

Ashbourne CNS Code of Positive Behaviour

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1. Vision and Values at Ashbourne CNS

At Ashbourne CNS we are committed to our core values of courage, creativity, collaboration and care. Our school celebrates diversity of belief, language and cultural traditions and we all learn to respect, trust and encourage each other every day. We listen to each other and negotiate our differences. This makes it easy for us accept, respect and include every person for who they are.

‘Learning is the Heart of our Community’ and we are dedicated to the holistic development of every child. Our practice is informed by Glasser’s Caring Habits, Growth Mindset and a Restorative approach. By focusing on inter and intra personal skills we seek to enhance relationships in our community and with the community. This holistic approach acknowledges that ‘learning takes place in a relationship’ and seeks to help children develop the resilience, self-esteem and relationships needed to overcome the many challenges on the road to adulthood.

We combine socio-cultural building blocks with high-quality approaches to teaching and learning in order to develop each child’s academic, social, moral, emotional, spiritual and creative capabilities. Thus, enabling them to reach their full potential and play an active part in the local community and wider civic society.

Education is a partnership, and at Ashbourne CNS experienced teaching professionals, students and parents work together with members of the wider community in a welcoming educational environment which is safe, happy, stimulating, inclusive and reflective of the diverse modern society in which we live.

At Ashbourne CNS we seek to provide a safe physical, psychological and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, background or ability. We promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We seek to prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of social justice.

2. Rationale

Under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 200, the Board of Management of each school 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 issues by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB).

The code of behaviour is the set of programmes, practices and procedures that together form the school's plan for helping students in the school to behave well and learn well. A code of behaviour is necessary to enhance the learning environment where children can make progress in all aspects of their development.

The code of behaviour helps the school community to promote the school ethos, relationships, policies, procedures and practices that encourage good behaviour and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The code of behaviour helps teachers, other members of staff, students and parents/guardians to work together for a happy, effective and safe school.

The code expresses the vision, mission and values of the school. 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 foster an orderly, harmonious school where high standards of behaviour are expected and supported.

The code of behaviour enables school authorities 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. The code of behaviour is a key tool in enabling the school authorities to support the learning of every student in the school.

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 to meet this challenge successfully.

3. Education and Welfare Act (2000)

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 sets out certain matters that must be included in a code of behaviour.

Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 says:

- (1) The board of management of a recognised school shall, after consultation with the principal of, the teachers teaching at, the parents of students registered at, and the education welfare officer assigned functions in relation to, that school, prepare, in accordance with subsection (2), a code of behaviour in respect of the students registered at the school (hereafter in this section referred to as a “code of behaviour”).*
- (2) A code of behaviour shall specify –*

 - (a) the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;*
 - (b) the measures that may 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 student; and*
 - (e) the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child’s absence from school.*
- (3) A code of behaviour shall be prepared in accordance with such guidelines as may, following consultation by the Board with national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations and trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, be issued by the Board.*
- (4) The principal of a recognised school shall, before registering a child as a student at that school in accordance with section 20, provide the parents of such child with a copy of the code of behaviour in respect of the school and may, as a condition of so registering such child, require his or her parents to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour so provided is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the child.*
- (5) The principal of a recognised school shall, on a request being made by a student registered at the school or a parent of such a student, provide the student or parent, as the case may be, with a copy of the code of behaviour in respect of the school concerned.*

In order to comply with these requirements, and in order to have the best chance of achieving its objectives, the code of behaviour should address:

- the standards of behaviour expected in the school
- the plan for promoting good behaviour
- the ways in which the school responds to unacceptable behaviour
- the plan for implementing the code of behaviour
- school procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion.

4. Development of Behaviour Policy and Consultation

This policy is closely linked to the vision and values of Ashbourne CNS and our context as a developing School. The development of this policy is guided by the NEWB document ‘Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools’ and a variety of educational psychological approaches. It is informed by best practice in teaching and learning and underpinned by the following educational psychological theories.

- Social Constructivism, Vygotsky, 1978. (Learning is a social process).
- Cognitive Development Theory, Piaget, 1936. (Changes in cognitive process and ability develop from physical actions to mental operations over time as the child matures).
- Behaviourism, Skinner, 1948. (all behaviours are learned through interaction with the environment. Therefore, behaviour can be changed).
- Choice Theory, Glasser, 1965. (All behaviour is a choice, all behaviour is trying to communicate something. If we change our thoughts, we can change our behaviour).
- Growth Mindset, Dwek, 2006 (Our thoughts impact our success. Our ability develops through hard work and dedication).
- Restorative Practice. (Focuses on repairing the harm done to people and relationships rather than exclusively on punishment and punitive measures)

These educational psychological and socio-cultural approaches are used together to support the development of resilience, well-being and a positive behaviour culture at ACNS. Some of the theories are central to initial teacher training and some are specific to our school context and dedication to the holistic development of every child. These theories are the starting point from which this policy was developed from 2019- 2021.

2019/2020

- Term 1 – School opens Junior Infants to 6th Class. Glasser’s Caring Habits are agreed by staff as the ‘school rules’ until policy can be put in place. The Caring Habits are explored each week at Assembly. The ‘Solving Circle’ is introduced by staff member and modelled at assembly for use on yard. Parent School Partnership (PSP) is established.
- Term 2 – Students, Parents and staff are surveyed, and the core values of courage, creativity, collaboration and care are developed. During this process Glasser’s Caring Habits emerge as a

common theme. Principal applies to Arts Council to be a 'Creative School' for support in developing a school crest.

- Term 2 – Covid 19 Pandemic results in national school closures and remote learning.
- Term 3 – Staff Meeting and Behaviour Committee is formed. Committee begin to formally research policy and create a draft document. Staff feedback to principal that they need guidance on Growth Mindset language to support writing the Summer Progress reports. Two members of staff undertake Growth Mindset Training. School awarded funding as Creative School to develop core values and crest.

2020/2021

- Term 1 – Implementation of Covid Response measures and resumption of face-to-face teaching and learning is priority. There are no assemblies. Online assemblies are trialled but are challenging for students. Behaviour Policy Draft is revised to include Covid Response measures. Principal is advised by management that these measures are not closely aligned with school values and restorative practice and the draft is revised.
- Term 1 – Creative Assistant works with children to explore school values including Glasser's Caring Habits. Due to continued Covid Restrictions the Parent School Partnership is paused.
- Term 2 – Prolonged distance learning. Principal develops and shares Guidance Document for Writing Summer Report with staff. Information on Growth Mindset is shared with parents.
- Term 3 – Behaviour Policy is discussed at staff meeting. Staff believe Behaviour Policy needs to be prioritised and a unified language approach which builds on Glasser's Caring Habits is needed. Restorative Practice (RP) is identified as an approach. The principal seeks funding for training of 3 teachers in RP, and this is put to all staff. Members of Behaviour Policy committee volunteer for training and another member of staff also puts themselves forward. All 3 participate in summer course with RP Connect, Michelle Stowe.

