

Code of Positive Behaviour

May 2016

This Code of Positive Behaviour has been developed in accordance with the NEWB (National Educational Welfare Board) guidelines "Developing a code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools", and the Education Welfare Act, Section 23, which states that the code of Behaviour shall specify "the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school". This Code is also informed by the "A Blueprint for an Educate Together Second-level School", the "The Ethical Curriculum Framework" and the "Education, Training and Youth Services Strategy 2015 – 2020".

Code of Positive Behaviour

Introduction

Clonturk Community College promotes a happy and caring school environment where students are encouraged and supported to reach their full potential. The learning environment in Clonturk Community College will be a positive one with a strong emphasis on the promotion and reward of positive behaviours. Our school will provide a caring and safe environment for our students where the values of respect, fairness, kindness, self-discipline and hard-work will be expected from all of us.

The Code of Positive Behaviour supports the school community to work together to encourage good conduct and to create an atmosphere which is conducive to teaching and learning.

The Code of Positive Behaviour is committed to:

- Creating a safe, secure learning environment for students by promoting a sense of mutual respect among all members of the college community and a sense of pride in our school, where differences and similarities are embraced.
- Recognising and respecting the potential of each individual: spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical.
- Encouraging students to take personal responsibility for their learning, development and behaviour and outlining ways in which this is acknowledged.
- Helping our young people to mature into responsible participating citizens.
- Having effective procedures in place which will allow for the day-to-day running of the college and which meet the demands of current legislation.
- Acknowledging that everyone has a shared responsibility in the continued growth and development of Clonturk Community College.
- Outlining the strategies to be used to prevent behaviour that falls short of expectations and outlining the structure of fair, consistent and agreed sanctions that will be used in response.
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

Students of Clonturk Community College are responsible for adhering to high standards of behaviour at all times while on school property, while travelling to and from school and while participating in any school-related activity. In return they will benefit from the caring and supportive environment throughout their educational journey with us. Set out below are responsibilities of each student. As an integral part of our community parents play an active and supportive role in ensuring students understand and meet their responsibilities as well as celebrating their achievements.

Responsibility 1: Attendance:

- Students need to attend school every day unless the absence is unavoidable. Attendances at school promotes a positive environment for learning and personal development. Full attendance enhances each student's ability to achieve his/her full potential and to benefit from all college activities and support initiatives.
- If a student does miss a day parents are obliged to write a note, in the school journal, explaining the reason for absence (Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 18). The principal is obliged to report, in writing, any student who misses 20 days or more within one school year.
- Students are not permitted to leave the college grounds during school hours without permission. Any student who wishes to leave the school early must provide a written note and must sign out at the school office in the presence of their parent/guardian.

Responsibility 2: Punctuality

- Students need to arrive to school and classes on time every day. In addition to being essential for the efficient running of the school, learning to be punctual is an essential life skill and is expected in the workplace. Late-coming is inconvenient for all members of the school community. If a student is unavoidably late he/she must furnish a note from our parent/guardian and sign in at the school office.

Responsibility 3: Be respectful to ourselves, others and our school environment:

- treat other students and staff with good manners and respect
 - don't interrupt others
 - take turns
 - Say hello, smile or wave when you meet someone
- be polite and considerate of others
 - always listen to others
 - tidy up after yourselves
 - hold the door for others
 - be respectful in your tone and language with others
- follow the instructions of staff members

- do not engage in bullying behaviour, abide by the Anti-Bullying Policy
- don't push or shove your way around the corridors
- respect your own and other people's property
- don't damage school property
- remember that snacking is allowed within the school building only at specified times and in specified areas
- remember that chewing gum and spitting is forbidden in the school building and grounds
- use the litter bins and recycle
- be aware that harassment of all teaching, learning support and ancillary staff is expressly forbidden both inside and outside the school

Responsibility 4: Make the best effort you can:

- do your best at all times
- complete all assigned homework by the due date
- listen to your teachers
- have all the equipment that you need for each class, including the journal, each day
- don't disturb the class
- do not go to the toilets/lockers between classes without the teacher's permission
- Keep classrooms clean and tidy.

Responsibility 5: Behave well in all aspects of school life; including trips and extra-curricular activities

- do not loiter in toilets or out-of-bound areas during the breaks or at any other times
- take your break in the manner and area specified and obey the instructions of the teachers on duty
- all phones and other devices are switched off during the school day unless it is necessary to turn them on and permission is sought. Important calls must be made in the designated area after permission has been given
- smoking / vaping is not permitted

- do not bring prohibited substances such as aerosols, sprays, correction fluid, permanent markers, cigarettes, lighters, matches, alcohol, illegal drugs or any substance that may be abused to school
- never come to school under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs

Responsibility 6: School Journal:

- Each student needs to buy a school journal at the beginning of the school year. The school journal is an important tool in terms of communication with the teacher and parents. The journal must be treated with respect and every student must have it in class every day. Students are responsible for keeping their journal neat and tidy at all times. Parents/guardians are asked to sign the journal at the end of each week.

Responsibility 7: To Comply with all school policies and expectations:

- Dress Code
- Acceptable Usage Policy (iPad and ICT)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Other school policies.

All policies are available on the school website.

Rewards, Interventions and Sanctions

The quality of relationships is one of the most powerful influences on student behaviour and achievement. Here in Clonturk Community College, we aim to foster mutually respectful relationships, balancing warmth and empathy with objectivity, professionalism and fairness. The quality of daily interactions both inside and outside the classroom is central to our efforts to promote good behaviour. In addition, we recognise the importance to reward students who make a positive contribution to school life.

