



Managing Behaviour Policy

Afterschool Childcare Service (Primary School Children)

1. Policy Statement

The Afterschool Childcare Service is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where all children feel valued and supported.

The service promotes positive behaviour, cooperation and mutual respect through clear expectations, consistent boundaries and supportive guidance. Behaviour is managed in a manner that protects the dignity, safety and wellbeing of each child. Staff recognise that behaviour is influenced by a child's age, stage of development, individual needs and circumstances. Behaviour will therefore be supported using developmentally appropriate approaches that help children build social, emotional and problem-solving skills.

This policy is implemented in accordance with guidance from Tusla – Child and Family Agency and relevant Irish legislation including the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Children First Act 2015.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote positive behaviour and respectful relationships
- Provide clear expectations and rules for children attending the service
- Outline procedures for managing conflict and challenging behaviour
- Ensure behaviour is managed in a consistent and developmentally appropriate way
- Protect children from harmful or inappropriate disciplinary practices
- Provide procedures for identifying and managing bullying
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained in behaviour management

Newtownwhite Educate Together NS

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3. Expectations and Rules Within the Service

Children attending the service are supported to understand and follow simple rules that ensure everyone feels safe and included. Children are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness and respect
- Use appropriate language
- Follow instructions from staff
- Respect property, equipment and the environment
- Play safely
- Include others and avoid exclusion
- Take responsibility for their actions

Rules are explained to children in a clear and age-appropriate manner and reinforced positively by staff.

4. Promoting Positive Behaviour

Staff will promote positive behaviour by:

- Building warm and respectful relationships with children
- Acting as positive role models
- Encouraging cooperation, empathy and kindness
- Praising positive behaviour
- Providing consistent routines and expectations
- Supporting children to express feelings appropriately
- Encouraging problem-solving and communication skills

The emphasis within the service is on guidance and learning rather than punishment.

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5. Developmentally Appropriate Behaviour Support

Behaviour management strategies will reflect the child's age & stage of development.

Junior Infants – Senior Infants (Approx. 4–6 years)

Children at this stage are learning to:

- Share and take turns
- Express feelings using words
- Follow simple rules
- Manage frustration and impulses Staff will support children by:
- Using clear and simple instructions
- Modelling appropriate behaviour
- Encouraging sharing and turn-taking
- Redirecting behaviour when necessary
- Praising positive behaviour immediately
- Supporting children to identify and express emotions

1st – 2nd Class (Approx. 6–8 years)

Children at this stage begin to:

- Develop friendships and social awareness
- Understand fairness and rules
- Reflect on behaviour when supported

Staff will:

- Encourage children to resolve small disagreements
- Support respectful communication
- Guide children in identifying solutions to conflicts
- Reinforce expectations and boundaries
- Encourage empathy and cooperation

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3rd – 4th Class (Approx. 8–10 years)

Children develop increased independence and responsibility.

Staff will:

- Encourage accountability for actions
- Support conflict resolution discussions
- Promote fairness and respect
- Encourage children to repair relationships where necessary

5th – 6th Class (Approx. 10–12 years)

Older children can engage in reflective discussions about behaviour.

Staff will:

- Encourage leadership and positive role modelling
- Support respectful peer interactions
- Address social exclusion or peer conflict

6. Managing Conflict and Challenging Behaviour

Conflict between children is recognised as a normal part of development.

Staff will respond by:

- Remaining calm and respectful
- Listening to all children involved
- Helping children express their feelings
- Supporting children to resolve disagreements
- Encouraging children to consider the impact of their behaviour on others

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7. Graduated Response to Repeated Challenging Behaviour

Where behaviour occurs repeatedly, the service will apply a graduated response.

Step 1 – Reminder and Redirection

Staff remind the child of the rules and redirect them to a more appropriate activity.

Step 2 – Reflection and Discussion

Staff discuss the behaviour privately with the child and support them to reflect on their actions.

Step 3 – Incident Recording and Monitoring

Where behaviour persists or is more serious, the incident will be recorded and monitored.

Step 4 – Parent/Guardian Consultation

Parents/guardians will be informed and may be invited to discuss strategies to support the child.