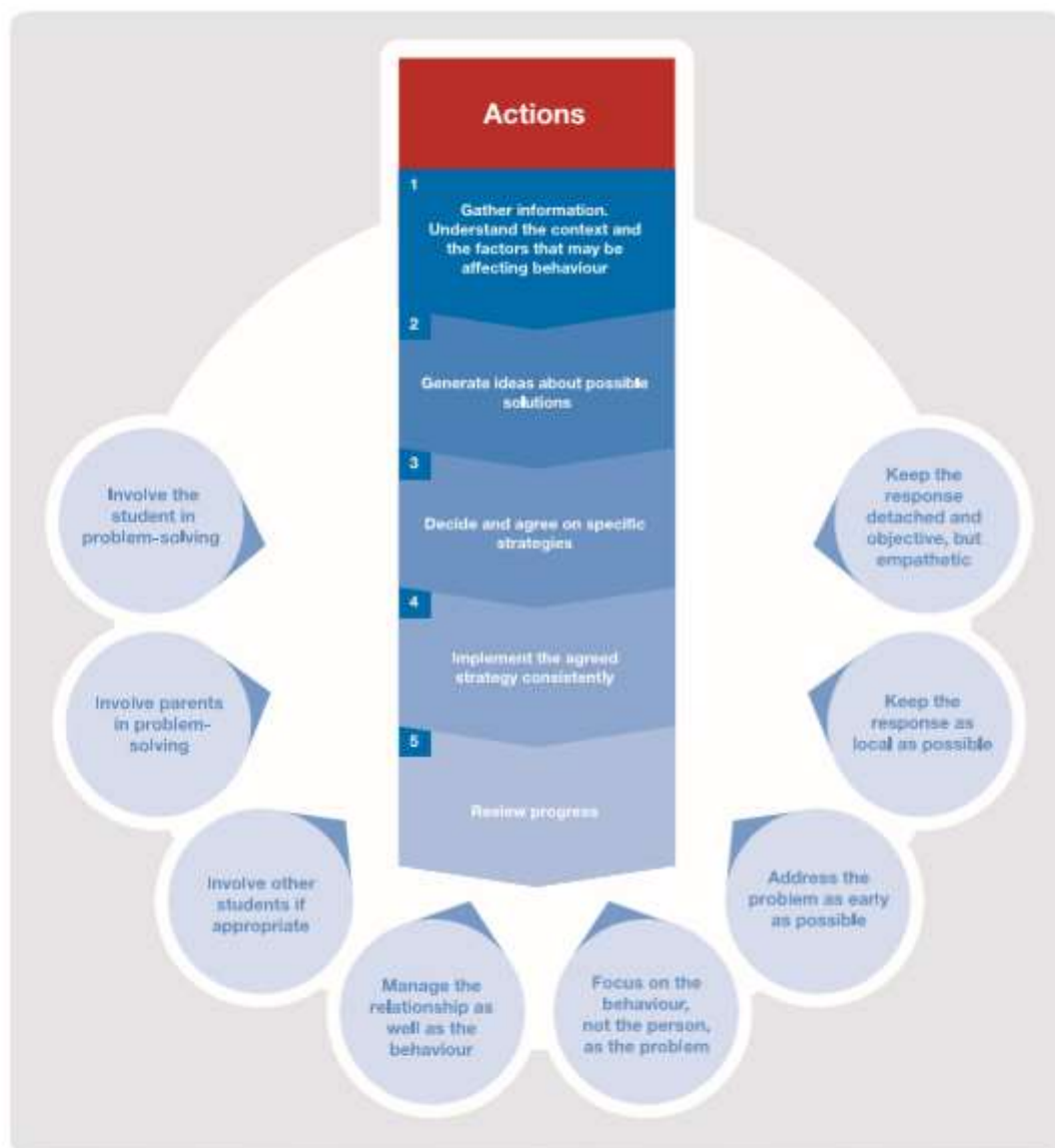
2021/2022

- Term 1 – Principal and post holders revise vision and values with all staff. Teacher shares growth mindset at staff meeting 'teach meet'.
- Term 1 – Behaviour Committee develops revised document informed by their RP training. Entire Staff meeting dedicated to reviewing updated Draft Behaviour Policy, issues ironed out. Behaviour committee and In School Leadership team refine document during several meetings.

- Term 1 – DP & AP2 survey students and workshop on proposed whole school behaviour expectations. Workshops are delivered by teachers to all classes on Behaviour Expectations and feedback is collated by Principal and included in this policy to reflect student voice.
- Term 2 – Parents are surveyed on their understanding of and attitudes towards Restorative Practice, Growth Mindset and the Caring Habits. Feedback is gathered on what support materials and communication measures are needed for parents. The Final Draft Document is displayed on Website and sent to BOM and PSP for final consultation and agreement.

5. Purpose

At Ashbourne CNS we believe that a positive attitude to oneself, to others and to learning greatly improves the likelihood of successful and fulfilling experiences at school and in life in the future. At Ashbourne CNS our aim is to create and maintain a nurturing and happy environment where children can succeed, learn from their mistakes, take responsibility for themselves as individuals and understand the positive contribution they make to the school community and beyond. This is underpinned by a restorative approach to behaviour management and complimented by the use of Glasser's Caring Habits, Choice Theory and Growth Mindset within Ashbourne CNS. The code is informed by the principle of fairness. This respects the principles of natural justice and ensures a consistent, problem-solving approach to behaviour on the part of all school personnel.



Key Principles and Influences on this policy Document:

- All behaviour is trying to communicate something (Glasser's Choice Theory)
- Behaviour has meaning. It is not random. It serves a purpose and has goals, though these goals may not be easy to recognise.
- Behaviour can be learned. This means it can change.
- Behaviour takes place within a particular context and in relation to other people. Understanding the context is central to understanding the behaviour.
- What teachers, other adults and other students do in response to a student's behaviour is critical in influencing the choices students make about how they behave.
- Effective teaching and learning are closely linked to good behaviour.
- Positive acknowledgement is a very effective way of influencing and promoting good learning behaviour.
- The quality of relationships affects behaviour.
- Learning takes place in a relationship.

The aims of this policy are:

- To continue to strengthen our school community by ensuring that all stakeholders promote our school vision, aims and values as laid out in Section 1 of this policy document.
- Actively engage in our shared ethos of promoting positive interactions and relationships.
- To enable all stakeholders to consider themselves a member of our school community and recognise the part they play and the responsibility they have in making Ashbourne CNS an effective learning environment.
- To assist parents, pupils, and staff in understanding the systems and procedures in place that form the Behaviour Policy at Ashbourne CNS and seek their cooperation in the daily application of these procedures.
- To ensure that Ashbourne CNS's high expectations of behaviour are clearly and consistently communicated and modelled by all stakeholders.
- To ensure that challenging behaviours and conflict are dealt with restoratively and that the 'wrongdoer' is held accountable for their behaviour and supported in repairing harm and restoring their relationships.
- To endorse the ethos of Community National Schools and LMETB.
- To create a climate that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To create a positive and safe environment for teaching and learning.

- To encourage students to take personal responsibility for their learning and their behaviour.
- To help young people mature into responsible active citizens.
- To build positive relationships of mutual respect and mutual support among pupils, staff and parents.
- To ensure that the school's high expectations for the behaviour of all members of the school community are widely known and understood.
- To provide opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding of the factors that affect behaviour and that help pupils to change behaviour.
- To provide ways of helping parents to understand how they can support students to behave well at school.
- To provide ways of helping students to understand their own behaviour, the reasons for it and how to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships.

This behaviour document, which underpins all other policies at ACNS, aims to outline and clarify the rationale and whole school approach of all other policies at the school.

School Expectations

We aim to create a positive environment in which pupil's feel valued, cared for, secure and can make progress in all aspects of their learning and development. In addition to fostering Glasser's Caring Habits, students are expected to model the following behaviours. These expectations are devised with regard for health, safety and welfare and to create a positive and effective learning environment for all members of the school community. If a school is to function efficiently, it is necessary that expectations are clearly stated and applied consistently and fairly.

Glasser's Caring Habits:

- Respect each other
- Trust each other
- Accept everyone for who they are
- Encourage each other
- Listen to each other
- Support our friends
- Negotiate when we have a problem

Expectations of behaviour at ACNS are framed with safety, learning, and Glasser’s caring habits in mind:

Caring Habit/Reason	Behaviour Expectations at ACNS
Be on time and be prepared	We wear our uniform correctly and proudly. We come to school on time and ready to learn.
Stay Safe	We walk inside the school. We play gently on yard and within the boundaries. We respect property and use all equipment as it is intended to be used.
Try your best	We work hard and praise effort.
Listen to each other	We listen and wait for our turn to speak.
Be respectful and kind	We use kind hands, feet and words.
Trust each other	We are honest and always tell the truth.
Encourage & support each other	We are helpful and kind. We think before we speak (Is it helpful? Is it kind? Is it necessary?)
Accept everyone for who they are	We accept everyone for who they are. We are not all the same, we do not always agree, but we can get along.
Negotiate when we have a problem	We work together to negotiate our differences and resolve conflict when it arises.

6. Scope

Everyone associated with the school has a responsibility to be a positive role model to ensure that positive behaviour is maintained through consistently using affective language and restorative approaches when undesired behaviour occurs. It is also the responsibility of the adults in school to facilitate restorative meetings in order for children to learn how to take responsibility for their mistakes and to make amends. Therefore, this policy is applicable to all members of our school community.

This policy interacts with and supports the following documents:

- ACNS Attendance Policy
- ACNS Anti-bullying Policy
- ACNS Mission Statement and Vision and Values
- NEWB Developing a code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools
- ACNS Critical Incidents Policy
- ACNS Communications Policy
- LMETB Complaints Policy & Procedures
- LMETB Expulsions and Suspensions Policy (Appendix E)
- ACNS Guidance document for staff writing progress reports

7. Theory

7.1 Restorative Practice Definition

Restorative Practice (RP) is both a philosophy and a set of skills rooted in respect for human beings and aims to build positive relationships between people. It is a proactive, skills-based approach that is centred on the understanding that relationships can be restored when they have been harmed by conflict or wrongdoing. Restorative Practice processes bring those harmed and those responsible for the harm into communication to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward. Restorative approaches are underpinned by values of respect, equity, interconnectedness, understanding, empathy, belonging and fair process.

