BOM for further consideration</b></p>	

<p><b><u>Serious misbehaviour including:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent, serious disruption of teaching and learning in the classroom.</li> <li>• Physical or verbal attacks on students, teachers. SNAs or ancillary staff</li> <li>• Deliberately offensive language or behaviour</li> <li>• Serious insolence including refusal to follow teacher/SNA instruction</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Reckless, threatening or dangerous behaviour towards self or others etc including not following safety advice regarding Covid-19. Deliberately coughing/spitting on others, not adhering to social distancing as advised by teacher.</li> <li>• Bullying (see anti bullying policy)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Referral to deputy principal or principal.</li> <li>2. Parents will be contacted orally and/or letter plus sanctions.</li> <li>3. Referral to the Board of Management. Parents will be informed in writing.</li> <li>4. Suspension of child in consultation with the Board of Management. Parents will be informed in writing</li> <li>5. Expulsion of child in consultation with the Board of Management. Parents will be informed in writing.</li> </ol> <p>See procedural requirements for suspension or expulsion below.</p>
---	--

### Playground behaviour

Playground	Sanction
Minor infringement of playground rules	v. Reminder or oral reprimand by teacher/SNA on yard duty.
	v. Behaviour noted in incident book

<p>Repeated minor infringement of playground rules (one or more of these sanctions may be applied)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Class teacher/parents to be informed.</li> <li>v. Separation from peers for defined period or until end of break</li> <li>v. Referral to deputy principal or principal along with teacher on duty</li> </ul>
<p>Playground misbehaviour noted over a series of breaks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. Separation from peers for between 2 and 5 days. Principal, class teacher and parents will be notified.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The following sanctions will be carried out in the order outlined. Following discussion with all parties, the principal will decide whether to refer the matter to the BOM for further consideration.</b></p> <p><b><u>Serious misbehaviour including:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent, disregard for safety of self, others or playground rules, including not following safety advice regarding Covid-19. Deliberately coughing/spitting on others, not adhering to social distancing as advised by teacher. Deliberately trying to mix with other bubbles and disregarding advice from teacher on duty.</li> <li>• Physical or verbal attacks on students, or teachers, SNAs or ancillary staff</li> <li>• Deliberately offensive language or behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Referral to deputy principal or principal.</li> <li>2. Parents will be contacted orally and/or by letter plus sanctions</li> <li>3. Referral to Board of Management</li> <li>4. Suspension of child in consultation with the Board of Management.</li> <li>5. Expulsion of child in consultation with Board of Management.</li> </ul> <p>See procedural guidelines for suspension or expulsion below</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious insolence and /or refusal to follow instruction from teacher/SNA</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Reckless, threatening or dangerous behaviour towards self or others etc.</li> <li>• Bullying (see anti-bullying policy)</li> </ul>	
---	--

### **Procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion**

The Board ratifies the use of the NEWB guidelines (2008) for the suspension and expulsion of pupils. Great care will be taken by the principal and the Board of Management to ensure that suspension or expulsion will be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, before suspension or expulsion other interventions will have been tried and reviewed. However, a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension or expulsion.

The Board of Management has delegated to the principal the power to suspend for a period of up to three days. This however may only be done in consultation with the Chairperson. Any suspension longer than three days is a decision that can only be made by the Board of Management. The Board places a ceiling of 10 days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. Whilst the Board has a duty to inform the NEWB when suspension of a particular pupil exceeds 20 days in any one year, it is the decision of this Board to inform and to consult with the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) with regard to any suspensions.

#### **The grounds for suspension**

- The pupil's behaviour has a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The pupil's continued presence in the school constitutes a threat to safety
- The pupil is responsible for serious damage to property.

#### **Procedures**

##### **Procedures in respect of referral to the BOM re Suspension**

This school will follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend or expel a student. These include

- The right of pupil and parent to be heard
- The right to impartiality
-



### **Procedures before suspension is ratified**

- The principal or other designated person will investigate the factors that led to the consideration for suspension
- The pupil and parent will be informed of the complaint. The parent will be informed in writing.
- The pupil and parents will be given the opportunity to respond to the principal and to the Board before a decision to suspend is made.

### **Procedures implementing the suspension**

The principal will notify the parents in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm

- the period of suspension, the dates when the suspension will begin and end and the reason for the suspension
- The arrangements for returning to school, including the reaffirming of the commitment to the code by parents and pupil
- The provision for appeal to the BOM
- The provision of appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act if a child has been suspended for more than a period of 20 days in any one school year.

### **Procedures after suspension**

Every effort will be made by the principal and deputy principal /Home School Liaison Teacher to engage with the parents before, during and after the suspension to ensure the successful and smooth reintegration of the pupil after the suspension.

- The school will arrange for a member of staff to provide support to the pupil when he/she returns after suspension.
- Apart from a written record of the suspension, the child will return to the school with a clean slate and the school will expect the same behaviour of this student as of all other students.

## **Procedures specifically with regard to Expulsion**

The authority to expel is reserved to the Board of Management and may not be delegated. The school will make every effort to avoid the use of expulsion.

### **The grounds for expulsion**

The grounds for expulsion are similar to the grounds for suspension. However, in addition to factors such as the degree of seriousness and the persistence of the behaviour, a key difference is that where expulsion is considered, the school will have tried a series of other interventions, and believe they have exhausted all possibilities for changing the pupil's behaviour. However, a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for expulsion.

Before a decision is taken to expel the Board of Management will make a full review of the factors that have led to the consideration of expulsion. These will include the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the context and the impact of the behaviour, the interventions tried to date, whether expulsion is a proportionate response and the impact of expulsion on the child.

### **Procedures in respect of expulsion**

The following procedural steps will be followed

1. A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the principal
2. A recommendation to the BOM by the principal
3. The Principal writes to the parents inviting them to the BOM hearing to decide the matter and copies them with a copy of the recommendation to the BOM and any documentation/ evidence forwarded to the BOM and relied upon by the Principal.
4. Consideration by the BOM of the recommendation and the holding of a hearing, in which the principal and the parents put their case to the Board in each other's presence.
5. BOM deliberations and actions following the hearing. The BOM decides whether or not to proceed with the expulsion. The Board will notify the NEWB in writing of the decision. Parents will also be notified in writing about the Board's decision and the next steps in the process will be outlined to them.
6. Consultations with parents, principal and Board will be arranged by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the NEWB.
7. Confirm the decision to expel. When a 20 day period of notification of the possible expulsion to the EWO has elapsed and every reasonable effort has been made to hold consultations between the school, the EWO and parents, the school may formally confirm the decision to expel. Parents will be notified immediately and in writing and will be told about the right to appeal under Section 29 of the Education Act. The standard form of appeal will be supplied to parents.