



**Rush and Lusk Educate Together
National School**

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Behaviours of Concern Addendum to Code of Behaviour Policy

Ratified at BOM Meeting on.....

SignedChairperson of Board of Management

Signed Principal

Date.....

Date of next review.....

BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN ADDENDUM TO CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (11th September 2023)

1. Our Rationale

Sometimes children may have such highly complex and challenging behaviour, social or educational needs that they need extra help and support. This addendum to our Code of Behaviour policy aims to support the child exhibiting Behaviours of Concern, other children, staff, and the relevant parents/guardians.

This addendum should be read in conjunction with the school Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour, and Health & Safety Statement.

Code of Behaviour

Our school Code of Behaviour aims to positively support children in the first instance but reserves the right to impose sanctions particularly when the health and safety of children 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 co-exist in a safe environment.

2. 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)

3.1 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”.

Examples of Behaviours of Concern (not exhaustive):

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

3.2 What is a crisis situation?

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

3.3 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
- We may also contact our relevant Management Body and or Principal's Association for advice and guidance.

3.4 When will our school use restraint?

A physical intervention: is the use of a physical act or restraint to prevent, restrict or subdue the movement of a child's body or part of a child'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
(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 child 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 it should be documented and reported to the Board of Management

4. POSSIBLE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

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

Anxiety and Stress: Children 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 or 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 children 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 children have the same understanding of social rules. Not all children 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.

5. Recording of Behaviours of Concern

Where behaviours of concern are an issue, we ensure that the parents/ guardians are aware of the school's policy and procedures on recording such behaviours. Parents/ guardians 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 (see Appendix A). Parents/ guardians should be assured that they will be included in this process.

Training

All Teaching & SNA staff in Rush & Lusk ETNS completed Behaviours of Concern Training with Mason Hayes Curran on the 13th of September, 2022.

Appendix A: Behaviour of Concern Incident Report / Risk Review

Child:

Location:

Date:

Time:

What happened?

What triggered the incident?

Whom/what was at risk?

CHILD WELFARE

List any de-escalation/ positive intervention strategies that you used to diffuse the incident.

Did you need to use a restrictive practice or physical intervention?

Why was this in the best interests of the student?

How effective was it?

Was the child distressed?

Yes / No

How was the child assisted to recover/ repair relationships with staff /other children?

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

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/Deputy Principal

Review by Principal / Deputy Principal

Parents notified: Yes / No

Medical intervention needed/sought: Yes / No

Signed by Principal or Deputy Principal:

Dated:

GUIDANCE NOTES on filling in *Behaviour of Concern Incident Report / Risk Review*

There are three main reasons for filling out incident forms following a serious 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 Behaviour Support Plans.

An incident form should be filled in following serious behavioural incidents by whichever adult was present. This should be done after but not during the reflection and recovery process for children or staff. **An element of professional judgment may be required to decide whether 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 class teacher should be made fully aware of the incident.

The following are examples of incidents that require reporting:

- 'Near miss's – the situation had the potential to be a risk to safety.
- Someone received an injury from a kick, bite, thrown item, etc.
- A restraint was necessary.

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 students 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/ guardians without the consent of the Principal. This is necessary because the incident report may contain information relating to other children or staff and may need to be redacted.

1. **Helpful phrases for 'What happened?'** Asked for assistance - drew towards - eased away - encouraged - guided – used a help hug - led student to the support room/yard/sensory room where s/he could be monitored/observed - moved student away from the area of the incident – (see paragraph 3 below) used physical prompt - used visuals/schedules/timetables - reassured – secured the door - supported - talked student down - withdrew other students – cleared the area of items that could be thrown – moved other students away from danger – asked for help – cleared the area of other students – 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 students.

2. **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 student; 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.

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

