



Relationships & Behaviour Policy

1. General

- 1.1 Newpark has a Christian tradition reflecting its origin within the Protestant community and is under the patronage of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin (see Ethos Statement and Admission Policy).
- 1.2 Newpark considers itself a pluralist community; it embraces inclusion in terms of social, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity.
- 1.3 Newpark is a co-educational comprehensive school with a broad curriculum, which aims to meet the diverse range of academic, vocational, spiritual and social needs of its students.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Newpark believes that its Relationship & Behaviour Policy should be framed in such a way as to encourage co-operation and interdependence. An essential element of this is good open communication between the partners. The school believes that such an approach will be beneficial for students, teachers, parents/ guardians and the Board of Management alike.
- 2.2 The aims of this policy are:
 - The efficient operation of the school in a manner which enables the school's overall aims/ethos to be realised.
 - To encourage respect for each individual and for the school environment
 - The fostering of self-discipline in students, their training in positive behaviour patterns which are based on consideration, respect and tolerance towards others.
 - The development of interpersonal skills, which will help students to work co-operatively, give them the ability to solve problems, develop relationships and resolve conflict appropriately.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers and Management

- 3.1 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 school campus
- Promoting positive behaviour and acknowledging learning achievements, progress and effort
- Following clearly defined procedures
- Adopting constructive, effective and fair consequences
- Implementing appropriate teaching strategies to enable all students to achieve their potential
- Providing support through the pastoral system and the SPHE and Life Skills programmes
- Encouraging student involvement in the extracurricular life of the school.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians

4.1 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 school campus
- Supporting the school in its high expectations of positive behaviour and high standards of achievement (see homework journal guidelines)
- Encouraging and supporting their children's progress
- Informing the school of concerns which may affect the child's progress.
- Providing feedback through the Parent Teacher Association on how policies and practices might be more effective.
- Providing notes for absences etc.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of Students

5.1 You, the students, are at the centre of the school community. You are responsible for your own behaviour and will engage in positive behaviour by:

- Respecting others as you would wish to be respected
- Creating a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom
- Working to obtain the best education for yourself and others
- Always acting in a safe manner
- Showing respect for other people's property and the school environment
- Supporting the Student Council in its role as a voice for students
- Raising issues which concern you, whether at home or in school, with an appropriate person.

6. Promoting Positive Behaviour

6.1 It is recognised that it is important to acknowledge students who make a positive contribution in the classroom and to school life in general. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Merit/Distinction System (First to Third Year)
- Positive comment in homework journal
- Contact with home via email, phone call, letter or postcard
- Recognition at assemblies and in school publications
- Encouragement of student involvement in the assemblies
- Presentation of prizes at assemblies
- Delegation of responsibility to students
- Encouragement of staff and parental involvement in the Relationships and Behaviour Policy

6.2 Respect for persons and property, the need for order and the promotion of positive behaviour are the underlying principles for the list of rules. All students upon admission to the school agree to abide by the Positive Behaviour Policy. This Policy and the Intervention Procedure (see pages 10 & 11) are brought to the attention of teachers and students at the start of each academic year.

6.3 The Board of Management is responsible for the implementation of the Positive Behaviour Policy. Overall responsibility for behaviour and discipline within the school rests with the Principal and Deputy Principals. Year Leaders monitor the behaviour of students in their respective year groups. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within their classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. Through the implementation of this policy students are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour.

7. Interventions

7.1 The following strategies may be used in response to inappropriate behaviour:

- Restorative approach which focuses on building and repairing relationships. The process includes restorative inquiry and language, restorative discussion, mediation and problem-solving circles
- Communication with parents via the Homework Journal/VSware
- Direct contact with parents/guardians by phone
- Warning and advice on how to change behaviour
- Revision of seating plan
- Move place in class
- Loss/Withdrawal of privilege
- Misdemeanour (MD) posted on VSware with sanction. 24 hours' notice must be issued for after school detention.

