

Bohermore National School

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Management, staff and parent/guardians of Bohermore National School, have developed and agreed this policy in line with the current National Educational Welfare Board code of behaviour guidelines entitled "Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools" (2008).

As required by S.23(2) of the Education Welfare Act 2000, our Code of Behaviour sets out the following:

- (a) the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school;
- (b) the measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards;
- (c) the procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school concerned;
- (d) the grounds for removing a suspension imposed in relation to a student; and
- (e) the procedures to be followed relating to notification of a child's absence from school.

Behaviour management in special schools requires a deep understanding of the needs of students enrolled in the school. For the most part, successful behaviour management for students with special needs will be grounded in a models of positive behaviour guidance. These need to be implemented and promulgated by staff in a variety of different ways. Given the importance of positive behaviour systems, in addition to fulfilling the statutory goals of a Code of Behaviour, our Code also sets out the principles and objectives of how we implement our philosophy of positive behaviour management for all pupils enrolled in Bohermore National School.

Bohermore NS aims to promote an atmosphere and environment in which each pupil will develop educationally, socially, physically and emotionally to the maximum of their potential. This Code of Behaviour aims to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption-free environment. The school recognises the variety of differences that exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. This Code operates alongside a number of student-focussed policies and internal procedural documents which have been put in place to guide staff and act as a repository of best practice for different situations.

This policy document sets out the school's aims, principles and strategies for the positive behaviour management

Implementing a Code of Behaviour that places positive behaviour management at whole school level at its core, requires staff to be fully committed to supporting pupils' learning within a 'no blame' culture in which 'what works' is what is promoted rather than making self and others 'wrong'. The reason for this is that pupils with a mild intellectual disability and complex special needs do not learn or understand the rules and boundaries incidentally, and if they are burdened with being made wrong by those of us who do understand, their anxiety levels will rise and their information processing will break down. Therefore, the behaviour must always be separated from the person.

Bohermore National School wishes to provide clear rules and boundaries and the tools to keep them within an environment where pupils can, over time, learn to develop thought processes and actions about what works in the world.

PART 1: WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

RATIONALE

Bohermore National School has developed a school Code of Behaviour for the following reasons:

- To ensure existing policy is in compliance with legal requirements and good practice as set out in *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008*;
- To ensure a safe, secure and orderly environment so that the school's duty of care in relation to the health, safety and welfare of all pupils and staff is met;
- To ensure a safe, secure and orderly climate for teaching and learning in the school so that the educational needs of all pupils are met;
- To ensure that all pupils – those in mainstream and those with complex special needs are able to access the broad, balanced and relevant curriculum offered to pupils throughout our school;
- To ensure that all levels of behaviour of concern or passive behaviour associated with students with and without complex special needs are brought to a manageable level so that the pupil is able to display behaviour which shows that they are ready to learn;
- To ensure that pupils' needs are taken into account in all aspects of their school life, including the school environment, planning, teaching and learning objectives;
- To ensure that this policy is a whole school policy;

CHARACTERISTIC SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL

All the pupils who attend Bohermore National School are individuals with unique personalities. Some also share certain common characteristics due to their disability profile. Some people with complex special needs have considerable difficulties with communication, social interaction, imagination and often sensory integration. These difficulties sometimes give rise to frustration, confusion and distress. This in turn can give rise to some inappropriate behaviour of concern.

Understanding the causes of such behaviour enables staff to more appropriately and effectively manage the behaviour. The Bohermore National School's ethos is one that is very much aware of the importance of good relationships between all pupils and adults who are part of the learning environment. A common vocabulary of trust, empathy and respect is used across the school to foster positive relationships and reciprocal behaviour. In order to provide an educational environment that is guided by our ethos, pupils are supported in managing their own behaviour within the context of effective communication and interaction. The skills of empathy and trust are explicitly taught and reinforced through the delivery of the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum and also across the curriculum. A positive behaviour support approach provides a cohesive, connective and meaningful way for pupils to learn and generalise key interactive skills within the school community.

(MIS)UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOURS

Bohermore National School recognises that not all behaviours need changing. We need to be tolerant of differences and to ensure that we do not interpret all behaviours as requiring change.

Some behaviours can be bothersome, but this does not make them challenging.

Some behaviours are coping strategies or part of pupils' needs and/or personality. This is part of our pupils' disability and should not be interpreted otherwise.

AIMS

Bohermore National School aims to ensure that the following primary aims below underpin our practice to enable us to provide the best possible education for our pupils:

- The provision of an educational environment that is guided by our school ethos;
- The Code of Behaviour is operated with consistency and sensitivity;
- Promote positive behaviour and self-discipline, recognising the differences between children and the need to accommodate these differences;
- Create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- Facilitate behaviour that is respectful of the safety and well-being of others by supporting pupils in developing their understanding of self-discipline and respect;
- Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all members of the school community;
- Allow the school to function in an orderly way where children can make progress in all aspects of their development;
- The staff of Bohermore National School aim to work co-operatively with one another and with parent/guardians to use consistent language and responses to challenging and inappropriate behaviour from pupils;
- A primary aim is to ensure that challenging or passive behaviour associated with complex needs is brought to a manageable level so that the pupil is able to display behaviour which shows that they and others are ready to learn;
- To promote an emphasis on positive behaviour management through designing programmes that highlight preventative measures;
- Staff aim to provide a consistency of approach which allows pupils to experience and learn clear rules and boundaries and respond appropriately to them;
- In requiring pupils to make choices about their own behaviour, staff aim to encourage self-reflection and personal responsibility in behaviour management;

- Staff aim to support pupils in identifying clearly what is the cause of their upset. This will support pupils in communicating clearly what has upset them, discussing it, making an effective choice about how to deal with it and addressing any negative results of behaviours which do not work and clearing up with whoever has been affected and moving forward;
- Staff aim to teach pupils how to relax by using specifically taught relaxation and calming techniques, how to monitor their levels of anxiety, and how to return to being just right/regulated during times of raised levels of anxiety. When necessary staff will use physical intervention techniques to support pupils in the process of calming down and keeping safe;
- Staff aim to promote the achievement of keeping the expectations of the school by rewarding individual pupils for good behaviour and good work;
- Staff will make clear through the way they are being with pupils that they are there to teach them and that pupils are here to learn. Pupils learn that they need to comply with reasonable adult requests whilst at school. Parent/guardians are supported in achieving this situation at home.

DEFINITION OF BEHAVIOUR OF CONCERN

In dealing with children with special needs, it is important to be clear as to what behaviours are to be addressed and targeted by a document such as this. This Code is focussed on all forms of behaviour which deviate from the rules set out in this Code but is focussed in particular on “behaviours of concern”. There are multiple definitions of behaviour of concern but NCSS has adopted the following definition:

‘Culturally abnormal behaviours of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is likely to be placed in jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit use of, or result in the person being denied access to ordinary community facilities’, (Emerson, 1995).

