



Shellybanks ETNS Commercialism Policy

Introduction:

The following policy is proposed in response to the growing number of commercial schemes aimed at teachers, pupils and their families.

This policy is the result of a process of collaboration between staff, support teachers, Board of Management and parents.

Rationale:

The school has chosen to adopt a commercialism policy in the light of:

- The Department of Education and Science's request that school authorities "consider carefully the implications of allowing any situation to develop which would result in parents being put under undue pressure to purchase a particular commercial product." (Circular 7/87)
- The recommendation of the Irish Primary Principals' Network that schools "should not facilitate outside agencies, commercial bodies, etc. to promote their products and services through children" (2002).
- The Social Personal and Health Curriculum which states that children should be enabled to "become aware of the different forms of advertising, its purpose and the messages it promotes".
- The dangers associated with allowing commercial marketing within primary schools including: advertising to a captive audience of minors, marketing of unwholesome food, commercial pressure on parents and abuse of teachers' influence.

Relationship to School Ethos:

Shellybanks ETNS is committed to the full and rounded education of each child and the effective delivery of the Revised Primary Curriculum. This includes fostering the child's capacity to question and enquiry critically about their world.

Aims/Objectives:

- To provide a commercial-free environment in school for teachers, pupils and parents.
- To filter out exploitative, pressurising or commercially-biased schemes which seek to market products to pupils or their families.
- To support the implementation of the Media Education element of the SPHE curriculum.

- To promote philanthropic involvement by the business community in a way that is commercially unbiased, child-centred and enhances teaching and learning within the school.

Policy Content:

The school will endeavour to be free from:

- Commercial presentations aimed at children. (e.g. Banks, Summer Camps).
- Incentive schemes or competitions that require them to influence children's commercial purchases or those of their families (e.g. voucher/token collection).
- Sponsored curriculum material carrying an overt or prominent advertising message (e.g. advertisements, logos, slogans, product-orientated activities).

The school will promote media literacy as part of the Media Education element of the SPHE curriculum. We will seek to make pupils aware of marketing messages and their influence on our consumer decisions.

The school will continue to support business partnerships which are commercially neutral and which are free from the kinds of marketing strategies listed above. Appropriate adult recognition may be given by teachers and school management for donations / benefits received from companies (e.g. letters of thanks, photographs, notice in the bulletin)

Specific Elements of the Policy:

Charities:

Shellybanks ETNS has established links with a number of charities. The school wishes to continue its recognition of and support for these and other charities, whilst being mindful at all times of not placing undue financial pressure on the school community.

Competitions:

Shellybanks ETNS encourages participation of its pupils in competitions which clearly support the principles of the Primary School Curriculum. Competitions considered appropriate include Texaco Art Competition, An Post Handwriting Competition, Local Businesses or Credit Unions who host Competitions and quizzes. Shellybanks ETNS will also participate in other competitions from time to time if considered appropriate and beneficial to the overall education and development of pupils.

Sponsorship:

Shellybanks ETNS deems sponsorship for school team jerseys or sports equipment from local businesses as an acceptable practice. All sponsorship must support the work of the classroom and the development of the various strands and strand units of the curriculum and provide added value to the children's learning.

Community Involvements:

Shellybanks ETNS supports local initiatives that promote a sense of community spirit and develops a sense of place and identity. This may involve the distribution of flyers/leaflets for local organisations and associations or being mentioned in the weekly school bulletin.

Success Criteria:

- A typically commercial-free environment within the school and classrooms.
- Increased levels of media awareness among pupils.
- Support for the school’s position from teachers, parents and pupils.
- Positive business relationships which support the school and do not compromise the above policy

Approval Procedure:

Requests of a commercial nature shall in the first instance be referred to the Principal for consideration. Requests of a more substantial nature will be referred to the Board of Management for discussion and consideration. In such instances the formal approval of the Board will be necessary before the proposal/request can proceed.

Ratification and Implementation:

This policy was discussed and ratified by the Board of Management and communicated to the school community in..... It will also be made available on the school website.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Shellybanks Educate Together N.S. on.....

Signed.....(Chairperson Board of Management)

Signed.....(Principal)