

Our Lady Queen of the Apostles N.S



Behaviours of Concern Policy

What are Behaviours of Concern?

Behaviours of concern can be defined as “behaviours that indicate a risk to the safety or wellbeing of the people who exhibit them or to others”.

What is a crisis situation?

A crisis situation can occur when behaviours of concern present serious risk of imminent physical harm to the student concerned and/or others within the school environment.

Our Rationale

A number of pupils have such highly complex and challenging behavioural, emotional, social or educational needs that they need extra help and support. This policy aims to support the pupil exhibiting Behaviours of Concern, other pupils, staff and the relevant parents. This policy is complimentary to the school Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour, and Health & Safety Statement.

Code of Behaviour

Our school Code of Behaviour aims to positively support pupils in the first instance but reserves the right to impose sanctions particularly when the health and safety of pupils and staff are a concern. Some pupils will follow an individual Behaviour Plan which will be a differentiated approach to the Code of Behaviour. Where applicable, a restorative approach will be used to support children and staff to deescalate, repair relationships and work to reduce the risk of further incidents. This approach may not be appropriate in all circumstances.

Child Safeguarding Statement

Our school Child Safeguarding Statement places a statutory responsibility on registered teachers to report child protection concerns that are at or above a threshold of harm. An accompanying Risk Assessment identifies possible situations where pupils may be at risk and the control measures that our school puts in place to address such concerns.

Health & Safety Statement

Our school Health & Safety Statement underpins the entitlement of all pupils and staff to coexist in a safe environment.

Training

Staff training to be arranged for all staff in 2023/24.

How do we react to a Behaviour of Concern Incident?

Guided by awareness of the health and safety of all involved

Prevent the situation deteriorating further

Put an immediate plan in place that will link to an effective and sustained behaviour plan.

Template - See Appendix 3

Link with relevant support services

Here is a list of State Agencies (not exhaustive) that we consult for advice, assistance and additional supports.

- Túsla
- CAMHS: Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- NDT where appropriate
- Department of Education
- Education Welfare Officer: (Attached to EWS)
- Education Welfare Service (Now part of Túsla)
- NCSE National Council for Special Education
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB now part of Túsla)
- Special Schools National Behaviour Support Service (SESS now part of NCSE)
- Special Education Needs Organiser (member of NCSE staff)

We may also contact our relevant Management Body and or Principal's Association for advice and guidance.

Possible underlying causes for a behaviour of concern

There is always a reason for, or purpose to behaviours of concern, such as:

Anxiety and Stress: Pupils may become anxious for a myriad of reasons. Worries about friendships, home situations, confusion over sexuality etc. can be overwhelming for a pupil, leading to stress. While most children are able to identify the cause and put in place strategies to reduce their stress levels, some cannot.

Trauma/Adverse childhood experiences

Communication difficulties: These can range from not being able to speak at all, shyness, social inhibition to being very articulate but not understanding the social variations and conventions in a conversation. Behaviours of Concern are often a substitute means of communication for such pupils.

Undiagnosed or underlying educational, behavioural, social conditions.

Sensory issues: Some pupils can be over- or under-sensitive to any of their senses. This is often referred to in the literature as hyper (over) or hypo (under) sensitivity.

Social understanding: Not all pupils have the same understanding of social rules. Not all pupils grow up in environments with social rules similar to those in most schools

Inflexible thinking: We all adapt to routines and can find them comforting. Some children struggle with changes in routine.

Recording of Behaviours of Concern

Where behaviours of concern are an issue, we ensure that the parents are aware of the school's policy and procedures on recording such behaviours. Parents should understand that the school seeks to record and analyse these behaviours to understand what the triggers are and to put in place a plan to support the pupil to develop more socially acceptable behaviours. Parents should be assured that they will be fully included in this process. It is important to emphasise that pupils who exhibit behaviours of concern may find social interaction with their class peers difficult.

Pupils in SEN classes will, where appropriate, have a specific behaviour plan/ACNT/SSP developed at an early stage where behaviours are noted. This will form part of their School Support File. See Appendix C for template. The same template will be used for all other pupils where incidents of concern pose a risk to themselves and others.

