



Code of Behaviour Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa Ballymurn

INTRODUCTION

This policy was formulated following an audit and review process involving Pupils, Parents, Staff and Board of Management. Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school.

In Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa, we hope to foster this ideal in cooperation with our parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive code of behaviour with emphasis on encouragement and reward so that good behaviour can prevail in our school.

The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school. Within the school, the overall responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal. Each teacher has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.

Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

In compliance with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa has prepared and made available a Code of Behaviour for its Pupils, Staff and Parents.

The Code of Behaviour details:

1. The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each pupil attending the school.
2. The whole school approach in promoting positive behaviour;
3. The measures that shall be taken when a pupil fails or refuses to observe those standards;
4. The procedures to be followed before a pupil may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
5. The grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a pupil
6. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and
7. The procedures to be followed in relation to a child's absence from school.

The Code of Behaviour of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa has been developed in accordance with 'Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools', National Educational Welfare Board, 2008.

POLICY FORMULATION

In formulating this policy the Board of Management completed the following steps:

- i. Class teachers were requested to discuss the topic of 'rules' with their classes and submit a list of pupils' suggestions to the Principal.
- ii. Staff prepared the initial draft of the Revised Code of Discipline.
- iii. A 'Parent Focus' group was established to review draft policy, make suggestions and amendments
- iv. Members of BOM were supplied with a copy of the revised Code and their opinions were requested.
- v. Parents were informed that an initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was available and they were invited to make submissions on the content of the code within a specified timeframe.
- vi. The initial draft of the Code of Behaviour was reviewed and where appropriate amended in-line with the feedback received.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE CODE

The aims and objectives of the code are:

To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development

To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others

To promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences

To ensure the safety and well being of all members of the school community

To assist school staff, parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the code of behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures

To ensure that the system of rules, rewards, and sanctions are implemented in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The Board of Management recognises the importance of creating consistent values, policies, practices and relationships that support the Code of Behaviour. Such an environment may only be formed by involving the entire school community and in this respect the Board acknowledges the importance of the roles played by the principal, teachers, ancillary staff and parents in the review and operation of the Code.

Responsibility of Adults

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children.

As adults we should aim to:

Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.

Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.

Provide a caring and effective learning environment.

Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.

Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.

Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

Encourage children to have a sense of respect for themselves, for others, for their own property and that of others;

Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually;

be interested in, support and encourage their children's school work;

ensure that their children have the correct books and other materials;

be familiar with the code of behaviour and other school policies;

support the implementation of these policies;

co-operate with teachers in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for others;

co-operate with the school in relation to the sanction imposed on their child

Communicate to the school problems which may affect a child's behaviour

Be courteous towards pupils and staff

Be respectful towards the school management team

Make an appointment to meet with a teacher/the Principal through the office

Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same

Label pupils coats and other personal property

Strictly supervise pre-school children, when in the school

As the Board of Management is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.

Incentives/ Rewards

Part of the vision of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa is to help children achieve their personal best and thus prepare them for further education, life and work. We recognise that there are many different forms of intelligence and similarly that children use a variety of approaches to solve problems. Our reward system seeks to provide encouragement to all children of all abilities and talents. Children will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school. Praise is earned by the maintenance of good standards as well as by particularly noteworthy personal achievements. Rates of praise for behaviour should be as high as for work.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Pupils

General Behaviour

Each pupil is required to:

be well behaved and display good manners

show respect and consideration for other children and adults

show respect for the property of the school, other children and their own belongings

Loss/damage must be paid for or replaced

attend school on a regular basis and to be punctual

do his/her best both in school and for homework.

adhere to School Rules.

adhere to the Pupils' Dress Code

Pupils must wear the full school uniform.

Pupils should present neat and clean with a conventional non-dyed hairstyle, which is not a distraction to themselves or others. Long hair must be tied up in school and/or long fringes must be clipped/tied up so that the hair is clearly out of the pupil's face and not obscuring their vision. This applies to both boys and girls.

Only jewellery allowed is:

Stud earrings

Watch

Face make-up and nail polish are not allowed

Classroom Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

listen – to the teacher and other pupils if they are speaking

work – to the best of his/her ability

value – school property, the belongings of fellow pupils and of staff.

follow – the direction of his/her teacher

obtain – his/her teachers permission to leave the classroom

respect – the teacher, other pupils and visitors to the classroom.

remain - seated in classroom unless otherwise directed by school staff.