Our intentions through the use of Restorative Practice at ACNS are:

- To put the values of Ashbourne CNS into action. These values are Care, Collaboration, Courage, and Creativity.
- To foster and encourage positive behaviour
- To grow and learn
- To honour relationships
- To repair harm
- To develop resilience

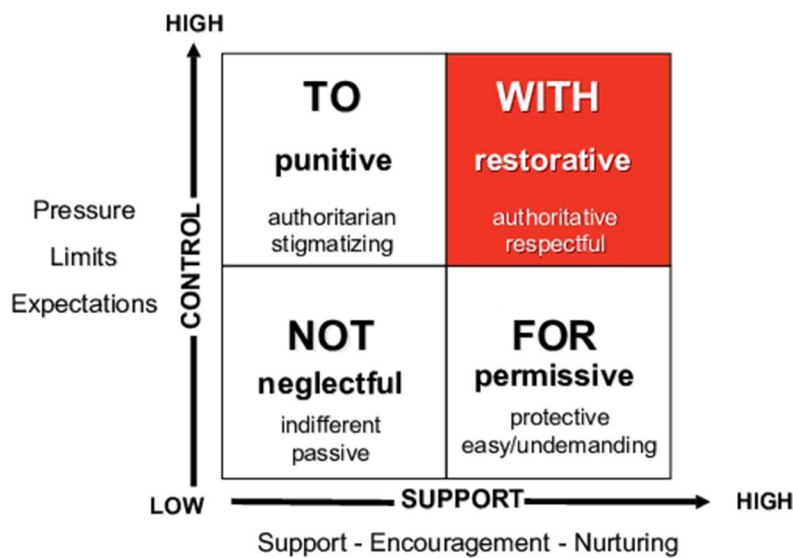
7.2 Principles of Restorative Practice

The following restorative principles will be used across the school:

1. The Social Discipline Window
2. The Restorative Practice Continuum
3. Fair Process

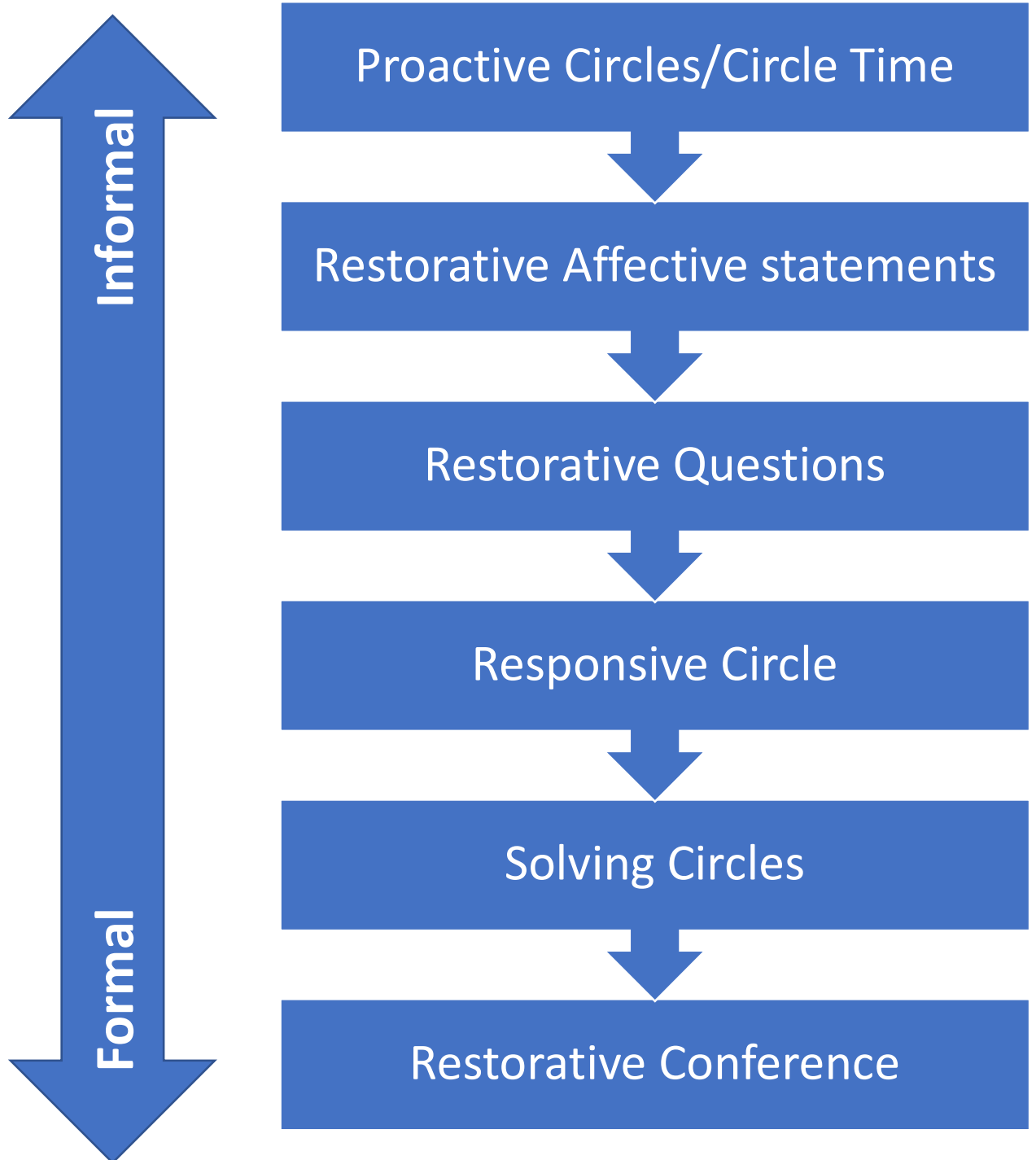
7.2.1 The Social Discipline Window

At Ashbourne CNS we aim to work within the with box of the social discipline window, thus providing nurture and support alongside clear boundaries and expectations of behaviour. Adults in the school community are expected to be positive and respectful role models for the pupils.



7.2.2 Restorative Practice Continuum

Restorative Practice consists of a variety of elements, ranging from informal to formal. These elements can be seen on the Restorative Practice Continuum (below). At Ashbourne CNS our aim is to use informal restorative practices daily/often to build and nurture strong relationships using Glasser’s Caring Habits. These are proactive practices to promote good behaviour. The formal end of the continuum (see below) is ideally used more seldomly. These are responsive practices to unwanted behaviours.



Proactive Circles/Circle Time:

Proactive circles are used to develop relationships and build community within the classroom. They consist of all members of the class sitting in a circle format and having a structured discussion about a set topic. Proactive circles are similar to 'circle time' and can be used interchangeably. The content discussed in proactive circles will differ depending on the class level and abilities. The premise of a proactive circle will remain the same throughout each class level; to create a safe space to speak and be heard to allow trust to develop in relationships. For more information about circles, see *Appendix C – Useful Resources*

Restorative Affective Statements:

Affective statements clearly define the actions that are desired/not desired, how these actions make the other person feel and what the person carrying out the actions can do to change or continue this. They can be referred to as 'When, I Feel, So' statements or 'WIFS'.

Examples of affective statements (WIFS):

'When you walk down the stairs with your voices off and holding onto the rail, I feel happy that you are safe, so please keep this up.'

'When you keep trying hard to solve your maths problems, I feel really proud of you, so keep going until you've solved them!'

'When you ignore my instructions, I feel that you do not respect me, so please listen and respond to me next time.'

'When you keep shouting out and disrupting everyone's learning, I feel disappointed and disrespected, so you must stop doing this and work quietly at your table until break-time.'

Restorative Questions:

These questions are to be proposed to the individuals involved in an incident where harm has been caused. The language used in the questions can be altered to suit the age and ability of the pupil. However, it is important that the premise of the questions remains the same. All parties involved should be present for the asking of these restorative questions. The questions should be asked in the following order:

1. Questions 1 – 3 asked to the person who caused harm
2. Questions 1 – 3 asked to the person who has been harmed
3. Questions 4 – 5 asked to the person who caused harm
4. Questions 4 – 5 asked to the person who has been harmed
5. Question 6 asked to the person who caused harm
6. Question 6 asked to the person who has been harmed

<i>Questions for the person who caused harm</i>	<i>Questions for the person who has been harmed</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking at the time? 3. What are you thinking now? 4. Who has been affected by your actions? 5. How have they been affected? 6. What do you think you need to do next? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking at the time? 3. What are you thinking now? 4. How has this affected you? 5. What has been the hardest thing for you? 6. What do you think needs to happen next?

Responsive Circles:

Responsive circles are used in a similar manner to Proactive Circles. They are used in a whole class setting using the format of sitting in a circle. The discussion in Responsive Circles will surround class issues or recurring unwanted behaviours. These circles are designed to remind pupils of expected behaviour and facilitate a discussion about a specific unwanted behaviour that is having a negative impact on the class and that is being displayed by multiple pupils. Examples of Responsive Circle topics could be; Calling people names, Using gentle hands, spreading rumours, etc. This practice is to be done at least once a month in each class. This can be incorporated through termly class meetings.

Solving Circles:

Solving Circles are used to repair harm and restore relationships. These are smaller, more formal circles consisting only of those involved in an incident along with a Restorative Practice facilitator (internal teacher). The discussion in the circle focuses solely on the incident that has caused the harm. The facilitator presents the Restorative Questions to those involved. A verbal agreement is made between all individuals in the circle about what behaviour they will display going forward. The Restorative Practice facilitator will record the incident and agreement on Aladdin.

Restorative Conference:

Restorative Conferences are also used to repair harm and restore relationships. Restorative Conferences are used if an individual breaks the agreement from a previous Solving Circle by repeating the same unwanted behaviour as before. Restorative Conferences consist of a circle meeting with the pupils involved, teacher(s), principal/deputy principal, and parent(s)/guardian(s) of the pupils involved. A written contract is created, agreed upon and signed by all present at the Restorative Conference. This contract will outline the expected behaviours that are to be displayed and the consequences if a pupil breaks the contract by displaying the same unwanted behaviour. One copy of this contract is given to each pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), one copy is stored digitally on Aladdin, and one copy is kept in the pupil file for each pupil involved.

7.2.3 Fair Process

When dealing with a conflict situation, adults in school will deal with it in a fair way as follows:

Engagement

All participants must be involved

- This means that all individuals involved in an incident are willingly engaging in the process and are ready to engage positively.
- e.g. "We are going to have a chat about what happened earlier. <name> are you feeling ready to talk about it openly so that we can fix the relationship?"

Explanation

All decisions should be explained clearly

- This means that all individuals involved and affected should have a good understanding of any decisions that have been made in the process and why they have been made. The teacher should use age appropriate language to communicate this
- e.g. "We have decided that tomorrow we will let <name> choose a game for little break, and <name> choose a game for big break. This is so that everyone will get a chance to choose a game."

Expectation Clarity

All expectations and consequences should be clearly stated

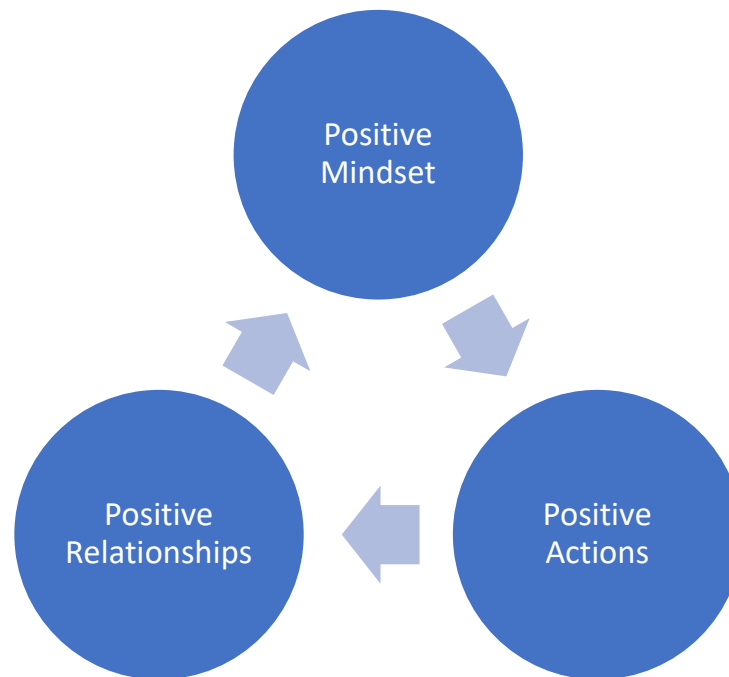
- This means that the teacher will clearly state the expectations of behaviours to each individual. The consequence for if this expectation is not met must also be stated.
- This can be done orally or in the form of a written agreement
- e.g. "<name> you have agreed to use kind hands on yard when you are playing with <name>. This means no hitting or pushing. If you use unkind hands, I will have to tell your parents."

It is important that the pupils know in advance what the processes/sanctions are and that it is the behaviour, not the pupil, that is being reprimanded.

8. Policy

8.1 Approaches used to promote positive behaviour at ACNS

Learning takes place in a relationship. Our thoughts impact our feelings, our feelings impact our actions and behaviour. This, in turn, can impact our ability to create and maintain relationships.

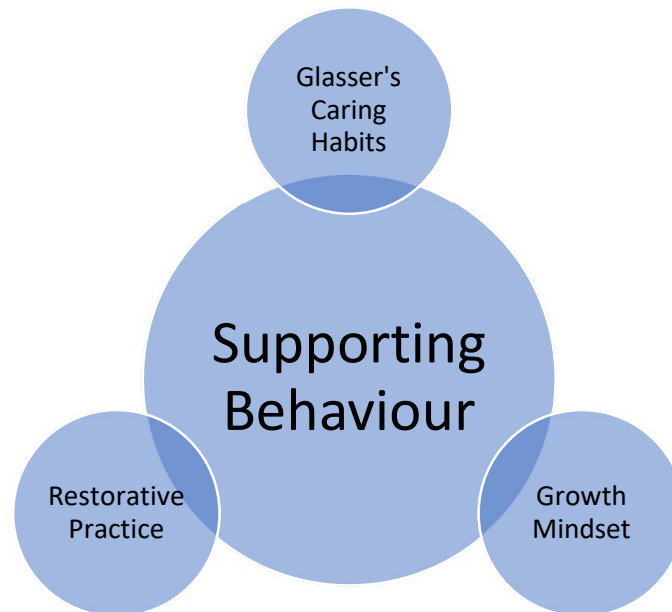


This is why, at Ashbourne CNS we use a variety of practices to support positive behaviour at school. Our main three practices for supporting behaviour are Glasser’s Caring Habits, Growth Mindset, and Restorative Practice.

Glasser’s Caring Habits help scaffold positive behaviours to support relationships at school

Growth Mindset encourages students to believe that their abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. The view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishments (Dweck, 2015).

Restorative Practice encourages empathy and the building, maintaining and repairing of relationships. A restorative practice approach is used in Ashbourne CNS to negotiate differences and manage conflict in a way which prioritises the restoration of the relationship.



8.2 Supporting Positive Behaviour using a Class Charter

In addition to the school behavioural expectations outlined in this policy class teachers will collaborate with students to develop a classroom charter at the beginning of each academic year.

Criteria for developing rules/charters/agreements School and classroom:

- kept to a minimum
- written in clear, simple language
- stated positively, telling students what to do, as well as what not to do
- based on a clear rationale that is explained, understood, and agreed
- developed through consultation with students in the class
- communicated and referred to regularly
- informed by Glasser's caring habits, growth mindset language and principles of restorative practice

8.3 Building Positive Mindset

8.3.1 Growth Mindset

Ashbourne CNS is a school that promotes Growth Mindset.

Growth Mindset is about fostering the belief that all children can improve and develop their knowledge and skills through effort. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

Intelligence or talent are not viewed as innate gifts and talent alone without effort will not lead to children reaching their potential.

Encouraging effort and not praising talent or intelligence will help children develop a growth mindset.

Praise	Encouragement
<p>Defined as: remarks on the performance of a task in relation to the child's abilities/goodness & expresses adult's evaluation of a child.</p> <p>Fosters fixed mindset and reliance on others for self-worth</p>	<p>Defined as: comments that focus on children's efforts and strategies towards their task (also known as process feedback)</p> <p>Fosters growth mindset encourages self-confidence.</p>
"You're so smart!"	"Wow you must have worked really hard for this!"
"Your animals are perfect! I love your drawing"	"You spent a lot of time working on this paper. I saw you were looking at the animal book to help you. That really worked!"
"good job with your shoes!"	"You are learning to put on your shoes! Last week, you had trouble getting them on but this time you did it without a problem!"
"I'm so proud of you!"	"You should be proud of the work you did! I saw that you were working hard!"