In Our Lady Queen of the Apostles N.S a variety of recording techniques may be used:

1. Daily records to monitor low level behaviours and observations by staff
2. ABC charts to look specifically at and analyse certain behaviours - templates available in SESS Supporting Behaviour Management in Schools (2011)
3. Incident Report and Risk Review (Appendix B)
4. Risk reduction/Behaviour Support Plan (Appendix C)/ACST/School Support Plan.
5. 1 and 2 are used to look at the function of certain behaviours as well as staff being aware of a pupil's baseline in regard to certain behaviours. This can help to establish achievable targets and proper monitoring of behaviour once strategies have been implemented.

Examples of Behaviours of Concern (not exhaustive):

Student with a weapon and intent on using violence
Physically attacking another or noted signs of escalation which suggest a physical attack is imminent
Throwing furniture or breaking glass close to others
Putting themselves in danger, running onto a road, climbing fences or dangerous pieces of equipment
Self-harm or attempts to self harm

When will our school use restraint?

We will only use restraint when there is a **crisis**. A crisis is when there is a **serious risk of imminent physical harm** to the pupil/s concerned or others.

A physical intervention: is the use of a physical act or restraint to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a pupil's body or part of a pupil's body.

Examples of physical intervention:

1. Presence

Standing in front of a pupil

2. Touching

Lead, guide, usher, block-door handle etc

Pupil retains a lot of mobility

3. Holding

Pupil's hand held by one adult but retains a level of mobility

4. Restraint

Completely restrict mobility -2 adults holding legs & arms

(Always in mind is: Am I using minimum force for the shortest time?)

Restraint:

Will not be used in school except in the case of a **crisis** where there is a **serious risk of imminent physical harm** to the pupil/s concerned or others.

Will not be the first option and if used should be timely, measured and proportionate.

Will be carried out by appropriately trained persons if at all possible

If used, it will be documented and reported to parents and the board of management.

This policy was ratified by the BOM on 20th June 2023

Kevin Gopla

Chairperson BOM

20th June 2023

Date

Date this policy will be reviewed	<u>June 2024</u>
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Appendix A

1. Function of Behaviour

Escape: removes undesired activities or interactions. Can happen when a task is too boring, hard, easy, scary etc

Attention: provides access to people or interactions. Can happen when social interaction is needed

Tangible: Provides preferred items or activities. Can happen when an activity or item is wanted or taken away

Sensory: provides preferred sensory experiences, behaviours which feel good to do. Can happen anytime, even when the child is alone. Especially prevalent when anxious.

2. Suggested phrases for 'What did you Do?'

Asked for assistance - drew towards - eased away - observed personal space rules - reduced demands - guided - used a help hug - monitored/observed - moved child away from the area of the incident by placing my palm on his/her elbow - used visuals/schedules/timetables - reassured - supported - talked pupil down - cleared the area of items that could be thrown - moved other pupils away from danger - sent for a senior member of staff - asked other staff to withdraw from the area - withdrew myself to a safe distance - kept an eye out for members of the public who might be at risk.

3. Suggested phrases for 'How was this in the best interests of the child?' Reduced the risk of injury - reduced possibility of - made situation safer - welfare of pupil(s)/staff - maintained dignity of the child - prevented negative social outcome for child - prevented distress - prevented later regret for actions.

4. Ideas for 'How can we reduce the risk of this happening again?'

a) *Environmental Alterations:*

Rearrange room/area, provide TEACCH stations, introduce and use visual schedule consistently, use choice board, provide breaks, rearrange timetable, consider staff change, modify curriculum, provide more opportunities for vigorous exercise, provide more opportunities for fun, check for physical discomfort - hunger, pain etc., social story, sensory considerations in room - light, noise, smells etc

b) *Staff Behaviours/Reactions:*

Reduce/eliminate demands and requests - calm/stance/voice - change of 'face' - use calm facial expression - use first/then - use diversion/ distraction - use calming script - repeat simple 'next step' - ignore elements of behaviour - use humour - negotiate - give time to process - use reward - use verbal/gestural prompts - praise early for small signs of compliance - offer preferred item - agree a consistent positive approach with other staff via meetings - emails - notice board - text or memo.

c) *Other possible factors:*

Curricular demands - are demands matching pupil learner needs, scheduling factors - need to amend/change schedule to include more or less of an activity, social setting - are peers causing reactions or does the child need more peer interaction.

Appendix B: Incident Report / Risk Review***Incident Report and Risk Review***

Pupil:	Date:	Time:	Location
What happened?			
Do you know why the behaviour occurred (trigger/function)?			
Whom/what was at risk?			