Entering/Exit the School Building (for Pupils at start and end of school day)/Use of Stairs/Exit to Yard for break time

Pupils in the new school building enter the building through the back doors.

Pupils in the original school building enter/exit through the door next to their classroom.

Stairs – pupils must walk up and down on the right hand side of the stairs

Corridors – pupils must walk on the right hand side of the corridors

Yard Allocation – pupils from Junior Infants to 1st Class exit and enter through the West door to access the yard and break and lunch times.

Yard Allocation – pupils from 2nd to 6th Class exit and enter through the East door to access the yard and break and lunch times.

Playground (Playing Field) Behaviour

Each pupil is expected to:

play – safely avoiding play or games that are rough or dangerous

follow – the directions of the playground supervisors

remain – on school grounds at all times

obtain – permission before re-entering the school building during break periods

respect – the yard supervisor and fellow pupils

refrain – from swearing, fighting, name calling or foul language.
stop – on the ringing of the yard bell
stay – within designated areas

Behaviour in other School Areas

Each pupil is expected to:

walk – in the school corridors and to and from place of play.
mobile phones are not allowed for pupils.

Behaviour during School Outings/Activities

Each pupil is expected to:

follow – his/her teacher's directions at all times
remain – with the teacher/supervisors and group of pupils at all times
behave – politely towards those they meet on such trips
observe – the rules of general good behaviour
respect – property & the environment encountered on trips & outings

Parents must sign & date a permission slip for school outings or pupils may not leave the school. Mobile phones are not allowed for pupils on school outings or school activities.

Staff

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure the school's Code of Behaviour is administered in a manner that is consistent and fair to all pupils. However each staff member has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within common areas of the school.

Teaching staff are specifically responsible for the management of behaviour within their own class. They will:

Discuss the Code of Behaviour with their class in an age appropriate manner at the beginning of the school year.

Ensure the School/Classroom Rules are displayed in the classroom.

Reinforce rules on a regular basis.

Encourage self-discipline and positive behaviour.

Ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times.

Implement the reward/sanction scheme in a fair and consistent manner.

Keep a written record of all incidents of continued, serious or gross misconduct. This record will indicate the advice and/or warnings given to the child on the misbehaviour and the consequences of its repetition.

Record instances of misbehaviour if deemed necessary.

Report repeated instances of serious misbehaviour to the Principal.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in shaping attitudes in their children, which produce positive behaviour in school. Parents/guardians can assist the school by encouraging their children to abide by the school rules, encouraging punctuality re. school opening & closing times, regular attendance and by ensuring that homework is given due time and effort. They should also support and work with the school when instances of misbehaviour are being dealt with.

Should a parent/guardian be concerned about any aspect of their child's behaviour they are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their concerns.

(Note: Appointment with a class teacher is required in this instance.) In cases of an identified pattern of misbehaviour parents will be invited to participate in the intervention process.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

As a general rule the school will endeavour to create an environment where positive behaviour is reinforced through praise and reward. School staff will use encouraging language and gestures, both in class and around the school, so that positive behaviour is instantly recognised and positively rewarded. Special attention will be paid to pupils who have previously been associated with poor behaviour so that not only good behaviour but also improvement in behaviour is acknowledged.

A reward scheme for promoting positive behaviour will be used. Such rewards will include:

- Verbal approval / Praise.
- Responsibility within the classroom.
- Golden Time.
- Group Credits.
- Special privileges.
- Treats.
- Mention at Assembly.
- Mention in School Newsletter.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

In order to establish a common understanding and consistent response the Code of Behaviour classifies misbehaviour into three levels based on the degree of disruption caused by the misconduct. The Code also specifies the disciplinary actions and supportive interventions that will be employed.

Level One

Level 1: Behaviours

Level 1 behaviours are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To

this extent, responses to the daily behaviours, which occur in school, will be developmentally appropriate, instructive and positive.

Children will be taught what is expected and how they should behave. Listed below are some examples of the types of Behaviour that are included in Level 1. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

Repeated failure to prepare for class, as defined by individual teachers
Running in the corridors/stairs
Constantly disruptive behaviour
Disturbing the work or play of others
Repeated breaking of individual teacher's classroom rules.
Deliberate exclusion of a child or group of children for any reason

Level 1: Disciplinary Actions

Consequences for Level 1 behaviour are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Teachers will discipline students at level 1. Some examples of Level 1 responses are:

Separation from peers – quiet space in classroom or yard
Reflection Form at the discretion of the teacher *
Verbal reprimand/reminder(s) from teacher
Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour
Lunchtime detention
Prescribing additional work – penalty sheet
Loss of privileges e.g. Golden Time

*Reflection form used from 1st class upwards only

Level 1 Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 1 supportive actions:

Classroom-based interventions, such as Circle Time
Discussion of behaviour with the child
Informal notes (i.e. in Homework Diary) regarding incident/intervention/date. This information would be useful should a problem persist.

Level Two

Level 2: Behaviours

Level 2 behaviours are those that seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 2. Please note the list is not exhaustive.

Repeated instances of Level 1 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention

Ignoring staff instruction
Deliberate exclusion of a child or group of children for any reason
Behaviour which is dangerous to self or others (e.g. shoving, pushing, hitting)
Intentionally damaging school or personal property
Stealing
Cheating
Use of profanity and/or sexually explicit language
Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, religion, physical condition, disability, or ethnic origin
Disrespectful language, tone, or manner towards another pupil or teacher or any adult working in or visiting the school
Possession or use of dangerous toys or sporting equipment (e.g. bow and arrows, any kind of knives, etc.)

Level 2: Disciplinary Actions

The disciplining of students for Level 2 behaviour is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour and developmentally appropriate levels. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 are administered by the Principal, following notification to the parents. Some examples of Level 2 responses are:

Reflection Form

Meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) at discretion of child's teacher

Teacher/Principal/Parent to agree to sanction for the child. Failure to agree to a sanction in consultation with the parent, will result in the school implementing a sanction which the Principal, Deputy Principal and teacher involved deem to be appropriate.

Suspension from school of one to five days at the discretion of the Principal Teacher

Implementation of an extensive Behaviour Management Plan.

Report submitted to the Board of Management

Level 2: Supportive Interventions

Listed below are some examples of Level 2 supportive actions:

Team conference to include classroom teacher, other involved staff, Deputy Principal or Principal and child's parents/guardians.

Request for assistance from external agencies such as the National Educational Psychological Service,

Health Service Executive Community Services, the National Behavioural Support Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, National Council for Special Education.

Referral of a child displaying behavioural problems for psychological assessment.

Level Three

Level 3: Behaviours

Level 3 behaviours are considered the most serious violations. These behaviours endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well-being of the pupils and staff of the school. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment.

Situations, which include illegal activity, may result in contact with the Garda Síochána after parental involvement. Listed below are some examples of the types of behaviour that are included in Level 3. Please note that the list is not exhaustive.

Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 behaviour which have not been modified by intervention

Setting fires

Intentional possession or use of weapons

Violent fighting or intentionally causing physical harm to others

Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, religion, physical condition, handicap, or ethnic origin

Level 3: Disciplinary Actions

Behaviour at Level 3 may involve suspension from school. The length of the suspension will depend upon the severity and frequency of the specific behaviour. Specific information about due process and procedures in respect of the issuing of a suspension is contained in this document. Level 3 responses:

Suspension from school for one to five days - this response will occur with the first incidence of Level 3 behaviour or Level 2 behaviour of significant severity. The Principal, following due process and procedure, can issue a suspension.

Suspension from school for five to ten days - this response will occur with the repeated incidence of Level 3 behaviour or a severe expression of this Behaviour. A suspension of this magnitude will only be issued with the approval of the Board of Management.

Expulsion - repeated incidents of Level 3 behaviour can result in a pupil being expelled.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

Suspension

Definition of Suspension: 'requiring the student to absent himself/herself from the school for a specified, limited period of school days'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Suspend:

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa has the authority to impose an 'Immediate Suspension' to a pupil via the Principal Teacher. An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Furthermore, the Board of Management has formally delegated to the Principal Teacher the authority to impose an 'Automatic Suspension' for named behaviours detailed in this policy.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days. The Board retains its authority to suspend a student in all other cases/circumstances.

Immediate Suspension and Automatic Suspension

An 'Immediate Suspension' will be deemed to be necessary where after a preliminary investigation the Principal reaches the determination that the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of pupils or staff of the school.

An 'Immediate Suspension' may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific Behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

An 'Automatic Suspension' is a suspension imposed for named behaviours. The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa having given due consideration to its duty of care as prescribed by Health & Safety Legislation, has determined that the following named behaviours will incur 'Automatic Suspension' as a sanction;

Physical assault/violence resulting in bodily harm to a pupil or member of staff
or
Physical violence resulting in serious damage to school property.