8.3.2 Positive Reinforcements

Positive reinforcement can take on many forms. It is important to recognise and acknowledge pupils' efforts in all aspects of school life, rather than praise outcomes or results.

Examples of positive reinforcement include but are not limited to:

- Verbal praise, facial expressions, thumbs up, round of applause, pat on the back
- Stamps, stickers, written comments on pupils' work

- Dojo points given for positive behaviours (i.e. not results driven)
- Golden time
- Celebration certificates
- Communication of positive behaviour with home, either verbal or written (email/on Seesaw etc).

Teachers and staff members should always ensure that growth mindset is at the core of any reward system or positive reinforcements implemented in their classrooms. In positive reinforcement, a response or behaviour is strengthened by reward, leading to repetition of the desired behaviour. The reward is a reinforcing stimulus. However, the less concrete the reward the more likely the positive behaviour is to continue without repeated physical reward. It would be considered best practice to use experiential reward systems rather than concrete rewards. Example of an experiential reward: eating lunch in teacher’s chair. Example of concrete reward: Toys/pencils etc.

Use of rewards	
Effective use of rewards	Ineffective use of rewards
<p>Reward systems are more likely to motivate students when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are meaningful to the individual student or group • the student understands what the reward is given for • they acknowledge behaviour that is valued and wanted • they are closely linked in time to that specific behaviour • they are based on a knowledge of the individual and are sensitive to personal, developmental and cultural factors (for example, teenagers may prefer private acknowledgement to public praise) • they are given for effort and not only for achievement • they are used consistently and by all staff • they are used in an inclusive way. Rewards must not be used in a way that discriminate against any student or group of students, for example, students from a particular background, gender or ethnic group. 	<p>Care is needed to ensure that rewards do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become the goal of learning • result in unhelpful competition • repeatedly reward the same students • seem unattainable to some students and, as a result, de-motivate them.

8.4 Building Positive Relationships

At Ashbourne CNS we acknowledge that relationships are essential to facilitate learning and promote positive behaviour. This is why we strive to place strong, meaningful relationships at the core of our school community. The development and maintenance of such relationships positively impacts every facet of school life. We use Glasser's Caring Habits to build positive relationships.

Relationships matter for positive teaching and learning: Research and evidence on how the brain works suggests that the safer and happier a person is, the more receptive they are to new ideas. When pupils have positive relationships with their classmates and teachers, this develops a sense of safety and comfort. These feelings, then, allow individuals to be in a mindset where they are prepared to learn. At ACNS one of our caring habits is 'Listen to each other'. By explicitly teaching this habit, we reinforce the skills needed for effective teaching and learning.

Relationships matter for motivation and inspiration: Effective learning consists of making connections between what people already know and new knowledge and ideas. These connections can be made more effectively if people feel excited, inspired, and engaged in their learning. To create such learning experiences, relationships must be formed between teachers and pupils. At ACNS we use the caring habits of 'Encourage and Support each other'. These habits are crucial for motivating and inspiring others.

Relationships matter in developing active citizenship and community spirit: A large part of school for pupils is to spend time with peers and develop their social skills. They, therefore, need to be offered opportunities to learn how to be social and how to interact positively with one another. The pupils need to be given the time and space without adult interference to learn how to negotiate relationships. Having strong relationships with peers and teachers allows pupils to feel comfortable and confident in growing their social skills. At ACNS, we teach the caring habit of 'Respect each other'. Developing this habit of respect leads to respectful citizens within their communities.

Relationships matter when things go wrong: Having strong and meaningful relationships allows us to learn how to accept responsibility, to be held accountable for our actions, and to learn how to repair relationships that have been damaged through our actions or the actions of others. Having meaningful

relationships also creates more motivation and willingness to engage in the process of repairing and restoring these relationships. At ACNS we develop the caring habits of ‘Trust each other’ and ‘Negotiate our differences’. These habits lead to successful rebuilding of relationships when harm has been caused as people are willing to trust the process and are skilled in negotiating. Staff at ACNS will scaffold pupils as they build and maintain relationships.

Relationships matter in tackling bullying: Hostility, prejudice, isolation, and bullying can not thrive in an environment where there is empathy, care, connection, community and belonging. A The caring habit ‘Accept everyone for who they are’ is explicitly modelling and taught. This habit of acceptance leads to fewer incidences of bullying.

8.4.1 Relationship Building Practices

The foundation of effective Restorative Practices comes from the development of strong relationships. It is imperative to engage individuals in activities which facilitate the building and maintaining of these relationships, as strong relationships facilitate learning. Within supportive environments we become accountable to one another, thus allowing us to fully engage in Restorative Practice. The relationship scale suggests that 5 positive interactions are required to negate 1 negative interaction.

Examples of positive relationship building activities that we use in each classroom are:

- Check-in and Check-out with focus on emotional wellbeing
- Proactive circles
- One-word-whizz
- ‘Would you rather’ games

For more resources for relationship building, see *Appendix C – Useful Resources*

8.4.2 Social, Personal, and Health Education

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of the individual child, to help him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society. Through an SPHE programme that is planned and consistent throughout the school, children can develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their decisions and actions both now and in the future. Since SPHE has a moral and a spiritual dimension, its development and implementation are influenced significantly by the ethos or characteristic spirit of the school.

8.4.3 Goodness Me, Goodness You!

In Ashbourne CNS, we undertake the Goodness Me Goodness You curriculum. Goodness Me, Goodness You (GMGY!) is multi-belief and values curriculum that has been developed for Community National Schools in collaboration with children, parents, and teachers of the schools, the local Education and Training Boards, the Education and Training Board of Ireland, the Department of Education and Skills and assisted by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. There are four strands in the Goodness Me Goodness You curriculum. They are Story, We are a Community National School, Beliefs and Religions, and Thinking Time.

8.4.4 Relationships and Sexuality Education

Since the late 1990s, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) has been a compulsory part of the primary and post-primary curriculum and is an aspect of a subject called Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). RSE is teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social aspects of relationships and sexuality. It aims to equip children and young people, in an age-appropriate manner, with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to develop self-awareness and self-esteem; realise their health, wellbeing and dignity; develop positive and respectful, social, and intimate relationships; consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others; and understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to themselves and others.

8.5 Repairing Relationships

8.5.1 Consequence Pathway for Minor Misbehaviours

When minor disruptive/harmful behaviours occur in the classroom or the yard, teachers should follow the below steps to ensure they are handled within the guidelines of our Restorative Practice model. These steps should be followed to positively reinforce the expectations of behaviour within our school community. If a behaviour is deemed serious, or it is recurring, teachers can accelerate the below process.

1. Verbal reminder of behaviour expected

2. Restorative Affective Statement

See Section 4.2.2

3. Diversion

Classroom job or task to allow the pupil time to regulate. Jobs, tasks, and time will differ depending on age, ability, and pupil.

4. Choice Card

Visual cue shown to remind pupil to make good choices with regards to their behaviour and actions. See *Appendix A*.

5. Restorative Questions

Questions can be asked orally or, if the situation requires, Restorative Question Based Worksheet can be given (See *Appendix B*).

6. Home link

If restorative worksheet was completed in step 5, this sheet will be sent home to be discussed and signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the teacher. If no worksheet was completed in step 5, a worksheet will be sent home to be completed, signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the teacher

7. Principal or Deputy Principal Restorative Discussion

Principal/deputy principal and pupil go through restorative questions after teacher speaks with principal/deputy to inform them of the issue

8. Restorative conference

See Section 4.2.2

9. Home-School Communication Log

Behaviour journal to be completed each day for an agreed upon amount of time. The amount of time will be agreed upon in Step 8. The behaviour journal is completed by the teacher each day and sent home to be signed by a parent/guardian and returned. See *Appendix D*

10. Unacceptable Behaviour Standards

Unacceptable behaviour standards are also a way of signalling to members of the school community the kinds of behaviours that are not acceptable in the school, for example:

- behaviour that is hurtful (including bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation)
- behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- threats or physical hurt to another person
- damage to property
- theft..