Rewards:

Every effort is made to reward positive behaviour, achievement and effort in a number of ways:

- positive verbal comments by teachers
- praise for effort, participation or achievement in class
- a positive note in the student's journal
- recognition of student achievements in the college newsletter
- merit awards
- displays of student work
- reward schemes e.g. Student of the Week, Class of the Month, Hardest Worker, Most Improved Worker, Spirit Award
- certificate and photo of Student of the Month put on display
- display of team photos
- representing school at various activities and events
- progress reports to parents
- assessment reports at Christmas and June
- postcard sent home of student's positive achievement
- annual student awards ceremonies e.g. annual attendance award
- end-of-term fun day/party
- selection as mentor for School Mentor Programme

Sanctions:

Clonturk Community College adopts a restorative approach to discipline, sanctions will be appropriate to the misdemeanour in so far as possible. We recognise that students may fall short of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour on occasion and a system of sanctions is in place. The aim of any sanction is firstly, to bring about a change in behaviour. The sanction may also signal to other students and staff that their well-being is being protected. Sanctions may include:

- reasoning with the student
- reprimand, including advice on how to improve
- move place in class
- note in school journal
- extra work/homework given to make up for time lost
- note to parent/guardian
- short 'reflection opportunity' for a period during the lunch break
- after-school 'reflection opportunity'. Parents are notified in advance. Failure to attend a reflection opportunity without an acceptable reason is deemed to be a serious breach of the Code of Positive Behaviour and may lead to a more serious sanction, including suspension.
- meeting with tutor/principal to decide an appropriate sanction
- an agreed improvement plan
- withdrawal of privileges
- daily report
- being asked to carry out a useful task in the school in the students free time
- meeting with parent/guardian to outline difficulties and to discuss strategies for improvement
- in-house suspension
- external suspension (See Policy on Suspension and Exclusion)

Conflict Resolution:

We take a restorative approach towards resolving conflict. Within our restorative practice framework the emphasis is upon restoring relationships rather than on exacting punishments. We recognise that there are three distinct approaches to resolving conflict:

1. Use restorative questions:

To respond to challenging behaviour:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

To help those harmed by others actions:

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

2. Negotiation:

The students are taught the skills needed to negotiate with others in times of conflict. We teach the students to clearly and directly communicate if another student or a member of staff is behaving in a way that is upsetting them.

The students are encouraged to say 'Stop' if someone is teasing them or annoying them in any way.

We see this assertive communication as a very important step in each child's personal development. Through our SPHE programme students are asked to take four steps if they find themselves in a conflict situation. (i.e. Stop, Ask, Listen, Talk) We also discuss conflict resolution in our Ethical Education lessons.

3. Mediation:

Mediation is regularly used to help students resolve conflict. The mediator helps the students in a dispute to resolve their differences amicably and aims to create 'win-win' solutions. Mediators encourage the students to communicate their feelings and to give an account of what has happened. In the mediation process students are encouraged to listen and to understand the situation from both sides.

Mediators must be impartial and as non-judgemental as possible.

It is hoped to also train some student as peer mediators in the future.

4. Arbitration:

Unfortunately, not all conflicts are resolved through negotiation and mediation. Sometimes conflicts are resolved through arbitration where the teacher or principal intervenes and decides whether sanctions are necessary to end a conflict.

Roles / Responsibilities of Teaching Staff and School Management

Teachers and management will endeavour to maintain a consistent and fair approach to supporting positive behaviour by:

- Fostering mutually respectful relationships between students, parents/guardians and all staff on the college campus.
- Rewarding positive behaviour and learning achievements/effort and general progress.
- Following and adopting clearly defined procedures/sanctions in a restorative, fair and helpful manner.
- Implementing appropriate teaching strategies and mixed methodologies to enable all students to achieve their potential.
- Supporting students through an effective pastoral care system and through the 'Social, Personal and Health Education' programme.
- Offering support through guidance and psychological support services.

Roles and Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians and teachers are the significant adults in the lives of the young people at school. Parents/Guardians will encourage positive student behaviour by:

Fostering mutually respectful relationships between students, parents/guardians and all staff on the college campus.

Supporting the school in its high expectations of positive behaviour and high standards of personal achievement and by encouraging and supporting their children's progress.

Informing the school of concerns which may affect the child's progress.

Providing feedback to the school in relation to policies.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students

Students are the centre of the school community. They are responsible for their own behaviour and engage in responsible and positive behaviour by:

- Respecting each other, the college staff and any visitors to the college
- Creating a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom.
- Working to the best of their ability to achieve the best possible education.
- Acting in a safe manner and considering the safety of others
- Showing respect for other people's property and the school environment.
- Supporting the Student Council and all student committees and groups in their role as a voice for the students.
- Raising issues which concern you with the appropriate person.

This code is not exhaustive and the Principal may on occasion need to take a decision based on best practice for the good of other students and staff and the school. The parents/guardians and the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed in the event of such an occurrence.

Criteria for Success

We will recognise that this Code is effective if;

It encourages good conduct throughout the college and fosters an atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning.

It promotes respect, teamwork and the pursuit of excellence.

It promotes a happy and caring school environment

It is understood and accepted by the school community.

Review and Evaluation

This Code of Positive Behaviour will be reviewed on an on-going basis and may be amended following consultation with the school community.

Ratification:

Ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____ Chairperson