An Automatic Suspension may be for a period of one to three school days depending on the severity of the specific behaviour, in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Board the suspension may be for a longer period but in any event will not exceed 5 school days.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed of an Immediate or Automatic Suspension by telephone, and arrangements will be made with them for the pupil to be collected.

In no circumstance will a student be sent home from school prior to his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) being notified. Formal written notification of the suspension will be issued in due course, but no later than 2 school days after the imposition of the suspension. Such a notification will detail:

the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
the reasons for the suspension
any study programme to be followed i.e. academic work as set out by class teacher

the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Board of Management acknowledges that the decision to impose either an Immediate or Automatic Suspension does not remove the duty to follow due process and fair procedures. In this regard, and following a formal investigation, to be completed no later than 2 school days after the incident the Board will invite the pupil and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) to a meeting to discuss;

the circumstances surrounding the suspension,
interventions to prevent a recurrence of such misconduct.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation process. In this regard the following undertaking is given;

i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure.

Procedures in Respect of Other Suspensions:

In cases other than those of Immediate or Automatic Suspension the following procedures will apply:

Where a preliminary assessment of the fact confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa will initiate a formal investigation of the matter.

The following procedures will be observed:

A written letter containing the following information will issue to Parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in suspension.
- ii. An invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond before a decision is made or a sanction imposed.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given:

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Where a decision to suspend has been made the Chairperson of the Board of Management will provide written notification to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the pupil of the decision. The letter will confirm:

- the duration of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end
- the reasons for the suspension
- any study programme to be followed
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management.

Where a suspension brings the total number of days for which the pupil has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

Expulsion

Definition of Expulsion:

'A student is expelled from a school when a Board of Management makes a decision to permanently exclude him or her from the school, having complied with the provisions of section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.'

Developing A Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, National Educational Welfare Board

Authority to Expel:

The authority to expel a pupil is reserved by the Board of Management.

Procedures in Respect of Expulsion:

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant expulsion the following procedures will apply:

a) A detailed investigation will be carried out under the direction of the Principal (or a Nominee of the Board if required)

As part of the investigation a written letter containing the following information will issue to parent(s)/guardian(s);

- i. details of the alleged misbehaviour, details of the impending investigation process, and notification that the allegation could result in expulsion.
- ii. an invitation to a meeting, to be scheduled no later than 5 school days from the date of the letter, where parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with an opportunity to respond

b) The Principal (or BoM Nominee) will make a recommendation to the Board of Management

Where the Principal (or nominee) forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged misbehaviour, that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal (or nominee) makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion.

In this event the Principal (or nominee) will:

i. inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) that the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion

ii. ensure that parent(s)/guardians have records of: the allegations against the student; the investigation; and written notice of the grounds on which the Board of Management is being asked to consider expulsion

iii. provide the Board of Management with the same comprehensive records as are given to parent(s)/guardian(s)

c) Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's (or BOM's Nominee) Recommendations & the Holding of a Hearing

If, having considered the Principal's report, the Board of Management decides to consider expelling a student a hearing will be scheduled.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing

i. as to the date, location and time of the hearing

ii. of their right to make a written and oral submission to the Board of Management

iii. that they may if they so choose be accompanied at the hearing

The Board of Management undertakes that the timing of such written notification will ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) have enough notice to allow them to prepare for the hearing.

In respect of the expulsion hearing the Board gives an undertaking that:

i. the meeting will be properly conducted in accordance with Board procedures

ii. the principal (or BoM nominee) and parent(s)/guardian(s) will present their case to the Board in each other's presence

iii. each party will be given the opportunity to directly question the evidence of the other party

iv. the parent(s)/guardian(s) may make a case for a lesser sanction if they so choose

d) Board of Management Deliberations & Actions following the Hearing

Where the Board of Management, having considered all the facts of the case, is of the opinion that the pupil should be expelled the Board:

will notify the Educational Welfare Officer in writing by registered post of its opinion, and the reasons for this opinion.

will not expel the student before the passage of 20 school days from the date on which the Educational Welfare Officer receives this written notification
will in writing notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their decision and inform them that the Educational Welfare Officer is being contacted
will be represented at the consultation to be organized by the Educational Welfare Officer
will suspend the student, if it is deemed likely that the continued presence of the student during this time will seriously disrupt the learning of others, or represent a threat to the safety of other pupils or staff.

e) Confirmation of the Decision to Expel

Where the twenty-day period following notification to the Educational Welfare Officer has elapsed, and where the Board of Management remains of the view that the student should be expelled, the Board of Management will formally confirm the decision to expel.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing that the expulsion will now proceed. They will also be informed of their right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science under Section 29 or the Education Act 1998 and will be provided with information on the submission of such an appeal.

The Board of Management of Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa acknowledges the fundamental importance of impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process. In this regard the following undertakings are given;

- i. No person with a vested interest or personal involvement in the matter will be involved in the organisation or implementation of the investigation procedure, nor will such a person be involved in the decision-making process.
- ii. The person(s) involved in the investigation process will on presentation of a full report of the facts absent himself/herself/themselves from the decision-making process.

Implementation Date

This policy has been implemented since 12th February, 2014.

Review

This will be reviewed by the teacher with responsibility for Code of Behaviour every year. It will also be discussed at a whole staff level under the guidance of the Principal.

Ratification and Communication

This policy was reviewed on October 17th 2023.

Signed: *Matthew Kelly*

Matthew Kelly
Chairperson

Date: 17/10/2023

Board of Management

Appendix A: Managing Behaviours of Concern

School: Scoil Chroí Ró Naofa, Ballymurn

Roll No.: 05070W

Principal: Emer O’Gorman

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

Sometimes students may have such highly complex and challenging behaviour, social or education needs that they need extra help and support. This policy aims to support the student exhibiting Behaviours of Concern, other students, 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 students in the first instance but reserves the right to impose sanctions particularly when the health and safety of students and staff are a concern.

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 students 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 students and staff to coexist in a safe environment.

Training

Staff received training in this area from Mason, Hayes and Curran on May 25th 2022.

How we react to a Behaviour of Concern Incident?

Make sure everyone is safe

Prevent the situation deteriorating further

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

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
- Department of Education
- Education Welfare Officer: (Attached to EWS)
- Education Welfare Service (Now part of Túsla)
- Gardaí
- NCSE National Council for Special Education
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- 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 OF BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

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

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

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 students.

Sensory issues: Some students 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 students have the same understanding of social rules. Not all students grow up in environments with social rules like those in most schools

Inflexible thinking: We all adapt to routines and can find them comforting. Some students 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 student 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 students who exhibit behaviours of concern make life difficult for themselves and inhibit social interaction with their class peers.

See Appendix A

Examples of Behaviours of Concern (not exhaustive):

- Student with a weapon and intent on using violence
- Physically attacking another or about to
- Throwing furniture or breaking glass close to others
- Putting themselves in danger, running onto a road or trying to self-harm

When will our school use restraint?

We will only use restraint when there is a crisis.

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

Examples of physical intervention:

- (1) Presence
Standing in front of a student
- (2) Touching
Lead, guide, usher, block-door handle
Student retains a lot of mobility
- (3) Holding
Student's hand held by one adult but retains a level of mobility
- (4) Restraint
Completely restrict mobility -2 adults holding legs & arms
(Am I using minimum force for the shortest time?)

Restraint:

- (1) Cannot be used in schools except in the case of a **crisis** where there is a **serious risk of imminent physical harm** to the pupils concerned/others
- (2) Should not be the first option and if used should be timely, measured, and proportionate
- (3) It should be carried out by appropriately trained persons if possible
- (4) If used should be documented, reported to the board of management

(5)

Appendix B: Behaviour of Concern Incident Report / Risk Review

Student: _____ **Location:** _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

What happened?

What triggered the incident?

Whom/what was at risk?

Student 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?

Why was this in the best interests of the student? (See over)

How effective was it?

Was the student distressed?

Yes / No

How was the student assisted to recover/ repair relationships with staff / other students?

How can we reduce the risk of this happening again? (Consult with relevant staff/parents)

STAFF WELFARE

How many staff were needed to manage this incident safely?

Were you or another staff member hurt?

Yes / No

Describe:

Did you or another member of staff find this incident distressing?

Yes / No

If yes, rate this on a scale of 1 to 5:

(1 = little or no distress, 5 = very distressing)

Which other staff were present?

Signed:

Date:

Please review form and ensure all questions are answered before submitting to Principal/DP

Review by Principal / Deputy Principal

Parents notified:

Yes / No

Medical intervention needed/sought:

Yes / No

Signed by Principal or Deputy Principal:

Dated:
