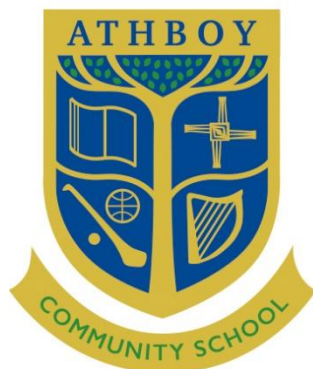


Athboy Community School



Learning Code Policy

Ratified 18 June 2025

1. Mission Statement

Athboy Community School prides itself on creating a safe, caring, creative and culturally diverse environment and on offering an innovative curriculum which challenges students to achieve their full potential.

We promote an open culture in which relationships between staff and students are prioritised.

We commend and reward positive behaviour and encourage student participation in all aspects of school life so they can flourish academically, physically, emotionally, spiritually and psychologically.

“Mol an Óige agus tiocfaidh sí”.

Our Core Values are; Care, Inclusion, Safety, Creativity and Respect.

2. Aims of the Learning Code

2.1 Aims

The Learning Code in Athboy Community School aims to ensure that positive behaviour is recognised and encouraged and to allow all students to learn and all teachers to teach without disruption.

2.2 Training on the Learning Code

Students and staff have a workshop on the Learning Code at the start of each academic year. Students who miss the session or join the year group late do the session with their year head at a later date to ensure they understand how it works. The principal/deputy principal work with new staff who miss induction or join late.

3. Expectations of Students

Our Learning Code is based on expectations aimed at encouraging students to be responsible for their own organisation and behaviour. The expectations are as follows:

1. All students should communicate positively and effectively by their words, actions and gestures with each other and with staff at all times
2. Students must attend all classes on time, bring a charged device, their journal, all necessary materials and homework to class.
3. Students are expected to participate in class to the best of their ability.
4. Students should be sustainable, dispose of rubbish appropriately, and take care of school furniture and equipment.
5. Students should follow guidelines relating to using toilets, lockers, the Yondr pouch and to banned items, eg vaping, smoking, snus, energy drinks, Tippex.
6. Students must not engage, support or encourage in bullying behaviour, ie, behaviour that is targeted, repeated and involves an imbalance of power.

3.1 In order to promote adherence to these guidelines, they have been shortened to the following version;

1. Be Respectful
2. Be Organised
3. Participate and work hard
4. Be sustainable
5. Follow guidelines on toilets, lockers, Yondrs and banned items
6. Be kind

4. Positive Behaviour Approach

All students are encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviour and staff are committed to recognising and commending the following types of behaviour:

- A. Oral contributions in class
- B. Active Listening
- C. Improvement in classwork or homework
- D. Commendable Acts of Kindness
- E. Positive school spirit
- F. Good manners
- G. Creativity in Music or Art
- H. Sustainability
- I. Taking initiative
- J. Digital Skills
- K. Sporting talent
- L. Being good with your hands
- M. Participation in extracurricular activities
- N. Quietly and diligently engaging in learning
- O. Helping other students learn
- P. Other talents, skills, achievements

5. Positive Behaviour Awards

5.1 Awards

Every student has an Assets Portfolio which records the Assets, Citations and Superlative Notes they accumulate during the school year. (*See Appendix 1*). Students can earn assets in many ways. The types of awards are as follows:

1. **Asset** - an award given in the journal recognising an achievement in class, in extra curricular activities, school events or outside of school (*See Appendix 2.*)
More than one Asset can be given by a staff member if the action/behaviour of the student warrants more than one Asset.
2. **Citation**- a major achievement given as a Citation Note in the journal for an

achievement which required preparation or training and significant effort by the student. This would normally require this additional work to be done in the student's own time. (The achievement must be equal to that which would earn 5 individual Assets).

3. **Superlative-** an outstanding award for an achievement which required a lot of preparation or training over a significant time as well as supreme effort by a student. It will require a substantial work outside of the normal school day. (Equal to 10 Assets) (*See Appendix 4*). This is an exceptional award which is nominated by teachers, assessed by the Year Head/Tutor Team and confirmed by the Senior Leadership. Then it is awarded in the journal by the teacher.

5.2 Students of the Week

Students who do very well in their Asset Portfolio win a Student of the Week Certificate which is presented at Year Head Assembly each week. When students win this award, they are not eligible to win it again for five weeks. This is to ensure that all students who do well are recognised for their efforts.

5.3 Certificates/Postcards

Student of the Week Certificates are awarded based on the number of Assets in the students' portfolios at assemblies. There is a Most Improved Student of the Month Certificate for the students who have increased their assets significantly. The class who has the best Assets Portfolios wins a prize each semester.

Teachers/SNAs may also wish to send home postcards for students who have won Assets, Citations or Superlative Notes.

5.4 Honour Roll

Students who maintain an Assets Portfolio which ranks in the top 10% of their year group secure a place on the Honour Roll which is published each semester on the Honour Roll Notice Board outside the Principal's office and on the Students Year Group Teams News Channel, in Staff and Parents weekly updates, on the school website and in the Principal's Report to the Parents Association and to the Board of Management. When a student earns their place on the Honour Roll for two consecutive semesters in the one academic year, they are not eligible to go on the Honour Roll trip the second time. They are deemed to be **honorary members** of the Honour Roll and their name remains on the Honour Roll noticeboard.

The prizes for the Honour Roll students are set out ahead of each semester, where possible, so students know what they are aiming for in terms of rewards. Students have a say in the trip/award they win.

5.5 Quantity of Assets

Staff are encouraged to give Assets consistently across all year groups. The recommended administration of Assets is between 2-5 Assets per class group on the basis of having two

classes per week with the class or between 4-10 Assets if the teacher has the group for four classes a week.

***5.6 Recognising Positive Behaviour and Attendance**

Students who have no Amber or Red Notes and whose attendance is 90% or more will earn a Citation each semester. This will be organised by the Positive Behaviour Coordinator in conjunction with the Attendance Coordinator.

Students who have 100% attendance (some mitigating factors may apply) will earn a Citation every semester. This will be organised by the Attendance Coordinator.

5.7 Recording and Accessing Assets

Staff will record Assets on VS Ware and not in the journal this year. Students will be encouraged during tutorials to go on to VS Ware and get their tally of Assets which they will write into the journal.

The tally of Assets will then be compiled by the Positive Behaviour Coordinator and provided to the year head for the purpose of awarding a Student of the Week Certificate at Assembly.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Role of the Positive Behaviour Coordinator

There is an APL postholder in the role of Positive Behaviour Coordinator who oversees the administration of Awards, Certificates and the Honour Roll. The coordinator liaises with the year heads and provides lists of Assets/Citations/Superlatives to each year head from VS Ware records each week. The coordinator organises Student of the Week and Most Improved Student of the Month Certificates based on the Asset Portfolios for presentation to students at year head assemblies each week. Students have the responsibility to maintain their Asset Portfolios summary in the journal accurately.

6.2 Role of Parents/Guardians

Parents and Guardians agree to accept and support the Learning Code of the school as a condition of enrolment. An important aspect of this acceptance and support is to sign the journal and any notes which are written by staff relating to organisational or behavioural issues. A "Guide to the Journal for Parents" page has been inserted to give parents information on where to find information in the student journal.

The Learning Code has four levels, and parents/guardians are required to attend the school for a meeting at each level in the Learning Code. These meetings are mandatory, and arrangements must be made to attend. Parents must also ensure the supports or sanctions which are put in place as part of the Learning Code are adhered to by students, eg, attendance at detention before or after school (24 hours' notice must be given to students and parents notified for after school detentions). Every attempt will be made to work with

parents/guardians in administering both supports and sanctions of the Learning Code. Non-compliance by parents/guardians with the Learning Code will result in a request to attend a meeting in school to discuss the situation and may be raised at the next Board of Management meeting.

6.3 Role of the Prefects

Each year group has a group of prefects who support them and encourage them to earn Assets. They organise activities at lunchtime or after school for the students in the year group. Prefects are permitted to give Assets to students for taking part in Prefect lunchtime activities.

6.4 Role of SNAs

SNAs can give Assets to students to incentivise progress on their particular targets or to reward students for genuine random acts of kindness or for going out of their way to be helpful.

7. Disruption of Learning

7.1 Supports for Students

Our Learning Code recognises that sometimes disruptions to learning happen in school and also that there are different types of disruption to learning. It recognises that students make mistakes, forget things and have days that are more difficult than others.