11. Implement the Consequence Pathway for Gross Misbehaviour

8.5.2 Consequence Pathway for Gross Misbehaviour

Before serious consequences such as detention, suspension or expulsion are used, every effort will be made to respond to behaviour with the intention of supporting the pupil and restoring relationships. Communication and cooperation with parents and school is essential in this process. If a behaviour is considered bullying, it will be dealt with through the process set out in the Anti-Bullying Policy (available on our website)

- 1. Ensure the safety of all pupils and staff present**
- 2. Provide the pupil with a cool-down period somewhere safe**
- 3. Inform the Deputy Principal and/or Principal of the incident**
- 4. When the pupil is ready, the classroom teacher will have a restorative conversation with them using the restorative questions**
- 5. When the pupil is ready and calm, they can be reintegrated into the class**
- 6. Parents will be informed of the incident on the day**
- 7. If the behaviour continues, the pupil will engage in a restorative conversation with the principal or deputy principal**
- 8. If the behaviour persists or if the behaviour is deemed severe the parents will attend a meeting with the principal and teacher to discuss further steps**
- 9. Following steps could include suspension or expulsion from school (in accordance with and abiding by the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000)**

Note: In the case of a serious offence or repeated continual less serious misdemeanours, a pupil may be suspended or expelled from school. In such cases, the school will follow the LMETB Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Board of Management & LMETB

The Board of Management & LMETB should:

- Ensure that the school has a policy on, and procedures for, the use of suspension and expulsion that are in line with these Guidelines and with any additional requirements set down by the patron
- Ensure that all students and parents are advised about, and aware of, the school's policy for suspension and expulsion
- Ensure that fair procedures are used for suspension and expulsion and that all staff are aware of those procedures
- Take special care to ensure that the fair procedures are accessible to people with disabilities or those from different language or cultural backgrounds
- Ensure that the Board of Management and the Principal are equipped for their roles in relation to the use of suspension and expulsion
- Ratify this policy document

9.2 Pupils

- Pupils have a responsibility to uphold this Behaviour Policy through their daily interactions with each other and all members of the school community.
- Pupils have a responsibility to co-operate fully with the school in the implementations of all school policies that apply to them.
- Pupils must ensure they are truthful at all times, even if they know themselves to have made a mistake.
- Pupils are encouraged to use their student voice to offer suggestions for any improvements that could be made to this policy/their learning environment.

9.3 Parents and Guardians

It is recognised and acknowledged that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their child. As a partner in the educational process at Ashbourne CNS, parents/guardians should ensure that they are supporting the implementation of this code of behaviour by:

- Being familiar with the policy. Parents/Guardians will be required to sign acceptance of the Behaviour Policy upon enrolment of their child/children at Ashbourne CNS.

- Parents/Guardians should share information with relevant staff about anything that might affect a student's behaviour in school.
- Parents/Guardians should make themselves available to support school management and staff if/when necessary.
- Parents/Guardians should support their child/children in upholding this policy by taking an active interest in their learning both in school and at home.
- Parents/Guardians should encourage their child/children to be supportive of and co-operative with the teaching and learning activities provided by the staff in Ashbourne CNS.
- Parents/Guardians should ensure that their child/children attend school and that they arrive and are collected on time.
- Parents/Guardians should ensure that their child/children co-operate fully with the school's uniform policy.
- Parents/Guardians should ensure their child/children are supplied with all necessary books, equipment, and materials for participation in all lessons and have paid their contribution towards book rental.
- Parents/Guardians should ensure that their child/children have a healthy lunch that will sustain them for the school day.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to get involved with the school community through actively engaging with the school (e.g. by being part of the Parent School Partnership).
- Parents/Guardians should ensure that they have registered with Aladdin Connect to ease communication with the school.

9.4 Staff

- All Teachers will aim to build a supportive environment that actively engages pupils in activities that facilitate, build and maintain positive relationships (see 4.3.1, Relationship Building)
- All teachers will draw up a class charter with each individual class.
- All teachers must keep up to date records of behavioural issues on Aladdin.
- Class teachers will work in collaboration with pupils to set out their own agreed class rules and positive reinforcement systems upon commencement of the school year.
- Class teachers will ensure that their pupils know in advance what the process/consequence is for any misbehaviour and that it is the behaviour, not the child, that is being reprimanded.
- All teachers/staff will work collaboratively to ensure that all pupils are familiar with, understand and uphold the school expectations of behaviour.

- All teachers/staff will work collaboratively to reinforce positive behaviours within the school community.
- All teachers/staff will work collaboratively with Parents/Guardians to ensure positive and open communication between home and school.
- When dealing with conflict in school all staff will ensure they do so by using Fair Process - Engagement, Explanation, Expectation.
- When dealing with minor disruptive/harmful behaviours that occur in the classroom all teachers will do so restoratively by following the Consequence Pathway for Minor Misbehaviours.
- When dealing with a gross misbehaviour all staff will do so restoratively by following the Consequence Pathway for Gross Misbehaviours.
- Principal/Deputy Principal will provide support to staff and students in modelling the expected behaviours.
- Principal/Deputy Principal will provide support to staff in implementing the Consequence Pathways and will engage in Restorative Conferences when needed.

10. Policy Review

The Review date for policies will be set at every two years for this policy document.

Róisín Fulcher is the policy owner and will ensure that the document is updated and reviewed accordingly in collaboration with the principal, Jenny Byrne.

A record will be generated of all school policies and corresponding review dates.

11. Appendices

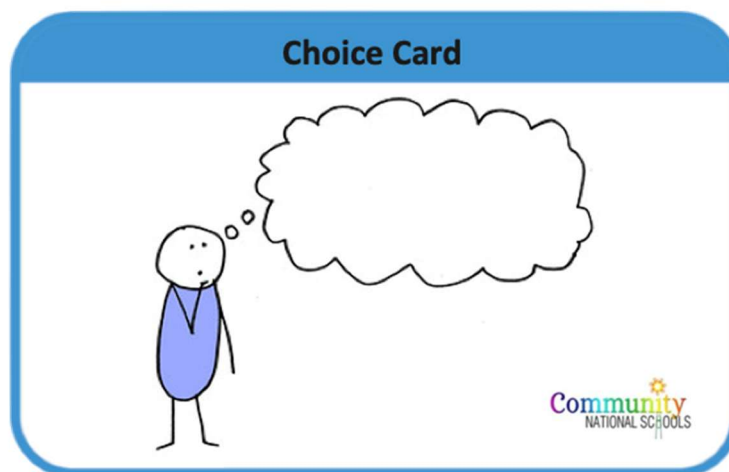
11.1 Appendix A: Restorative Questions and Choice Cards

RP Questions:

Restorative Questions

Q's for Wrongdoer	Q's for the Person Harmed
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking at the time? 3. What are you thinking now? 4. Who has been affected by your actions? 5. How have they been affected? 6. What do you think you need to do next? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking at the time? 3. What are you thinking now? 4. How has this affected you? 5. What has been the hardest thing for you? 6. What do you think needs to happen next?

Choice Card:



11.2 Appendix B: Restorative Question Based Worksheets

Click the class level below to access a soft copy of the worksheet required. Worksheets can be opened in Microsoft Word Desktop App and translated if required.

- [Infants](#)
- [1st – 2nd](#)

- [3rd – 6th](#)

11.3 Appendix C: Useful Resources

Topic	Resource
Teaching Restorative Practices with Classroom Circles	teaching-restorative-practices-with-classroom-circles.pdf (restorativejustice.org)
Proactive Circle Discussion Prompts	Relationship Building Circle Prompts
One-word-whizz information and prompts	One-Word-Whizz Prompts
Would you rather information and prompts	Would You Rather Prompts

11.4 Appendix D: Behaviour Journal Template

Click below to access a soft copy of the behaviour log template. This template can be adjusted and translated to suit the pupil, teacher, and situation.

[Behaviour Log](#)

11.5 Appendix E: LMETB Suspension and Expulsion Policy



LOUTH AND MEATH EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The suspensions and expulsions policy applies to all schools established and maintained by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board.

2. Legal framework

- 2.1. Louth and Meath ETB acknowledges the duty of schools under its control to publish their policy concerning admission and participation in the school, including the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students pursuant to Section 15 (d) of the Education Act 1998 and Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Code of Behaviour in *Ashbourne CNS* specifies:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school
- The measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from a school
- The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student
- The procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

- 2.2. *Ashbourne CNS* affirms that its Code of Behaviour is prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Board 2008. The Code of Behaviour addresses:

- The standards of behaviour expected in the school

- The plan for promoting good behaviour
 - The ways in which a school responds to unacceptable behaviour
 - The plan for implementing the code of behaviour
 - School procedures for the use of suspension and expulsion
- 2.3. **Ashbourne CNS** recognises the Right to Appeal pursuant to Section 29 of the Education Act.
- 2.4. In regard to informing the Education Welfare Board, **Ashbourne CNS** affirms its statutory obligation pursuant to section 21 (4)(a) of the Education Welfare Act.
- 2.5. **Ashbourne CNS** affirms that data collected in relation to students and parents is in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018.

3. Suspensions

- 3.1 The Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** holds the authority to suspend a student. This authority is devolved under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Boards of Management of each of the schools under its control.
- 3.2 Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Boards of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** may delegate this authority to the Principal of **Ashbourne CNS**. The Board of Management should make a formal delegation arrangement taking due account of the provisions of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013.
- 3.3 **Ashbourne CNS** recognises that suspension is only one strategy within the **Ashbourne CNS** Code of Behaviour in response to inappropriate behaviour.
- 3.4. **Ashbourne CNS** recognises that when all other strategies have been exhausted, suspension affords a student time to reflect on their behaviour, to acknowledge and accept responsibility for their behaviour and to accept the need for the behaviour to change. **Ashbourne CNS** works closely with parents to assist a suspended student to re-join the school community successfully.
- 3.5. **Ashbourne CNS** acknowledges that suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:
- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students.

- The students continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety.
 - The student is responsible for serious damage to property.
 - The student breaches the Code of Behaviour. (At the discretion of the Principal.)
- 3.6. *Ashbourne CNS* affirms that all suspensions must be notified to the Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS*.
- 3.7. *Ashbourne CNS* affirms that the Education Welfare Services of the Child and Family (Tusla) should be Informed of suspensions in the following circumstances:
- Where the period of suspension is for 6 or more consecutive school days.
 - Where the aggregate number of days on which a student has been suspended /absent in any school year is 20 or more days.
- 3.8. *Ashbourne CNS* affirms that suspension may occur after the following factors have been considered:
- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
 - The impact and context of the behaviour
 - The interventions tried to date
 - That all discipline options under the *Ashbourne CNS* Code of Behaviour have been applied and documented
 - That all actions /decisions taken are recorded and all correspondence copied.
 - Discussion has occurred with the student and parent(s) regarding the specific behaviour which the school considers unacceptable, and which may lead to suspension.
- 3.9. The Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* affirms that students attending *Ashbourne CNS* may be suspended as follows pending investigation and /or discussion with parents. The following list is not exhaustive:
- For serious misbehaviour
 - For an unacceptable level of repeated misbehaviour
 - For bullying, insulting, aggressive or violent behaviour towards others whether in person, by mobile phone or via social media or other electronic means; in the school, or when identifiable with the school
 - For the supply/possession /use of alcohol and /or illegal drugs
 - For the supply /possession /use of weapons/ hazardous materials
 - For behaviour that may be a danger to self or others
 - For racist behaviour /supply of racist behaviour/use of racist material
 - For behaviour that is contrary to the terms of the Equal Status Act 2000
 - For sexual harassment and/or the possession/supply /use of pornographic material.

- 3.10. **Ashbourne CNS** acknowledges that a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension. Such grounds may include where the continued presence of the student in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety or welfare of students, staff of the school or any other person.
- 3.11. A student may be suspended during a state examination and such suspension should normally be approved by the Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS**. This type of suspension should only be used where there is:
- A threat to good order in the conduct of the examination
 - A threat to the safety or welfare of other students and personnel
 - A threat to the right of the other students to do their exam in a calm atmosphere.
- 3.12. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** may decide as part of the school's policy on sanctions and following consultation process with the Principal, parents, teachers and students, that particular named behaviour incur suspension as a sanction. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures in each case.

4. Inappropriate use of Suspension

- Rolling suspension. A student should not be suspended again shortly after they return to **Ashbourne CNS** unless they engage in serious misbehaviour that warrants suspension, that fair procedures are observed in full and the standard applied to judging the behaviour is the same as that standard applied to the behaviour of any other student.
- Informal / unacknowledged suspension. Exclusion of a student for part of the school day as a sanction is a suspension.
- Open-ended suspension. Students should not be suspended for an indefinite period. Any such suspension would be regarded as a de- facto expulsion.

5. Procedures in respect of Suspension.

- 5.1. Louth and Meath ETB affirms that **Ashbourne CNS** is required to follow fair procedures when proposing to suspend a student. The school should observe the following procedures

- The student and parent(s) should be informed about the complaint
- The student and parent(s) should be given the opportunity to respond
- In the case of 'immediate' suspension, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. Parents must be notified, and arrangement made for the student to be collected from the school. The school must have due regard for its duty of care for the student.

5.2. A student should not be suspended for more than 3 days except in exceptional circumstances. Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* should provide guidance to the Principal concerning the kinds of circumstances under which suspensions of longer than 3 days might be approved. If a suspension of longer than 3 days is being proposed the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval. However Louth and Meath ETB recognises that the Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* may wish to authorise the Principal, with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management, to impose a suspension of up to 5 days in circumstances where a meeting of the Board cannot be convened in a timely fashion. Such authorisation must be recorded in the minutes of meeting of the Board of Management and reviewed on an annual basis.

5.3. Louth and Meath ETB affirms the Boards of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* should formally review any proposal to suspend a student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to 20 days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

6. Implementing the suspension

6.1. The Principal of *Ashbourne CNS* should notify the Parent(s) and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter will confirm:

- The period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end.
- The reasons for the suspension.
- Any study programme to be followed.
- The arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents.
- The provision for an appeal to the Department of Education, in the case of a suspension which would bring the days suspended in one academic year over 20 days.

- 6.2. In the case where Parents do not agree to meet with the Principal, Louth and Meath ETB confirms that written notice will serve as notice to impose a suspension.
- 6.3. A suspension may be removed if the Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** decides to remove the suspension for any reason.

7. Section 29 Appeal against Suspension

- 7.1. Where the total number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year reaches 20 days, the parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the suspension under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 to the Minister for Education.
- 7.2. An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.
- 7.3. An appeal must be made within **42 calendar days** from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.
- 7.4. Appeals must be made in writing on the Section 29 Appeal Form and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website www.education.ie.

8. Expulsion

- 8.1. Louth and Meath ETB has the authority to expel a student. This authority may be delegated under Section 44 (11(a)) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 by Louth and Meath ETB to the Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS**.

- 8.2. Expulsion should be a proportionate response to the student's behaviour. Ashbourne CNS acknowledges that expulsion of a student is a very serious step and one that should only be taken by the

Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** in extreme cases of unacceptable behaviour.

- 8.3. The Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** affirms that **Ashbourne CNS** needs to have taken significant steps to address the misbehaviour and to avoid expulsion.

Such measures may include:

- Meeting with parents and students to try and find ways of helping the student to change their behaviour.
- Making sure that the student understands the possible consequences of their behaviour should it persist
 - Ensuring that all possible options have been tried.
- Seeking the assistance of relevant support agencies, e.g. Child and Family Agency (Tusla) Education Welfare Services, HSE Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. National Behavioural Support Service JLO, NEPS, NCSE.

- 8.4. A proposal to expel a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- 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 the safety and welfare of others.
 - The student is responsible for serious damage to property.

- 8.5. Before expulsion is considered, school authorities must satisfy themselves that all possibilities have been exhausted for changing the student's behaviour.

- 8.6. 'Automatic Expulsion'

The Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** may decide in consultation with the Principal, parents, teachers and students that particular named behaviours would result in 'Automatic' expulsion. This does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedure.

- 8.7. Expulsion for first or once-off offence

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management of **Ashbourne CNS** decides that a student should be expelled for a first offence. The kinds of behaviour that might result in a proposal to expel on the basis of a single breach of the Code of Behaviour could include:

- A serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff
 - Actual violence or physical assault
 - Supplying illegal drugs to students in the school
 - Sexual assault

9. Factors to Consider before proposing to expel a student

9.1. The Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* should take the following factors into consideration before considering expelling a student:

- The nature and seriousness of the behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The impact of the behaviour
- The interventions already tried to change the student's behaviour
- Whether expulsion is a proportionate response
- The possible impact of expulsion

9.2. Expulsion would not be appropriate for the following:

- Poor academic performance
- Poor attendance or lateness
- Minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour

However, any behaviour that is persistently disruptive to learning or dangerous can be a serious matter. Behaviour must be examined in context to understand both the behaviour itself and the response or sanction that is most appropriate.