7.2 The Behaviour Intervention Procedure (see student journal) will be applied as a ladder of increasingly serious intervention. Strategies used may include:

- Daily Report
- Formal Assessment
- Behaviour Management Plan
- Suspension
- Implementation of exclusion procedures

7.3 The following is a summary of the suspension and exclusion procedures. For further detail please refer to the school Policy on Suspension and Exclusion. As required under the Education Welfare Act 2000 Section 23 (2) the following procedures will apply in the case of suspension. The Principal and/or the Deputy Principal can suspend students from school for a serious breach of discipline or in circumstances of continuous failure to conform to school rules (See Positive Behaviour Intervention Procedure pages 10 & 11). Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of this decision. In the case of an immediate suspension parents will be notified and arrangements made for the student to be collected. The suspension will be a matter of record and notified to the Board of Management. The Principal or Deputy Principal will contact or meet the parents/guardians of any suspended student and may recommend referral to the appropriate support agencies and/or the signing of an agreement. The student will report to the Principal, Deputy Principal or Year Leader upon their return to school.

7.4 The Board of Management has the authority to expel a student. Expulsion may be recommended to the Board when the student and his/her representative fail to convince the Principal of their resolve to conform to the school rules or when the breach of discipline is so grave that the Principal considers it in the best interests of the staff and fellow students that the right to attend be permanently withdrawn. The Board of Management shall make the final decision in relation to the permanent exclusion of a student from the school.

7.5 The Board of Management will consider the Principal's recommendation. The Board will hold a hearing if it decides to consider expelling the student. If the Board, having considered all the facts, is of the opinion that the student should be excluded then, the Board will notify the National Education Welfare Board and the parents/guardians in writing. Parents and students will be informed of the right to appeal under the *Education Act 1998 section 29* and supplied with the standard form.

8 Absences

8.1 The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, Section 18, requires parents to notify the school of the reason for a student's absence. The VSware app is used to record

lates and absences. Please refer to <https://support.vsware.ie/submit-an-absence-request> on how to submit a planned or unexpected absence via app. For a partial day's absence from school, a note should be written in the school journal. Students must sign in late or sign out early via the library. In the event of any absence the parent/guardian will be sent a text by the school.

- 8.2 Section 21 (4) of the Act requires the Principal to inform an Educational Welfare Officer in writing if the aggregate number of days on which a student is absent during a school year is 20 or more. The Principal is also authorised to notify an Educational Welfare Officer if, in the opinion of the Principal, a student “is not attending regularly”.
- 8.3 The school will acknowledge students who have good attendance records as required by section 22 (2) of the Act.

9. Related policies

- 9.1 Teachers, parents/guardians and students should be aware of the content of the policies listed below. Copies are available from the school office or can be found on the school website - www.newparkschool.ie. *Dress Code, Anti-Bullying, Substance Use, School Trips, Suspension and Exclusion, Mobile Phone Usage.*

Appendix 1 School Rules

1. Classroom

- 1.1 Allow your teachers to teach and your fellow students to learn.
- 1.2 Contribute to a positive educational atmosphere in the classroom.
- 1.3 Bring all necessary equipment and materials to class.
- 1.4 Complete homework (your own work) on time and to the best of your ability.
- 1.5 Students must follow all rules related to property, as outlined in section 4, below.

2. Dress Code

- 2.1 Follow the dress code regulations, as laid out in the *Dress Code Policy*, available on the school website.

3. Safety, Health and Welfare

- 3.1 School is a place of safety for all. The safety, health and welfare of all members of the school community must be considered by all, at all times.
- 3.2 All forms of bullying are unacceptable and should be reported to a member of staff (see *Anti-Bullying Policy*).
- 3.3 It is illegal to smoke within the school or its grounds. Smoking or vaping is forbidden anywhere on campus and in areas close to the school (including the shops and surrounding residential areas) or while representing the school on any activity. Students should not be in possession of cigarettes, vaping devices or other smoking paraphernalia on or anywhere near the campus. The consequence for smoking or vaping is a two-day suspension followed by a four-day suspension for any subsequent use.
- 3.4 Any involvement with or possession of alcohol, harmful substances or illegal drugs on school grounds or on any school activity is forbidden. Please refer to the *Substance Use Policy* for more information.
- 3.5 Possession of dangerous objects/substances or offensive weapons is forbidden.
- 3.6 Behave in a responsible, polite and appropriate manner while moving around the school environment.
- 3.7 A high standard of behaviour is expected while travelling to and from school and while waiting at bus stops and DART stations.
- 3.8 Do not delay or drop litter in the vicinity of the shops or in surrounding residential areas.
- 3.9 Students who drive to school (e.g., car, motorbike) are subject to the *Student Cars and Motorbikes Policy*.
- 3.10 Dismount from bicycles, scooters and skateboards, etc. when on the school grounds.
- 3.11 Hot food must be consumed in the GPA or outside.

4. Property

- 4.1 Respect all property.
- 4.2 Any damage to furniture or fittings, e.g., graffiti may have to be paid for by those responsible.
- 4.3 Keep the school environment safe and tidy. Take care not to leave any litter in classrooms, school buildings, school grounds or elsewhere.
- 4.4 Charging of mobile phones is not permitted.
- 4.5 Chewing gum is forbidden within the school environment.
- 4.6 The school cannot be held responsible for lost property. Personal belongings should be clearly labelled.
- 4.7 Certain areas of the school are out of bounds i.e., green areas around the hockey pitch, the biodiversity garden (unless supervised by a member of staff), the areas to the rear of the Sports complex and to the rear of the Academy of Music.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

- 5.1 Attend school each day.
- 5.2 Students in 6th year can leave school during break and lunch.
- 5.3 Attend all timetabled classes. Permission to leave school early should be requested in writing by the parent/guardian and signed by the form teacher. Students are not permitted to write their own notes.
- 5.4 Punctuality is essential at all times. Students who arrive after registration go directly to the library. Students arriving after 9.30am must get their late slip signed by the Deputy Principal.

6. Internet Access – See Also *Acceptable Use Policy*

- 6.1 We provide every student with a school email and office 365 account. The account is provided and can be monitored by the IT administrators. Students will have the ability to use the Office 365 suite of apps in school as well as at home. These are to be used for school purposes only and should not be used for personal use. All email, office 365 and device use will fall under Newpark's Acceptable Use Policy, Relationships and Behavioural Policy and Anti-Bullying policy.
- 6.2 Downloading any software, either to the C drive or any removable drive (e.g., a USB key) is not permitted.
- 6.3 USB keys or any other ICT external storage device may not be used in the designated computer rooms (T7, T8, G13 and M9) or on any school devices.
- 6.4 If a student unexpectedly comes upon any inappropriate, illegal and /or harmful images and /or text, whether violent, hate-based, or of a sexual nature, the supervising teacher must be told immediately. Under no circumstances should such material be revisited, shared or downloaded; any attempt to do so will result in disciplinary procedures.

- 6.5 The platform used for online learning is Microsoft Teams. Students log in via computer using their Office365 address and they will have access to their class groups where teachers can post assignments and students can upload their work and receive feedback. There is also a collaboration space which allows students to communicate with their classmates. It is in this space that group work can take place and students can ask their peers questions about schoolwork. This platform is for **school related conversation only** and it is **not a space for social media activity**. For reference, see section 6 above - 'Internet Access'. Students are expected to follow these rules at home when using Microsoft Teams and when communicating using their school 365 account. Any inappropriate communication will result in disciplinary procedures.

9. Student and Parent/Guardian Declaration

All students and parents/guardians have declared that they have read, understand and accept the Relationships and Behaviour Policy within section 6 of *the Application Form for Admission* to the School.

By enrolling as a student in the School, all students and their parents/guardians agree to abide by the Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

This policy was reviewed in the 2022/2023 academic year and will be reviewed again as required, in line with changing information, guidelines, legislation and/or feedback from school stakeholders.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management, Newpark Comprehensive School at its meeting on 21st June 2023.