To support with organisation, we have Organisation Plans which year heads can implement for students who struggle to manage their lockers or to bring correct materials to class. We also have a Check and Connect Programme in which a small number of students have their lockers kept in the Care corridor where they get help every morning with organisation.

7.2 Note of Concern

If a student disrupts learning for the first time in a particular class, they are given a verbal warning and a written **Note of Concern** in the journal to encourage them to avoid this type of behaviour. One **Note of Concern** can be given per teacher per student **in that academic year**. This note does not count towards levels on the Learning Code. If the behaviour is repeated, an Amber or Red note may be written in the journal (*See Appendix 5*).

7.3 Amber Notes

Organisational issues sometimes cause disruptions which take up class time and stop learning. These include:

- i. Coming late to class without a note
- ii. Coming to class without books, copies, equipment
- iii. Not doing homework including learning homework
- iv. Not charging the laptop
- v. Not wearing the full uniform/tracksuit on the correct days.

These issues, when repeated, will result in an **Amber Note** being written in the journal. Students

will have to do extra work based on that subject or a brief teacher's detention during the day to make up for the disruption and will get the note signed by a parent/guardian and Year Head.

Procedures to be followed after issuing Amber Notes;

- i. Students who don't do the extra work will be given **double** the work, unless a note is provided or extenuating circumstances occur (*See Appendix 6*).
- ii. If a student does not present the work on the second occasion, the teacher should ring home and schedule a detention at break or lunchtime in which the student must do the doubled work.
- iii. The teacher should refer to the year head if the student does not show up to this detention. The Year Head will ring home and schedule a lunchtime detention.
- iv. If the student does not show up, an after-school detention will be scheduled giving 24 hours notice to parents. The student will be given every opportunity to attend the detention.
- v. If the student does not show up, a meeting with parents will be arranged.
- vi. Red Notes are not issued for organisational issues.

7.4 Red Notes

Deliberate/negative behaviours which disrupt learning in class and outside of class include:

- Talking, shouting, laughing, making noises, comments or gestures which insult any other person.
- Ignoring instructions, asking unnecessary questions, deliberately delaying doing something
- Using inappropriate language
- Taking/damaging property without permission
- Refusal to hand the journal to a member of staff
- Refusing to go to another teacher's room when instructed
- Tampering with the school journal or not having a journal in class
- Leaving class without permission or not attending class
- Vaping/Smoking
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Using a phone in school without permission

These behaviours will result in a Red Note being written in the journal. Students will be given extra work based on that subject or a brief teacher's detention during the day to make up for the disruption and will get the note signed by a parent/guardian and Year Head.

Procedures to be followed after issuing a Red Note:

- i. Students who don't do the extra work will be given double the work, unless a note is provided or extenuating circumstances occur.
- ii. If a student does not present the work on the second occasion, the teacher should ring home and schedule a detention at break or lunchtime in which the student must do the doubled

work.

- iii. The teacher should refer to the year head if the student does not show up to this detention. The Year Head will ring home and schedule a lunchtime detention.
- iv. If the student does not show up, an after school detention will be scheduled and 24 hours notice will be given. The student will be given every opportunity to attend the detention.
- v. Red Notes are not given for the same incident twice.

Some more serious behavioural incidents may need to be referred straight to the year head/deputy principal and will be dealt with by the year head/deputy principal. The staff member who witnessed the incident must write a report and provide details to the year head/deputy principal as soon as possible after the incident. Follow up actions may include a meeting with parents and more severe sanctions such as detention or suspension. (See Section 7 for Serious Incidents).

7.5 The Learning Code and School Trips

Students on Level 2 upwards will need Year Head approval to go on a school trip, particularly if there are concerns around the health and safety of a student going on a trip due to behaviour.

7.6 Levels of the Learning Code

There are four levels in the Learning Code and students progress through levels if they continuously disrupt learning despite the many supports that are put in place. Parents/Guardians are involved at every stage of the process and are invited in for meetings to discuss how best to support their child at each level.

At each level, there are clear steps to be followed by the student.

The timeframe for notes is one semester. At the end of each semester, students get to start afresh. If students have reached five (ten at Level 1) Amber or five Red Notes and have gone onto a level, they only restart at the level they are on. They do not go back a level unless they do the Buy Back option (See 5.6 b. below and see Appendix 12 for Levels of the Learning Code Poster).