Step 5 – Behaviour Support Plan

Where necessary, a Behaviour Support Plan may be developed in collaboration with parents/guardians.

8. Behaviour Support Plans and Collaboration with Schools

Some children may already have a Behaviour Support Plan or Individual Behaviour Plan in place during the school day.

Where this is the case:

- Parents/guardians will be asked to share relevant information with the Afterschool Service.
- The Behaviour Support Plan will be discussed with the afterschool staff to ensure appropriate strategies are understood.
- Where appropriate, the service will continue to implement consistent strategies during the afterschool programme.

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This collaborative approach helps ensure consistency for the child between school and the afterschool environment, supporting positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing.

All information shared will be treated confidentially and respectfully.

9. Supporting Children with Additional Needs

The service is committed to inclusive practice & recognises that some children may require additional behavioural support due to developmental or emotional needs.

Staff may support children by:

- Providing structured routines
- Giving advance notice of transitions
- Using visual supports
- Offering calm or quiet spaces
- Breaking tasks into manageable steps
- Supporting emotional regulation

The service will work collaboratively with parents/guardians to ensure appropriate supports are in place.

10. Bullying Prevention and Management

The service operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

Bullying may include:

- Physical aggression
- Verbal abuse or name calling
- Social exclusion
- Intimidation or threats
- Repeated teasing or humiliation

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Responding to Bullying If

bullying occurs:

1. Staff will intervene immediately.
2. The incident will be investigated.
3. The children involved will be supported appropriately.
4. Parents/guardians will be informed where necessary.
5. Measures will be implemented to prevent recurrence.

All incidents of bullying will be recorded and monitored.

11. Practices Not Permitted in the Service

The following practices are strictly prohibited:

- Corporal punishment of any kind
- Any practice that is degrading, humiliating or intimidating
- Emotional or physical harm to a child
- Bullying by staff or children
- Isolation of a child in a manner that may cause distress
- Restraint using unapproved methods

12. Physical Intervention

Physical intervention may only be used when necessary to:

- Prevent injury to a child
- Prevent injury to others
- Prevent serious damage to property or equipment

Physical intervention will never be used as punishment.

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13. Conditions for Physical Intervention

Where physical intervention is necessary, it must:

- Be used only as a last resort
- Involve minimal force
- Ensure no pain is inflicted on the child
- Use an approved evidence-based method
- Only be carried out by staff trained and certified in the method

Following an intervention:

- An incident report will be completed
- Parents/guardians will be informed
- The incident will be reviewed by management

14. Procedure if a Child Leaves the Service Without Authorisation If

a child leaves the service unaccompanied without permission:

1. Staff will immediately search the premises and surrounding area.
2. The Service Manager will be notified.
3. Parents/guardians will be contacted.
4. If the child cannot be located promptly, appropriate authorities may be contacted.
5. An incident report will be completed.
6. The incident will be reviewed to prevent recurrence.

The safety of the child is always the priority.

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15. Staff Training

All staff will receive training in behaviour management & positive behaviour support.

Training will ensure staff can:

- Promote positive behaviour
- Manage conflict appropriately
- Support children with challenging behaviour
- Apply behaviour management techniques safely

Training will be reviewed and updated regularly.

16. Record Keeping

Behaviour incidents will be recorded where necessary and will include:

- Date and time of incident
- Children involved
- Description of behaviour
- Actions taken by staff
- Follow-up actions

Records will be stored securely in line with data protection requirements.

Reference the 'Incident Recording Log' tab in the Data Recording Logbook

17. Working in Partnership with Parents

The Afterschool Service recognises that positive behaviour support is most effective when staff and parents work together.

The service will:

- Communicate concerns with parents/guardians
- Work collaboratively to support children
- Maintain respectful and confidential communication

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Communication with parents/guardians will be through the afterschool teacher at Collection time with any written communications sent through the Aladdin communication system.

18. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required, in line with guidance from Tusla – Child and Family Agency and any changes to legislation or best practice.

Date Adopted: 7th September 2026

Review Date: 1st September 2028

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracey Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Tracey Jones - *Manager / Service Provider*
Acting Principal of Newtownwhite ETNS