Pupil Welfare:

List any de-escalation/ positive intervention strategies that you used to diffuse the incident (see over).	
Did you need to use a restrictive practice or physical intervention? (be specific)	
Why was this in the best interests of the child? (see over)	
How effective was it?	
Was the child distressed?	Yes/no
How was the child assisted to recover/ repair relationships with staff /other pupils?	
How can we reduce the risk of this happening again? (Consult with relevant staff/ parents).	
Follow up actions (Include Code of Behaviour actions if relevant)	

Staff Welfare:

How many staff were needed to manage this incident safely?		Were you or another staff member hurt or distressed? Yes / no	Describe:
Names of other staff			

present:	
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Signed:	Date:
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Please review the form and ensure all questions are answered before submitting to the Principal/DP.

Risk reduction review by Principal / Deputy Principal:	Parents notified: <i>Yes/no</i>
Medical intervention needed/sought: <i>Yes/no</i>	
Signed by Principal or DP:	

GUIDANCE NOTES on filling in INCIDENT FORM

There are three main reasons for filling out incident forms following a behavioural incident:

1. To provide a clear, factual account of what happened.
2. To reduce the risk of the incident occurring again.
3. To provide information for Positive Handling Plans and Behaviour Support Plans.

An incident form should be filled in following serious behavioural incidents but not during the reflection and recovery process for pupils or staff. If SNAs only are present during an incident it is good practice to fill the incident form out with the class teacher so that s/he is fully aware of the incident. An element of professional judgement may be required to decide whether or not an incident merits the filling in of an incident form. It is better to err on the side of caution and fill out the form. If in doubt consult with the Principal or Deputy Principal.

The following are examples of incidents that require reporting.

- 'Near miss' – the situation had the potential to be a risk to safety.
- Someone received an injury from a kick, bite, thrown item, etc.
- A restraint/force was used.
- Liberty was restricted
- A pupil became significantly emotionally distressed.

A good incident form describes the incident briefly, factually and honestly, identifies triggers (if known), suggests risk reduction measures and takes account of the welfare of both pupils and staff. Judgmental, 'blaming' language should be avoided. Examples are provided below.

The information is reviewed by the Principal and/or Deputy who will check on the welfare of all involved and discuss/implement risk reduction measures if applicable.

It is good practice to inform parents of incidents but the incident forms may not be given to parents without the permission of the Principal. This is necessary because the incident report may contain information relating to other pupils or staff and may need to be redacted.

1. Function of Behaviour

Escape: removes undesired activities or interactions. Can happen when a task is too boring, hard, easy, scary etc

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2. **Helpful phrases for 'What happened?'** Asked for assistance - drew towards - eased away - encouraged - guided - used a help hug - led child to the support room/yard/sensory room where s/he could be monitored/observed - monitored/observed (from outside the door) - moved child away from the area of the incident - used physical prompt - used visuals/schedules/timetables - reassured - secured the door - supported - talked pupil down - withdrew other pupils - cleared the area of items that could be thrown - moved other pupils away from danger - asked for help - cleared the area of other pupils - sent for a senior member of staff - asked other staff to withdraw from the area - withdrew myself to a safe distance - kept an eye out for members of the public who might be at risk - prevent emotional/psychological distress to other pupils.

3. **De-escalation techniques to try:** Move away: reduce requests; redirect to schedule; sensory/movement breaks; calm stance/voice; calming scripts; change of staff; 1:1 close to pupil; 1:1 supervision from afar; time out of class; distraction/diversion; facial expression; first/ then; humour; negotiate; offer choice; outline consequences; outline limits/ boundaries, positive reminders; planned ignoring; removal to support room using friendly hold (pupil comes willingly); reassure; short tasks only; time given to process; use of reward; verbal support/prompts; praise.

4. **Helpful phrases for 'How was this in the best interests of the child.** Maintain dignity of the child - prevent negative social outcome for child - prevent distress - prevent pain - reduce risk of injury - reduce possibility of - unsafe situation for - welfare of pupil(s)/staff - prevent emotional/psychological distress.

Appendix C: Risk Reduction/Behaviour Support Plan

ABC Observation Form

Student Name:		Observation Date:	
Observer:		Time:	
Activity:		Class Period:	
Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequence	