



## **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 behaviour, social or education 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 Positive Behaviour**

Our school Code of Positive 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.

### **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**

### **How we react to a Behaviour of Concern Incident?**

- Make sure everyone is safe
- Prevent the situation deteriorating further
- Aftercare for staff and pupils
- Put an immediate plan in place that will link to an effective and sustained behaviour plan

### **Aftercare (immediately after crisis)**



#### Support response to child(ren) involved, including witnesses who may be upset

1. Give child(ren) a space to relax and don't introduce demands.
2. Offer child(ren) a preferred activity to support continued regulation.
3. Administrate first aid if necessary.
4. Verbally reassure individual that everything is ok.

#### Support response to staff involved

1. Offer a break from the room/class for a short period to allow staff member(s) to process the incident, where possible.
2. Support/check in from a member of the leadership team.

#### **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 EWO)
- 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 of behaviours 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 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 need additional support to do so.

**Communication difficulties:** These can range from not yet speaking, shyness, social inhibition to being very articulate but struggling with social variations and conventions in a conversation. Behaviours of Concern are often a substitute means of communication.



**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 and social interaction.

**Difficulty adapting to change:** We all enjoy routines and can find them comforting. Some children struggle with changes in routine.

### **Recording of Behaviours of Concern**

Where behaviours of concern arise, 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 pupils. Parents should be assured that they will be fully included in this process. Our recording documents are attached as Appendix to this policy.

**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 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  
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, with the minimum amount of force for the minimum amount of time.



**Restraint**

- 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
- Should not be the first option and if used should be timely, measured and proportionate
- It should be carried out by appropriately trained persons if at all possible
- If used should be documented, reported to the board of management

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>
<b>Principal</b>	Gemma Maher	<i>Gemma Maher</i>
<b>Chairperson</b>	Austin O'Sullivan	<i>Austin Sullivan</i>

<b>Date this policy will be reviewed</b>	At the next board meeting
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**Ratified by the Board of Management Date: 06.12.2022**