7.7 Recording of Amber and Red Notes

Teachers will record Amber and Red Notes in the student journal and on VS Ware. Students must present any notes to their tutor at the next tutorial and to their parent/guardian that evening. Parents/Guardians are required to check the journal each evening, sign notes, and ensure that the student does the extra work which will be checked at the next class with that teacher.

The school will be sharing Positive Awards and sanction notes with the parents via VS Ware also. Parents/Guardians are required to sign up to both the school app (Athboy Community School App) and VS Ware (VS Ware App). Instructions on how to access both are on the *Guide to the Student Journal* page in the journal.

Levels of the Learning Code

The four levels of the Learning Code are as follows;

Level 1	
If you get...	What happens?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Amber notes + extra work and/or • 5 Red notes + extra work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 10 Reminder Notes only, student goes on Organisational Report • Learning Review Form to fill out at home • Meeting with parent/guardian • Level 1 Support Book for 5 days, signed daily by tutor and parent/guardian.
Level 2	
If you get...	What happens?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Amber notes + extra work and/or • 5 Red notes + extra work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with parent/guardian • Meeting with Learning Code team to discuss progress • Level 2 Support Book for 10 days, signed daily by Tutor and parent/guardian
Level 3	
If you get...	What happens?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Amber notes + extra work and/or • 5 Red notes + extra work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly meetings with parent/guardian to review Support Book • Level 3 Support Book for 10 days • Your file may be referred to the Board of Management • Letter of commitment to Learning Code to be signed by student/parent or guardian
Level 4	
If you get...	What happens?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Amber notes + extra work and/or • 5 Red notes + extra work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly meetings with parent/guardian to review support book. • Individual Behaviour Contract to be signed • Level 4 support book for 10 days • Your file will be brought to the Board of Management. • You may be asked to leave the school (expulsion)

a. Care Team

Students will meet with a member of the Care Team for additional support at each level.

b. The Buy Back

If a student goes four weeks without an Amber or Red Note, they can buy back one level and start afresh.

c. Year Head Note

When a student is on a Support Book, they are not given Amber or Red Notes. Instead, if they get a comment from a teacher indicating that they are deserving of an Amber Note, the Year Head may put a detention at break times. If the teacher notes that they have behaved in a way that would ordinarily warrant a Red Note, the year head may put an after-school detention in place to re-emphasise the importance of positive behaviour.

d. Detention Note

If the Year Head needs to detain a student after school, a detention Note will be issued at least 24 hours in advance so that a parent can make arrangements to collect the student, if necessary, after the detention.

8. Serious Incidents

In some cases, a serious incident may result in a student going straight to **Level 4** of the Learning Code. That decision is made by the principal. Such incidents include but are not restricted to the

following types of behaviour:

- i. Consistent refusal to co-operate with a staff member
- ii. Aggressive behaviour towards any member of the school community
- iii. A serious threat of violence towards any member of the school community
- iv. Fighting
- v. Theft
- vi. Vandalism
- vii. Bringing, having or distributing illegal substances in school or on a school trip
- viii. Bringing a weapon or anything that may be used as a weapon to school or having a weapon or anything that may be used as a weapon in school or on a school trip or while in school uniform
- ix. Bullying/cyberbullying or inappropriate use of technology of any kind which impacts negatively on any person in the school community
- x. Inappropriate/unsafe/intimidating behaviour
- xi. Behaviour which threatens the safety, security and learning environment of the school.

The outcome of these incidents may result in a suspension and/or in a report being brought to the Board of Management in a recommendation to expel. (See the Suspension & Expulsion Policies).

If a report is not brought to the Board of Management, other sanctions such as suspension, the use of a support book, loss of privileges etc... may apply.

A Report of the incident will remain on the student's file indefinitely.

9. Phone Policy

The school uses Yondr pouches for safe storage of phones in the school building and as necessary on school trips. (*See Separate phone policy*).

10. Banned Items

Health and Safety

In consideration for the health and safety of our students there is an overt ban on certain items. These items are either harmful to the health and safety of students or cause damage to the building.

Snus is a tobacco product which is consumed by placing a pouch of powdered tobacco leaves under the lip for nicotine to be absorbed. It is illegal in Ireland. However, non-tobacco based Snus has not been regulated in this country as yet. The school does not allow students to consume or be in possession of either type of Snus.