10. Procedures in respect of expulsion

10.1. A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal. The Principal should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the investigation.

10.2. The Principal should inform the student and his/her parents about the specific details of the alleged breach of behaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion. The Principal must ensure that the student and parents are given every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious misbehaviour. The Principal should communicate this in writing to ensure that parents have a permanent record of having been informed.

10.3. A meeting should be arranged between the student and their parents and the Principal of *Ashbourne CNS* before a sanction is imposed.

10.4. Should a student and their parent(s) fail to attend a meeting the Principal should write advising:

- the seriousness of the matter
- the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting

- Failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the inappropriate behaviour
 - Record all correspondence
- 10.5. Where the Principal of *Ashbourne CNS* forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board to consider expulsion.
- 10.6. The Principal should:
- Inform the student and parents in writing that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
 - Ensure that parents have written records of (a) the allegation, (b) the investigation, (c) written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion.
 - Provide the Board with the same comprehensive records as are given to the student and the parents.
 - Notify the parents in good time of the date of the hearing with the Board of management and invite them to that hearing.
 - Advise the parents that they can make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management.
 - Ensure parents are given enough notice to allow them to prepare for the meeting.
- 10.7. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* to review the initial investigation and satisfy itself that the investigation was properly conducted in line with fair procedures.
- 10.8. The Board of Management should undertake its own review of documentation and all circumstances of the case.
- 10.9. The Board of Management should ensure that no party who has had any involvement with the circumstances of the case is part of the Board's deliberations.
- 10.10. Where the Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* decides to expel a student it must hold a hearing and this meeting should be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures.
- 10.11. Parents may be accompanied at the Board hearing but, as this is a lay forum; legal representation is not the normal practice, however it may be allowed due to the potentially serious consequences for the student. The Board Secretary should be informed in writing who shall be attending this meeting at least two days prior to the meeting taking place.
- 10.12. At the start of the meeting the Chairperson shall enquire whether any member

has an objective bias in respect of the matter being considered by the Board.
Where the Board is satisfied that an

objective bias exists, the member(s) involved shall withdraw from the meeting.

- 10.13. At the hearing the Principal and the parents, or a student aged 18 or over, put their case to the Board in each other's presence and will be available to answer questions from Board Members. Each party should be allowed question the evidence of the other party. Questions should be directed through the Chairperson at the end of each presentation.
- 10.14. Once the Principal and the Parents have made their cases, they will withdraw from the meeting.
- 10.15. Should the Board require the professional advice of the Principal, the Principal may be invited to return to the meeting briefly for that purpose. While the Principal is present, there will be no discussion on the merits of the particular case being considered.
- 10.16. In the conduct of the hearing the Board must take care to ensure they are and are seen to be impartial as between the Principal and the student. Parents may wish to be accompanied at hearings and the Board should facilitate this in line with good practice and Board procedures.
- 10.17. When both sides have been heard the Board should ensure that the Principal and Parents are not present for the Board's deliberations.
- 10.18. In hearing and considering a proposed expulsion the Board shall have regard to:
 - (a) the nature, scale and persistence of any behaviour alleged to have given rise to, or contributed to, the decision made by or on behalf of the Board,
 - (b) the reasonableness of any efforts made by the school to enable the student to whom the appeal relates (the 'student concerned') to participate in and benefit from education,
 - (c) the educational interests of the student concerned and the desirability of enabling the student as far as practicable to participate in and benefit from education with his or her peers,
 - (d) the educational interests of, and the effective provision of education for, other students of the school and the maintenance of a classroom and school environment which is supportive of learning among the students of the school and ensures continuity of instruction provided to students in any classroom concerned and the school,
 - (e) the safety, health and welfare of teachers, students and staff of the school,
 - (f) the code of behaviour under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act of 2000 and other relevant policies of the school and —
 - (i) in the case of that code of behaviour, the extent to which it is in compliance with that section 23 and any guidelines issued under subsection (3) of that section, and

- (ii) in the case of those other policies, the extent to which each of them is implemented, promotes equality of access to and participation in education and is in compliance with —
- (I) any enactment that imposes duties on schools or their boards,
 - (II) any relevant guidelines or policies of the Minister,
- (g) the duties on schools or their boards imposed by or under any enactment,
- (h) guidelines issued pursuant to section 22(7) of the Act of 2000, and
- (i) such other matters as the Board considers relevant.

11. Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing

- 11.1. Having heard from all the parties involved it is the responsibility of the Board to decide whether or not the allegation is substantiated and if expulsion is the appropriate sanction.
- 11.2. When the Board of Management having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the student should be expelled, the Board must notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing of its opinion and the reasons for this opinion pursuant to section 24(91) of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Board should refer to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) Education Welfare Services reporting procedures for proposed expulsions.
- 11.3. The student cannot be expelled before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the EWO receives this written notification.
- 11.4. The Board of Management should inform the parents in writing about its conclusions and where expulsion is proposed the parents should be informed that the Board of Management will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

12. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer

- 12.1. Within 20 days of receipt of a notification from a Board of Management the EWO will make all reasonable attempts to hold individual consultations with the Principal, the parent and the student. The EWO

will convene a meeting of those parties. These consultations will focus on alternative educational arrangements for the student.

- 12.2. Pending the consultations in 12.1 the Board of Management may consider it appropriate to suspend a student during this time. This should only be considered where the continued presence of the student during this time would seriously disrupt the learning of others or represent a risk to the safety and health of students or staff.

13. Confirmation of the decision to expel

- 13.1. When the 20 day period following notice to the EWO has elapsed and the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management should formally confirm the decision to expel. The Board of Management may delegate authority to the Chairperson and Secretary to review this decision of expulsion after the twenty days has expired.
- 13.2. Parents should be notified immediately that the expulsion will now proceed. Parents and the student must be informed of their right to appeal to the Minister for Education.

14. Section 29 Appeal against Expulsion

- 14.1. The parent(s) or a student aged over 18 years, may appeal the expulsion under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.
- 14.2. Parents and the student should be informed about their right to appeal to the Minister for Education.
- 14.3. An appeal may be made by the parent of the student concerned, or by the student concerned where the student has reached the age of 18 years. In accordance with section 26 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) may appoint a person, independent of that Agency, to appeal a decision of a board of management or person acting on behalf of the board of management to permanently exclude a student from a school.
- 14.4. An appeal must be made within **42 calendar days** from the date of the decision of the board of management or a person acting on behalf of the board of management.

- 14.5. Appeals must be made in writing on the **Section 29 Appeal Form** and submitted to the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit which has been established within the Department of Education to provide

administrative support to enable appeals committees perform their functions. The Section 29 Appeal Form may be downloaded from the Department's website or obtained directly from the Section 29 Appeals Administration Unit. Contact details for the Unit are available on the Department's website www.education.ie.

15. Review of use of Expulsion

15.1. The Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* should review the use of expulsion in the school at regular intervals.

16. Implementation and Review of Policy

16.1. The Principal and Board of Management of *Ashbourne CNS* will be responsible for the implementation of this policy.

16.2. This policy shall be reviewed periodically, in light of emerging legislation and circulated Guidelines from the Department of Education from its official adoption by the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board and *Ashbourne CNS* Board of Management.

This policy was reviewed and adopted by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board on 15 November 2018 for incorporation into school's Codes of Behaviour.

This policy was reviewed in November 2020 in light of commencement of changes to the Section 29 Appeals procedures under the Education (Admission to schools) Act 2018.

This policy was ratified by the *Ashbourne CNS* Board of Management on
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1. Definitions under the Education Act, 1998

“parent” includes a foster parent, a guardian appointed under the Guardianship of Children Acts, 1964 to 1997, or other person acting in *loco parentis* who has a child in his or her care subject to any statutory power or order of a court and, in the case of a child who has been adopted under the Adoption Acts, 1952 to 1998, or, where the child has been adopted outside the State, means the adopter or adopters or the surviving adopter;

“Principal” means a person appointed under *section 23*;

“school” means an establishment which—

(a) provides primary education to its students and which may also provide early childhood education, or

(b) provides post-primary education to its students and which may also provide courses in adult, continuing or vocational education or vocational training, but does not include a school or institution established in accordance with the Children Acts, 1908 to 1989, or a school or institution established or maintained by a health board in accordance with the Health Acts, 1947 to 1996, or the Child Care Act, 1991;

“student”, in relation to a school, means a person enrolled at the school and in relation to a centre for education, means a person registered as a student in that centre;