Vaping and Smoking are banned in the building and on the grounds of the school.

The sanction for using any of these items will be determined by the year head depending on the nature of the use. It may include detention in school time or after school during which time the student will undergo training on the reason for the ban on the item. Repeated incidents may result in additional sanctions.

Illegal Substances: any illegal substances which are vaped, smoked or ingested are covered in our Suspension and Expulsion Policy and the Board of Management will determine the outcome when such substances are found to have been brought, acquired, shared or

consumed in the building, on the grounds, on school trips or on the way to or from school.

Energy Drinks: There is a bill in motion called Public Health (Restriction on Sale of Stimulant drinks to Children) which will ban the sale of energy drinks to those under 18. It targets drinks containing Taurine and with more than 150mg of caffeine per litre. Mindful of the damage caused by such drinks, the school has banned all energy drinks and includes in this ban, all soft drinks also due to the high sugar content. Water is the preferred drink for all students to bring to school.

Tippex is a correction fluid used to paint over mistakes. It contains an organic solvent 1.1.1-trichloroethane which is absorbed by the lungs and passes through the blood-brain barrier and may be lethal following acute exposure.

Chewing gum causes a huge amount of damage to school furniture every day and necessitates a lot of time to remove it from under desks and benches.

10. Implementation of the Learning Code

The Positive Behaviour Team gathered data following the Learning Code pilot and small changes were made to the Code. It will be made available in student journals, in Teacher/SNA Handbooks, on the new website and on the app.

Parents/Guardians must accept the school's Learning Code as per the Admissions Act 2018 and will be asked to accept and support the implementation of the Learning Code via the school app.

The Learning Code will be reviewed each year by the Staff, Student and Parents' Positive Behaviour Teams and updated as needed.

11. Policy Review

The Learning Code will be reviewed each year and amended as needed.

A copy of this policy will be made available on our app and website when ratified. This policy was adapted by the Board of Management on

Signed:

(Chair) Date:


Signed:

(Principal) Date:

Date for next Review:

Appendix 1 - Assets Portfolio

Fill in the total number of Assets, Citation Notes and Superlative Notes awarded each week at tutorial in your Assets Portfolio below.

**Athboy Community School**

ASSET PORTFOLIOS

Semester: **Name:**

Class: **Class Tutor:**

Week	Assets	Citations (5)	Superlatives (10)	Total
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11				

Semester Total: _____

Citation Note: 5 points
Superlative Note: 10 points

Appendix 2 - Notes of Concern

Note of Concern 1

Name of Student:

Subject:

Reason for note:

Signed by Parent/Guardian:

Date: __/__/__

Signed by Teacher:

Date: __/__/__

Appendix 3 – Amber Notes**AMBER NOTE - ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES****Amber Note****1****Level:**

Name of Student:

Subject:

Date:

- ☐ Late for Class ☐ Homework not Presented/Incomplete ☐ Device not charged
☐ No Books/Copies/Equipment ☐ Uniform/P.E. Gear Item Missing ☐ Device misuse

Extra work given:

☐ Extra work collected by teacher☐ Recorded on VS Ware

Signed by Parent/Guardian:

Date: __/__/__

Signed by Teacher:

Date: __/__/__

Appendix 4 – Red Notes

RED NOTE - DISRUPTION TO LEARNING

Red Note	28	Level:	
Name of Student:		Date: ____/____/____	
Reason for note:			
Work Given:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra work collected by the teacher		Recorded on VS Ware <input type="checkbox"/>	
Signed by Parent/Guardian:		Date: ____/____/____	
Signed by Teacher:		Date: ____/____/____	

Appendix 5 - Year Head Notes

Year Head Note	1	Level:	
Name of Student:			
Reason for note:			
Detention Given:			
Date: ____/____/____	Time:	Duration:	
Work to complete			
			Recorded on VS Ware <input type="checkbox"/>
Signed by Parent/Guardian:		Date: ____/____/____	
Signed by Teacher:		Date: ____/____/____	

Appendix 6 - Detention Notes

DETENTION NOTE - FOR AFTER SCHOOL	
Detention Note 1	
Student's Name:	Class:
Reason for detention:	
Date of detention: ____/____/____	Time:
Signed by Parent/Guardian:	Date: ____/____/____
Signed by Teacher:	Date: ____/____/____