Behaviour of concern may take various forms:

- Self-injury
- Violence directed towards other people
- Reckless disregard for own safety and/or the safety of others
- Sexualised behaviour
- Behaviour which causes serious damage to property
- Verbally abusive with varying intensity and/or frequency

PROCESSES AND SKILLS

Bohermore National School uses a combination of autism-specific preventative and intervention strategies in combination with the Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) approach when managing all pupil's behaviour. Details of these strategies and approaches are outlined in later sections. Together these strategies and approaches provide a planned, systematic and graded method that is effective, safe and as least intrusive as possible.

We believe that these strategies and approaches help our pupils to learn and make choices and begin to take control of their behaviour. The approaches used in school are based on a philosophy of non-violent and pro-active methods of dealing with situations involving pupil's anger and aggression. Underlining a structured response is the acknowledgement of caring enough about our pupils in Bohermore NS not to let them be out of control. School staff aim to resolve crisis situations through appropriately calm, controlled, dignified and skilled de-escalation intervention.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

A whole school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour management within Bohermore NS will be achieved through adopting the following common elements:

- Ethos, policies and practices that are in harmony;
- A teamwork approach to behaviour;
- A whole-school approach to curriculum and classroom management;
- An inclusive and involved school community;
- A systematic process for the planning and reviewing of behaviour policy;
- Continuing professional development for all staff in the area of positive behaviour management;
- A whole school approach to the development of class rules;

To ensure that these elements are meaningful during the day-to-day practice in our school, staff have identified key aims to underpin our practice on a whole-school basis, the end purpose of which, is to enable us to provide the best possible education for all pupils attending Bohermore

GUIDELINES FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT IN Bohermore NS

Bohermore NS recognises that pupils with and without and complex special needs have individual needs in relation to managing their own behaviour. Additionally, it also recognises that Bohermore NS provides education programmes to some children whose complex special needs increase the likelihood of behaviour of concern. It is the overall aim of the school to provide a caring and supportive learning environment for all pupils, as defined by the four fundamental rights of the child.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000, Section 23, states that the School's Code of Behaviour shall specify "the standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school". Bohermore NS recognises the challenges that some pupils may face when self-managing their own behaviour and aims to provide appropriate supports. Therefore, we aim to build and raise all pupils self-esteem through positive relationships based on mutual respect.

Bohermore NS wishes to promote standards of behaviour, which are guided by the following four fundamental rights of the child and associated responsibilities:

<i>Rights</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
To be valued as an individual	To value others
To be treated with dignity and respect	To treat others with respect
To be loved and cared for as a child first	To love and care for others
To be safe	To keep others safe

This policy aims to preserve these fundamental rights through developing a culture of mutual respect, to empower each individual by equipping them with skills to respond appropriately to situations which might infringe their rights and to fulfil their responsibilities towards others.

Ways in which we show respect for one another:

- Look for the positive aspects of each person
- Reward good behaviour and appropriate responses
- Share examples of good behaviour and appropriate responses with parent/guardians
- Listen to each other
- Ensure that everyone's right to privacy, independence and dignity are upheld

Pupils are taught that everyone should have the right to:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being
- Be treated fairly and with respect
- Be listened to
- Be given the opportunity to reach their full potential

- Belong

Pupils are taught that our responsibilities include:

- Respect for others
- Respect for property
- Honesty and fairness in all we do
- Care and consideration for others
- Following school rules

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In accordance with the Bohermore National School Policy on Equality, all pupils attending Bohermore NS must be given all opportunities to thrive and achieve irrespective of any behaviours that may be perceived as challenging.

Staff will endeavour to help pupils to develop their full potential by supporting them in managing their own behaviours, irrespective of race, gender or disability. This Code of Behaviour applies to all children equally.

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENT/GUARDIANS

Parent/guardian and/or guardians are actively encouraged to work in partnership with the school in a constructive and child-centred way to support their child in the self-regulation of their own behaviour. Parent/guardians are also requested to support staff in their work with the child by following the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Bohermore NS Parent/guardian School Communication Policy. Parent/guardians have opportunities during the three scheduled Parent/guardian/School meetings held each academic year to raise any issues arising from their child's School Support (plus) Plan and/or Behaviour Management/Intervention Plan.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DISCIPLINE

STAFF

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the School Principal. The following process will be followed.

A pupil will be referred to the Principal for serious behaviour incidents and for repeated incidents of minor behaviour incidents. The Principal will inform the child's parent/guardians on the third occasion.

The Principal will consider what approach is best suited to the needs of the child, i.e. meet with the child, observe the child school, risk assess the behaviour, suggest data

collection over a period of time to ascertain the function of the behaviour and the necessary behaviour strategies that should be implemented.

When a student has been referred to the Principal on three occasions, a class review meeting will then be arranged to discuss the child's behaviour and the range of available supports will be considered, i.e. staffing, class placement, NCSE applications for supports, clinical referrals.

At this stage, the Principal will update parent/guardians in relation to support for their child being provided by the school.

CLASS TEACHER & SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS

Each Class teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom, while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises.

The Class teacher and Special Needs Assistants together, through their respective roles, bring their combined expertise to the management of behaviour and learning in the classroom. The Class teacher and SNA will also complete NCSE Care Plans and will review regularly.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This Code of Behaviour places positive behaviour management at its core. Staff are required to be fully committed to supporting pupils' learning within a 'no blame' culture in which 'what works' is what is promoted rather than making self and others 'wrong'.

The continuing professional development of staff in the area of behaviour management is key to achieving a whole school approach to the implementation of this policy and it is incumbent on all staff members to implement the guidance provided by this document and staff training. It is intended that continuing professional development in the area of positive behaviour management will ensure the following:

Knowledge and understanding of complex special needs throughout the school;

Knowledge, understanding and implementation of established interventions and approaches;

Knowledge and understanding of general and specific behaviours and behaviour management approaches;

School staff are kept up-to-date with current research relating to the education and well-being of pupils with complex special needs;

The whole staff of Bohermore National School are trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) with all new staff required to undertake full training and all staff required to undertake annual refresher training. These training courses are provided in-house by Bohermore NS staff, who are fully qualified instructors in CPI. Details of CPI are outlined in a later section.

It is the responsibility of staff to highlight for themselves should they require more training and/or information, particularly in relation to individual pupils with whom they are working.

The School Principal and/or the Board of Management will endeavour to provide additional training when and where practicable.

All staff are responsible for making themselves aware of pupils' strengths and abilities to communicate and build on this in their work with each child.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The overall responsibility for ensuring the preparation and review of the Code of Behaviour of Bohermore National School rests with the Board of Management. The Board of Management has ensured that all members of the school community were consulted in the preparation of this policy and, as final authority rests with the Board, the final draft of the policy was made by the Board and no subsequent amendments were made to this document.

The Board of Management provides support for the implementation of this policy by sanctioning the continuing professional development of staff.

The Board of Management has ensured that they have provided for their duty of care to all pupils and staff by including within this policy the procedures that are in place for the Board of Management to deal with serious breaches of behaviour.

PARENT/GUARDIANS

The active support of parent/guardians is essential for the effective implementation of a behaviour policy. Bohermore NS recognises the importance of consulting with parent/guardians in the formulation of this policy. Views were sought from Parent/guardian representatives from the Board of Management and these representatives were invited to provide comments on a draft version of this policy.

In relation to bullying behaviour, parent/guardians are requested to engage with school staff and the parent/guardians of the 'target' child, as per the procedures contained in the Bohermore NS Anti-Bullying Policy.

From September 1st 2020 onwards, parent/guardians will be provided with the Bohermore NS Code of Behaviour prior to registering their child. Under Section 23 (4) of the Education Welfare Act 2000. From the 1st September 2022 onwards, the Board of Management, will, as a condition of registering their child in the school, require parent/guardians to confirm in writing that the Bohermore NS Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by their child by completing the school form contained in Appendix 1.

PUPILS

Pupils are involved in formulating a Code of Practice at the beginning of each new school year. Each class group, together with their teacher, devises a Code of Practice, referred to as 'Class rules' that are based on the aforementioned four fundamental rights of the child and associated responsibilities and also on the agreed 'School Rules'. On occasion, it may be more appropriate to approach this exercise with some pupils on an individual basis. The Code of

Practice/Class Rules are devised at a level that is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the group and also contain a list of rewards/reinforcers and sanctions. The content of this list should reflect the behaviour plans of each pupil in the class and therefore, should be individualised. The diversity within each class group requires a flexible approach from the teacher and the best use of his/her insight and judgement when making decisions. Class rules will be communicated to parent/guardians for discussion through the individual education planning process.

PART 2: WHOLE SCHOOL PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

As stated earlier, a primary aim of Bohermore NS is to ensure that all levels of challenging or passive behaviour associated with complex special needs is brought to a manageable level so that the pupil is able to display behaviour which shows that they are ready to learn. To this end, the purpose underpinning the approaches outlined in this section is two-fold in that it is intended that they be used as part of the Bohermore NS whole-school approach to positive management of behaviour; Firstly, by ensuring that good behaviour is promoted and behaviour of concern is anticipated through the use of preventative practice; And secondly, through the use of intervention approaches that are chosen and aimed appropriately at low, medium and high levels of behaviour of concern.

Our positive behaviour management approaches place emphasis on separating the behaviour from the person as it is essential for building a caring and empathetic relationship with the child.

The following sections provide details of the staged process to positive behaviour management followed by Bohermore NS. This process involves assessment of behaviour, planning for behaviour management, planning for behaviour intervention and the types of strategies that are regularly used as intervention.

APPROACHES TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Bohermore NS uses a variety of approaches to positive behaviour management. These approaches consist of interventions that operate at the following three levels:

- General preventative strategies

Preventative strategies are used by all school staff to ensure that the school day is adapted for our pupils' individual needs. The intention of this is to support the child in the self-management of their own behaviour without the need for behavioural intervention.

- Positive behaviour interventions aimed at Level 1 behaviours

Positive behaviour interventions aimed at modifying low-level behaviours are used to support a pupil who is unable to self-regulate their behaviour. The intention of intervention is to support the child and work towards independence in the self-regulation of their behaviour. The school may seek parent/guardian permission to make a referral for clinical services at this stage.

- Positive behaviour interventions aimed at Level 2 & 3 behaviours

Positive interventions aimed at modifying high-level behaviours are used to support a pupil whose behaviour is significantly challenging and poses a risk to themselves and/or others. Such behaviour will typically pose a health and safety risk, either physically, by emotional

distress or harm for the child concerned and/or others, i.e. through self-harming, through physical assault of other pupils or staff and/or involving behaviour giving rise to child protection concerns. A high level of disruptive behaviour will also require positive behaviour intervention to ensure a calm school environment. The school may seek parent/guardian permission to make a referral for clinical services at this stage.

The following outline provides more detail of how behavioural intervention is implemented at each stage of our approach to the positive management of pupils' behaviour in Bohermore NS.

GENERAL PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

In Bohermore NS there is a whole school emphasis placed on positive behaviour management through preventative strategies. School staff are required to organise all classrooms to meet the individual needs of the children within each class by using the TEACCH approach, i.e. each child is allocated their own individual workstation and a common area is designated for group work. Pupils' desks may be positioned individually, or they may be joined with peers in accordance with the needs of pupils. Staff interact daily with children in such a way as to manage children positively so that opportunities for learning can be maximised. This involves using preventative strategies in line with each student's disability profile in the following areas to support pupils throughout the school day.

School Rules:

- Language and communication
- Environment
- Personal
- Sensory Integration

SCHOOL RULES

All students, especially those with complex special needs rely on rules and routines to keep their environment predictable and, therefore, feel safer. Educational professionals and parent/guardians must understand the importance of rules and routines for individuals with complex special needs and apply them in various settings and situations. Application of rules and routines in school and home helps all students with or without complex special needs engage more successfully in activities and prevents problem behaviour.

Generally, many children with complex special needs, and in particular those with a diagnosis of autism, have rigid patterns of thinking. Their tendency to follow rules and routines often causes problems for adaptive functioning, including daily living skills, communication, and social interactions. Pupils may insist upon the same routine or environment and be upset or even have an emotional meltdown if the sameness is broken by unexpected changes or people. However, this characteristic can be applied in a positive way. For example, it is widely known that many individuals with complex special needs benefit from structured environments in which they understand the rules and routines. Pupils with complex special needs are more likely to engage in activities in those situations. For example, highly structured

program, such as structured teaching approaches, show how consistent application of rules and routines facilitates the child's learning.

Rules and routines must be established for all pupils to follow in class or other places in school, including transitions. It is suggested that the rules and routines be explained and stated using positive words (i.e., saying "Walk quietly on the corridor" instead of saying, "Do not run on the corridor"). The teacher may set up a time for the pupil to read and repeat the rules in a daily routine.

Together with pupils, each class teacher will write class rules. This can take place on a group or individual basis. The class rules will be derived from the agreed school rules.

The following school rules have been agreed by the school community for use throughout the school. Individual class rules and pupil rules are derived from the list below:

- Be a good listener
- Follow directions
- Be kind and respectful to others
- Do your best and work hard
- Care for our school
- Care for each other
- Choose kindness
- Care for your classroom
- Care for your favourite items
- Play safely
- Keep your hands to yourself
- Play fairly with others
- Talk calmly to others

Routines help create an efficient environment – they save time. When pupils know routines, they can perform daily activities more quickly. Teachers often establish and teach routines related to (a) taking lunch, (b) handing in work, (c) handing out work, (d) getting ready to leave at the end of the day, (f) lining up for break, (g) walking down the corridor, and so on.

The following steps may be used to develop rules and routines for a pupil:

1. Determine the most important rules or routines.

Most pupils benefit from structure. Observe the pupil's daily routines and activities and prioritise individual needs.

2. Develop rules or desired behaviour for a setting.

Rules and routines can be developed differently depending on situations or people. For example, teachers can establish different rules for their classes. Rules need to be concise and observable. In addition, literally accurate and positive words can be used to prevent confusion.

3. Teach the rules directly.

Once rules are established, teach them to the pupil directly. Direct instruction gives a rationale for the rule and provides knowledge about how to use the information. To teach rules and routines, teachers may use modelling or social narrative strategies. Staff may also teach rules using behavioural strategies, including prompting, fading, shaping, and direct instruction.

4. Provide support.

There is no specific way to provide rules or routines; however, supports should be based on the pupil's age, interests, and individual needs. Visual supports of rules or routines are often very useful in enhancing pupil understanding of activities or sequences.

5. Evaluate and generalise rules and routines.

Monitoring the pupil's progress is an important part of instruction. In addition, the pupil should eventually be able to generalise the rules and routines to various settings.

For some pupils with complex special needs, especially pupils who have limited skills in communication and other adaptive functioning, rules and routines must be directly taught. For instance, an activity schedule consisting of a set of pictures or words provides visual cues and helps the pupils know the sequence of activities. Social stories are also useful to introduce the rules and routines.

Rules and routines can prevent problem behaviour by providing information about what to do in a certain environment. Pupils can benefit from rules and routines as structure alleviates their confusion across settings and activities throughout the day.

PART 3 – INTERVENTIONS

DEFINITIONS OF TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

PHYSICAL ESCORT

Physical escort means a temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location.

SECLUSION

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a pupil alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. This is only permissible during an ongoing physically challenging incident that is considered to have a high level of health and safety risk to the pupil and/or others. The pupil must always remain visible to staff and must remain supervised at all times. This is a response that occurs only when two or more staff are present and the School Principal must be informed immediately such action has been taken. The School Principal will then inform the parent/guardians of the pupil concerned of the details of the incident.

TIME OUT

Time out involves restricting the pupil's access to all positive reinforcement as part of the behavioural programme.

WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal involves removing a pupil from a situation which causes anxiety or distress where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities. This will often involve escorting the pupil on a walk in the school grounds, but will always involve taking the pupil to a communal area, i.e. school playground, courtyards, playrooms, etc. Where a pupil is withdrawn, he or she must always be accompanied by two members of staff.

STAFF INTERACTION

Staff should not personalise abuse or aggression in these situations. If a member of staff feels that he or she is being emotionally affected by the behaviour of concern being displayed, then the pupil is likely to be at greater risk. In these circumstances the staff member must hand over to another member of staff and withdraw.

A second member of staff must be present at all times and the Class teacher is responsible for ensuring that this is the case. In the event of a staff shortage, the Class teacher must ensure that the school principal or deputy principal are promptly informed.

Both staff members who are present are responsible for monitoring the event and ensuring that the pupil's rights are being preserved as well as being safeguarded for advice and support for each other. Teamwork is considered to be essential when managing an incident of high level behaviour of concern.

Listen to what the pupil says and pay close attention to his or her mood, facial expressions and body language. Do not ignore or accept any further verbal challenges. Try to divert the pupil's attention into a distraction of more positive behaviour. If a pupil makes a threat, divert the threat. Do not leave the pupil in the position where staff have not offered an alternative.

Behaviour of concern involves the pupil AND the respondent. Staff will ensure that their own behaviour or use of language does not provoke the pupil or escalate the situation. Staff should be prepared for an intervention to continue for a long time and should not allow themselves to become emotionally involved.

The following steps have been sanctioned by the Board of Management and therefore, can be followed when an incident of behaviour of concern is occurring.

Situations are not ignored when another pupil or a staff member is involved. The other pupil is moved, if possible, rather than the pupil who is behaving inappropriately. This is done to re-direct the attention from the escalating behaviour. Pupils may be given verbal prompts, such as 'hands down' and, to re-direct them back to task;

1. DEALING WITH A SITUATION

Whenever possible the staff who initially dealt with the behaviour remain with the pupil until they are settled. In some circumstances another staff member may take over, simply as a new face, as this can sometimes break a pattern of behaviour;

2. AFTER A SITUATION

It is important after dealing with an incident that it is then 'finished'. Incidents are not dwelt on or re-visited after the event. Each incident is treated as a new and different incident. This helps to prevent the feeling of failure and does not reinforce any negativity;

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION – OUR APPROACHES TO BEST PRACTICE

Bohermore NS recognises that there is a need, reflected in common and statute law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its pupils, staff and property.

Bohermore NS is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and only use physical intervention as a last resort, in the interest of safety and it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.

This policy applies to all staff who are authorised to use physical intervention.

The best practice regarding physical intervention outlined below should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying and health and safety.

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate. In general, physical intervention will only be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Where there is risk to their own safety and/or the safety of other pupils, staff or visitors; or
- Where there is risk of serious damage to property; or
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline; or
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.

In assessing whether physical intervention is appropriate, staff shall take into account all of the circumstances in the incident including the severity of the potential consequences, the likelihood of those consequences, the effect of physical intervention on the child in question and the likely effectiveness of physical intervention in reducing risk. All staff should be aware that the use of physical intervention in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be more justifiable than the use of force to prevent damage or misbehaviour.

POSITIVE STRATEGIES, POSITIVE HANDLING AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

The underpinning principles of using restrictive physical interventions in Bohermore NS are as follows:

- The use of force should, wherever possible, be avoided.
- There are occasions when the use of force is appropriate
- When force is necessary, it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned

The use of reasonable and appropriate force is likely to be defensible when it is required to prevent:

- Self-harming

- Injury to other pupils or staff
- Damage to property
- An offence being committed
- Any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline within the school or among any of its pupils

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause. All physical interventions must be in line with CPI training, as provided by the Board of Management.

Staff will view physical intervention or restraint of pupils as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment which is generally calm and supportive especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs which may increase their despair and aggression.

All staff must understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child, which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

A physical intervention behaviour programme is implemented in Bohermore NS to manage highly challenging pupil behaviour of a nature that poses a significant risk to the child concerned or others with strategies that are known to all involved, both in and out of school. The physical intervention behaviour programme gives continuity to the pupils, as those that deal with them use the same responses when managing behaviour. It is produced under consultation with the involved professionals and parent/guardians.

Planning the behaviour programme could involve the following:

- Prevention strategies to alleviate conflict
- Physical intervention methods
- Identification of the triggers
- Description of behaviours displayed
- Risk assessment

Physical intervention behaviour programmes are implemented after using 'ABC' recording charts, recording observations at specific intervals. All incidents are recorded on the relevant school forms only and these forms are kept on file in the school principal's office and online on Aladdin. All staff are individually responsible for ensuring that incident report forms are completed accurately and in a timely manner, i.e. within 48 hours of the incident occurring.

Staff are advised that failure to complete school incident report forms will be regarded by the Board of Management as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with under the appropriate DES circular (Circular 72/2011 for SNAs and Circular 49/2018 for teachers).

Incident Report Forms can be later used to assist in writing and implement a behaviour programme and also to apply for extra resources/support staff for the individual pupil. Together, these documents will build up a profile of the pupil, identifying different methodologies, strategies, behaviours and triggers. A baseline, identifying pupils' strengths and needs, is established using this profile and this becomes part of the Behaviour Plan and also forms part of the Support Plan and Care Plan of the pupil concerned.

In situations where physical intervention has been necessary, pupils will always be encouraged to complete a task that was not completed as a result of an outburst. This may be with support, or in some cases, independently. In these incidences, the principal will report as required under the new NCSE guidelines to the NCSE.

There will be occasions when staff may have to act using their own initiative. This is because it is not always possible to identify and/or predict every situation that could result in an outburst. Ad hoc situations will follow the general guidelines that have been set out in this policy, summarised below:

- Physical intervention is a last resort
- All incidents are recorded factually without interpretation
- Force is minimal
- Physical intervention methods used are only those that are outlined within this policy

Behaviour Plans are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are relevant and effective. Parent/guardians sign the Behaviour Plan to ensure that they are aware of what is happening in school and agree with the plan being implemented.

Parent/guardians are advised that if the Behaviour Plan is not signed then, following referral of the matter to the Board of Management by the school principal, it is the policy of the Board of Management to not allow that pupil to attend Bohermore NS until some form of agreement is reached. This is to ensure that staff are not placed in a position of liability in the event of an accident or incident.

Parent/guardians are informed of a behavioural incident through the usual method of home/school communication (for details refer to the Bohermore National School Parent/guardian/School Communication Policy – in development). Copies of School Incident Report Forms will be provided to parent/guardians on request.

SCHOOL PRACTICE REGARDING INCIDENTS OF BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN

Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff at as early a stage as possible since single-handed intervention increases the risks of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.

The School Principal and/or Deputy Principal must be informed of each incident involving a high level of behaviour of concern within 10 minutes or as close to 10 minutes from the beginning of the incident. The responsibility is on all staff equally who are present during the incident to ensure that this requirement is met.

All staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance should this be required.

Before intervening in a non-emergency, consideration must be given to whether or not other staff are available to assist.

Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident, may be in a better position to intervene or restrain the pupil if this proves necessary.

A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil will be removed from the audience. The pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet, but not completely private, place (e.g. two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).

In the event of the pupil's behaviour posing a serious health and safety risk to others, the door will be closed. The following constitutes high risk behaviours:

- Attempted absconding
- Attempted physical assault
- Actual physical assault
- Attempted and extensive destruction of property
- Actual extensive destruction of property

Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil calms down, she/he will be released.

All staff are aware that we operate a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies by using the internal telephone network.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION/RESTRAINT APPROACHES WHICH CAN BE REGARDED AS REASONABLE IN APPROPRIATE CIRCUMSTANCES

The following approaches are regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances. However, all approaches listed below must be followed in accordance with CPI training. Where a staff member has not undergone the CPI training, they may not undertake the following actions unless there is a serious risk to the life or personal safety of a staff member or pupil.

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Pushing, if restricted to situations where reasonable force is used to resist a pupil's movement, rather than a forceful push that might cause the pupil to fall over
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Escorting a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- In extreme cases using restrictive holds and lifting where possible

In the event that a child strongly resists safe physical intervention, staff will withdraw physical intervention and wait until the child is ready to comply and it is safe for further support to be provided for the child.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

REMEMBER:

- Get to know the pupil well
- A strong relationship based on trust and respect is one of the best preventative measures.
- Involve the pupils in decisions
- Discuss with the pupil reasonable limits, appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Teach by example
- Model respect for the pupils and for each other in all of your work.
- Encourage good behaviour
- Notice and respond when pupils are behaving well, or are being helpful and co-operative, or just being quiet and friendly.
- Be consistent in your own behaviour
- Encourage consistency in the team in which you work.

Also,

- Understand the communication needs of the pupil
- Objectives (long-term and short-term) should be set at the right level for each pupil

- Make sure that the pupils understand exactly what is expected of them
- Pupils should be attending to you before they are given instructions and instruction should be set at the right level with clear antecedents
- The following guiding principles will be followed by staff in relation to physical interventions.
- Physical intervention, physical escort and seclusion will always consider the rights and needs of the pupil first;
- Pupils will always be encouraged to regain control without the need of physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion;
- Physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion will only be used if it is in the best interest of the pupil and the other pupils. The pupil must remain under direct adult supervision at all times.
- Every effort should be made by staff to prevent the need for use of physical intervention, physical escort and the use of seclusion in a separate area.
- Physical intervention or seclusion will never be used except in situations where the child's behaviour poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self and/or others and other interventions are ineffective and should be discontinued as soon as imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others has dissipated.
- Any behavioural intervention must be consistent with the child's rights with their dignity as a person and with their bodily integrity.
- Physical intervention, physical escort and seclusion should never be used as punishment or discipline (e.g. placing a pupil in seclusion for minor incidents of behaviour), as a means of coercion or retaliation, or as a convenience.
- Physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion should never be used in a manner that restricts a child's breathing or harms the child.
- The use of physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion, particularly when there is repeated use for an individual child, multiple uses within the same classroom, or multiple uses by the same individual, should trigger a review and, if appropriate, revision of strategies currently in place to address dangerous behaviour. If positive behavioural strategies are not in place, staff should consider developing them. In the event that this process has already been undertaken, then the school principal will refer the matter to the Board of Management for further review.
- Behavioural strategies to address dangerous behaviour that results in the use of physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion should address the underlying cause or purpose of the dangerous behaviour.

- Parent/guardians will be notified as soon as possible following each instance in which physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion is used with their child.
- Policies regarding the use of physical intervention, physical escort and seclusion should provide that each incident involving the use of physical intervention, physical escort or seclusion should be documented in writing and provide for the collection of specific data that would enable teachers, staff and other personnel to understand and implement the preceding principles. Any use of physical intervention must be reported to the NCSE from September 2025 onwards.

NON-VIOLENT CRISIS PREVENTION INTERVENTION (CPI) - A PRACTICAL APPROACH FOR MANAGING AGGRESSIVE AND VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

Managing aggressive and violent behaviour is an essential skill pertinent to all school staff. The Board of Management recognises the need for safe, effective behaviour management training designed to maintain the care, safety, welfare and security of all involved in the intervention process.

This policy formally adopts the approach of CPI as a safe, non-harmful behaviour management system to be used in Bohermore NS by all school staff. The CPI programme is designed to aid school staff in the management of disruptive and assaultive pupils, even during the most violent moments. It has been developed and taught by the Crisis Prevention Institute, a training organisation dedicated to training staff in the safe management of potentially violent pupils.

The programme has several primary objectives:

- To train staff in those techniques that are most effective in approaching and reducing the tension of an agitated pupil.
- To focus on the alternatives if a pupil loses control and becomes violent.
- To instruct staff members in techniques to control their own anxieties during interventions and maintain the best possible professional attitude.
- To provide non-verbal, verbal, and physical intervention skills to allow the staff member to maintain the best possible care and welfare, as well as safety and security, for all involved - even during aggressive outburst or lashing out.

Further guidance regarding CPI restraints and holds may be referred to in Appendix 2.

PARENT/GUARDIAN/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor encouraging positive behaviour in the school. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parent/guardians have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

The methods of communication used within the school are outlined in detail in the Bohermore NS Parent/guardian/School Communication Policy. Arrangements for Informing Parent/guardians of behaviour incidents are outlined below:

Parent/guardians will be informed of the school's policy regarding physical intervention in the following ways:

- At the outset of the introduction of this policy, all parent/guardians/guardians will be informed about the policy
- Staff who are working with particular children who have a high level of behavioural needs may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage behaviour of concern. Such arrangements will be discussed with parent/guardians/guardians in advance on an individual basis. All interventions will be routinely recorded on the School Incident Report Form.
- Parent/guardians will be informed via the arrangements outlined in the Parent/guardian/School Communication Policy after a non-routine incident where physical intervention is used with their child.

STAFF DEBRIEFING

How each debrief is undertaken will depend on the nature of the incident and the number of people involved. The following is the process that must be followed in cases where a serious behaviour incident has occurred.

Immediately following an incident, the staff involved must take time away from the situation. Debriefing may continue as is necessary for staff to feel ready to return to work.

If any injuries have occurred appropriate action must be taken and at a minimum a first aider will be involved. In the event of a serious injury the Health and Safety Officer/First Aid Officer will attend the injured person and may refer the need for further medical attention to the school principal.

The school principal will ensure that all staff involved have the opportunity to speak about the incident. As soon as is feasible (within a week) following an incident, all parties involved meet to formally debrief and actions that arise from it. It is the school principal's responsibility to organise the meeting. This meeting will only concern the well-being of staff and pupil behaviour will not be discussed.

Actions from debrief must be recorded on the School Incident Record Form.

The Board of Management will be informed by the school principal of all incidents that require a debriefing meeting.

Staff will be provided with the contact details of the Department of Education Occupational Health Service at the start of each school year and following any incident.

STAFF AUTHORISATION AND GOOD PRACTICE IN RELATION TO PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

We recognise that most of the time physical intervention will be used infrequently, that is, as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.

Board of Management Authorisation of Staff to Use Physical Intervention: All teachers and special needs assistants are, given the nature of their roles and duties, authorised to use physical intervention as appropriate and in accordance with their training.

At each Board of Management meeting, the Board of Management will be informed of the number and types of physical interventions for behaviour of concern incidents at levels 2 and 3.

PART 4 - SCHOOL PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING SANCTIONS

In every aspect of school life Bohermore National School seeks to promote positive behaviour. However, in instances of negative behaviour, the focus is on encouraging a pupil to change that behaviour to a more useful one by:

- helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is undesirable
- helping pupils to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping pupils, in ways that are appropriate to their age and level of cognitive functioning, to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- help pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour

If however, the pupil does not respond, there are a series of consequences that can be used, depending on the pupil's needs and the situation. An effective consequence is one that most often reduces or stops the negative behaviour. It is the objective of the school to use sanctions such as expulsion or suspension as a measure of last resort only. It is hoped that in the vast majority of cases, the school's positive behaviour management strategies will obviate any need for such punishments. In rare cases, the Board recognises that it may have no alternative but to suspend (whether internally or externally) a pupil or in extreme cases to exclude a pupil.

This child's level of cognitive functioning will always inform the decision-making in relation to the use of sanctions.

A sanction may also:

- reinforce boundaries set out in the code of behaviour
- signal to other pupils and to staff that their well-being is being protected

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parent/guardians will be utilised and the following procedures will be followed.

It should be noted that in certain cases, the School may invoke sanctions for behaviour which occurs off school grounds or outside school hours which endangers or harms school pupils, staff or property, involves illegal substances or illegal activity.

The below stages can be followed sequentially in the case of a continuum of serious behavioural incidents or can be invoked at a stage proportionate to the level of wrongdoing and/or risk posed by the behaviour in question. Every situation differs and different responses may be required in different case depending on the circumstances of that case.

STAGE 1 – PARENT/GUARDIAN/SCHOOL MEETING

The school principal will arrange a meeting with the parent/guardians of the pupil concerned and the deputy principal and class teacher will attend this meeting along with special needs assistant(s) who are working directly with the child. A clinician may also be invited to attend this meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to inform parent/guardians of the nature and level of their child's behaviours and to either create or review the child's Behaviour Plan. Minutes of this meeting will be taken.

STAGE 2 – INTERNAL SUSPENSION

Internal suspension will be implemented by removing the child from the main classroom and placing him or her in a separate classroom. The decision to remove the child from the main classroom will be taken on health and safety grounds and also on the grounds of the school's responsibility to deliver a relatively disruption-free learning environment to all pupils equally. This arrangement may be temporary, but in any case, it will be reviewed to ensure that the child's needs are continuing to be met. In the event that clinical recommendations and behavioural support are made available to the school, the ensuing behavioural plan will be planned in line with the arrangements outlined above.

The Board of Management instructs all staff to make every attempt to support the child towards increased inclusion whilst ensuring the health, safety, well-being and safe-guarding of all pupils and staff.

The pupil will be provided with a scheduled day and where possible within the staffing level allocated to the school by the NCSE, the pupil will be allocated access to a special needs assistants to oversee the school day while working under the direction of the class teacher. On occasions when staffing levels are reduced, staff must inform the school principal or deputy principal that another member of staff is required. It may be necessary, on occasion, for staff to maintain a supervision presence outside the classroom, with the classroom door remaining open, until additional staff become available.

In the event that the pupil is able to cope with short periods in the main classroom, this time may be gradually extended in accordance with the pupil's individual needs when balanced equally with the needs of the other pupils in the class. The main aim of this approach towards inclusion for pupils with high levels of behaviour of concern is to support children in modifying their behaviour through a highly controlled education and behaviour programme. Pupils are supported in coping with the demands of the main classroom by controlling the length of time they spend in this more demanding environment and by ensuring that this time is spent purposefully and disruption-free for all pupils.

Staff and parent/guardians are advised that a change in classroom may also involve a change in class placement and this will be dependent on ensuring a balance of needs in all classes. Any such change will be guided by the Bohermore NS Class Placements policy.

The School Principal will arrange a meeting with parent/guardians to inform them of the reasons for the change in classroom for their child and to discuss how the child's education programme will proceed. This meeting will also be attended by the Deputy Principal and Class teacher and minutes of the meeting will be taken.

STAGE 3 - EXTERNAL SUSPENSION

Suspension should be a proportionate response to the behaviour that is causing concern. Normally, other interventions will have been tried before suspension, and school staff will have reviewed the reasons why these have not worked. Other interventions may include:

- Parent Supervision
- Behaviour Monitoring
- Behavioural Contract
- In-school suspension
- Support from external clinical services

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students

The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety for themselves, other students and staff members

The student is responsible for serious damage to property or has engaged in assaultive behaviour

A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension.

There may be instances where behaviour warrants immediate action and disciplinary absences are given in the interest of the safety of the student and other school community members.

Length of period of suspension

- The Board of Management has authorised the principal to impose suspension as a sanction for up to a maximum of three days. The Principal, in consultation with the Chairperson, is authorised to impose a period of suspension of not more than five days.
- The Board of Management may impose a period of suspension of more than five days but will normally place a ceiling of ten days on any one period of suspension imposed by it. The Board will not impose an indefinite suspension and will formally review an proposal to extend an existing suspension.
- The Board will also formally review any proposal to suspend a student where the suspension would bring the number of days for which the student has been suspended in the current school year to twenty days or more. Any such suspension is subject to appeal under section 29 of the *Education Act 1998*.

Administrative Steps relating to Suspension

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms serious misbehaviour that could warrant suspension, the school should observe the following procedures:

Step 1: Inform the student and parents

Let the student and their parents know about the complaint, how it will be investigated, and that it could result in suspension. Parents may be informed by phone or in writing, depending

on the seriousness of the matter. Informing parents in writing has the benefit of ensuring that there is a formal and permanent record of having let the parents know. It also ensures that parents are clear about what their son or daughter is alleged to have done. It serves the important function of underlining to parents the seriousness with which the school views the alleged misbehaviour.

Step 2: Give an opportunity to respond

Save where an immediate suspension is warranted on health and safety grounds, parents and student should be given an opportunity to respond before a decision is made and before any sanction is imposed. A meeting with the student and their parents provides an opportunity for them to give their side of the story and to ask questions about the evidence of serious misbehaviour, especially where there is a dispute about the facts. It may also be an opportunity for parents to make their case for lessening the sanction, and for the school to explore with parents how best to address the student's behaviour. If a student and their parents fail to attend a meeting, the Principal should write advising of the gravity of the matter, the importance of attending a re-scheduled meeting and, failing that, the duty of the school authorities to make a decision to respond to the negative behaviour. The school should record the invitations made to parents and their response.

Step 3: Decision as to whether to suspend the student or not.

Having heard what the parents and/or student has to say, the Principal (or where appropriate the Board) will make a decision as to whether to suspend the student or not, and the period of suspension to be imposed.

Step 4: Follow up

As soon as possible after the decision to suspend has been taken, the Principal should notify the parents/guardians and the student in writing of the decision to suspend. The letter should confirm:

- the period of the suspension and the dates on which the suspension will begin and end,
- the reasons for the suspension,
- the arrangements for returning to school, including any commitments to be entered into by the student and the parents/guardians (for example, parents/guardians might be asked to reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Behaviour),
- the provision for an appeal to the Board of Management,
- where applicable, the right to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) (Education Act 1998, section 29).

In the event of a student being suspended, the school will notify school transport of this fact and the date of return to school for the student.

Procedures in relation to immediate suspension

Where an immediate suspension is considered by the Principal to be warranted for reasons of the safety of the student, other students, staff or others, a preliminary investigation should be conducted to establish the case for the imposition of the suspension. It should be noted that this preliminary investigation is likely to be brief and will not involve the parents having a right to respond at the initial stage. A formal investigation (during which there will be full rights of fair procedure in relation to a right to a response etc. in accordance with Steps 1-4 above) should immediately follow the imposition of the suspension. No suspension, including an immediate suspension, should be open-ended. In the case of an immediate suspension, parents must be notified, and arrangements made with them for the student to be collected.

The school must have regard to its duty of care for the student. Under no circumstances should a student be sent home from school without first notifying parents.

Rationale for the use of Suspensions

Bohermore NS believes that using suspensions as a consequence for serious misconduct can have value if used with a specific purpose in mind. This includes giving staff time to plan ways of helping the student to change unacceptable behaviour and giving the school an opportunity to seek support from other agencies that may be able to help to support the child (e.g. CAMHS, NEPS, Social Services). Suspensions can provide respite for staff and students, give the student time to reflect on the link between their action and its consequences, and illustrate to other students that serious misbehaviour is not acceptable at the school. It can also be used to allow the school an opportunity to apply certain construction works or building upgrades necessary to deal with a child's behaviour.

Appeals

Decisions in relation to suspension imposed by the Principal should be appealed to the Board of Management within 10 school days of the decision being notified to the parent(s). In relation to suspensions where the period of cumulative period of suspension in an academic year reaches 20 school days, this can be appealed in accordance with the provisions of Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.

Administrative Suspension

In certain exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may apply an administrative suspension. Such a suspension is not intended to be punitive or disciplinary in nature, but is solely a management tool to allow the school an opportunity to pursue certain specified steps in relation to a student. For example, the Board of Management may deem that it is necessary to obtain funding for certain construction works or building upgrades in order to safely accommodate a particular child. Equally, it may be necessary to obtain certain training for staff members, additional staff supports or additional clinical supports. Where it is necessary for the student to be out of the school until those supports or funding have been obtained, the Board of Management may, in its absolute discretion, place the child on an administrative suspension until those works or support or funding has been procured and completed. The administrative suspension shall be reviewed every 10 school days and the ongoing necessity for same will be discussed by the Board of Management on each such occasion.

REMOVAL OF SUSPENSION (REINSTATEMENT)

Following or during a period of suspension, the parent/guardian(s) may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The school principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff.

In the event that the School Principal is not satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupil's or staff, the parent/guardians(s) application to have the pupil reinstated to the school may be referred by the School Principal to the Board of Management.

In the event that the pupil is reinstated a Behaviour Intervention Plan for the pupil will be required prior to re-admitting the pupil formally to the class. The school will require that this Behaviour Intervention Plan is supplied by clinical services to the School Principal.

STAGE 4 - EXCLUSION

This procedure may be used in a case of serious wrongdoing, in accordance with the principles set out below and with Section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. While it is envisaged that expelling a student would be a measure of last resort after a continuum or period of serious or dangerous behaviour, the Board recognises that there may be instances of behaviour which are so serious or dangerous that expulsion is warranted for a "first offence".

Grounds for expulsion:

- The pupil's behaviour is a consistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process.
- Continued presence of the pupil in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to the pupil's own safety and well-being.
- Continued presence of the pupil constitutes a real and significant threat to the safety and well-being of others.
- Single incident or a series of incidents of significant, dangerous or serious wrongdoing.

Non-exhaustive list of examples which may warrant expulsion:

The Board may impose expulsion as a sanction in cases such as the following. Please note that this list is for information purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive. Other scenarios may arise in which the Board deem expulsion is warranted.

- Sexual assault
- Possession of and/or supplying illegal drugs
- Actual violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff
- Attempted violence or physical assault against another pupil or member of staff
- Attempted or actual self-harm resulting in the occurrence of potentially serious physical injury where the school judges that it can no longer meet the pupil's needs by adequately providing for the pupil's health, safety and well-being when at school

Procedure in respect of expulsion:

1. A detailed investigation of the incident(s) will be undertaken by/at the direction of the School Principal including interviews with all relevant parties, witnesses and the alleged wrongdoer. As part of this investigation, the Principal will meet with the pupil and his/her parents. At this meeting, the parents will have the opportunity to respond to the allegation(s) and make any submissions they wish to make in relation to the nature of the sanctions to be applied or how the pupil's behaviour might be managed without the school having to resort to expelling the pupil. The pupil's parents should

be provided with copies of the relevant documentation before this meeting in order that they be aware of the nature and extent of the allegations against their child.

2. The Principal will provide a written report to the Board of Management outlining the facts of the matter as ascertained by the Principal and the Principal's recommendations in relation to sanctions.
3. Where the Principal is recommending expulsion as a possible sanction, the Principal's report should be furnished to the parents of the pupil at least 5 working days before the hearing referred to below or any rate sufficient time must be allowed to them to review the report and be aware of what allegations are being investigated as part of this process. If statements have been taken as part of the investigation or evidence gathered, the parents are entitled to copies of such statements (redacted if necessary) and details of the evidence which will be considered by the Board of Management. In certain scenarios, e.g. the statement has been given in confidence and on the understanding that it will not be shared with the pupil and/or their parents or where the making of the statement would put the person at risk (whether of reprisal or otherwise), the Board may provide portions or excerpts of the statement/evidence or may decline to provide the document or evidence at all.
4. The Board of Management will then consider the school principal's report and recommendations. If the Board decides to consider expelling the pupil, it will hold a hearing at which the child's parents/guardian can make submissions.
5. Having held the hearing, and having heard the pupil's parents' submissions, the Board of Management will withdraw to consider the appropriate sanction and the Principal's recommendations in light of the following factors:
 - a. The nature, scale and persistence of the behaviour in question,
 - b. The effect of the behaviour on the school community (staff and pupils) – in particular their health and safety,
 - c. The previous behaviour and conduct of the pupil,
 - d. Any contrition or attempts by the pupil to reform their behaviour,
 - e. The merits of any explanation of justification offered by or on behalf of the pupil
 - f. Attempts (short of expulsion) made by the Principal and staff to divert, correct or check the behaviour and the effectiveness of those attempts,
 - g. The duty of the school to provide an education for its students and whether the continued enrolment of the student affects or limits the Board's ability to discharge this duty,
 - h. The duty of care owed by the school to its employees, pupils and to visitors to the school and whether the continued enrolment of the pupil affects or limits the Board's ability to meet this duty of care.
 - i. the educational interests of the student concerned and the desirability of enabling him or her to participate in and benefit from education with his or her peers,
 - j. the educational interests of and the effective provision of education for other students of the school and the maintenance of a classroom and school environment which is supportive of learning amongst all students in the school and ensures continuity of instruction provided to students,
 - k. such other matters as the Board of Management considers relevant.

- 6 Based on the foregoing considerations, any submissions from the parents and the Principal's Report, the Board will then make a decision as to whether or not to exclude the pupil.
- 7 If the Board of Management recommends expulsion, the Board of Management will propose a date on which the expulsion will become effective at least 20 school days from the date on which the Education Welfare Officer is notified of the proposed expulsions.
- 8 If the Board deems it necessary, the pupil may be suspended for the period before the Board meets again to confirm the expulsion in accordance with step 11 below.
- 9 The Education Welfare Officer is informed of the proposal to expel the pupil and the effective date of that proposal.
- 10 The Education Welfare Officer will arrange consultations with the appropriate parties.
- 11 At least 20 school days after the EWO was notified of the proposed expulsion, the Board will meet again to decide whether or not to confirm the decision to expel the pupil.
- 12 Confirmation of the decision of the Board of Management (and if relevant, the effective date of the expulsion) is sent in writing by registered post or a recorded delivery method to the parents of the pupil.
- 13 Parents of the pupil are informed of their rights to invoke a Section 29 appeal under the Education Act 1998.

PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFICATION OF A CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Each parent/guardian must notify the school in writing (by email to the Class teacher) of their child's absence and the specific reason for this absence.

In the event of a pupil's absences exceeding 20 days, the school is legally obliged to report such absences to Tusla, The Child & Family Agency.

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH ABSCONDING PUPILS

Parent/guardians are advised that, although the school will endeavour to provide appropriate and adequate supervision at all times, it may be the case that a child may abscond, despite the best efforts of staff.

In the event that a pupil leaves the school building without permission, a search will be instigated of the school and grounds. Should the pupil remain missing, the School Principal will telephone the pupil's parent/guardians and, when necessary, the pupil's emergency contact number.

Any decision on whether to involve outside parties, such as the Gardai, will be taken jointly by the School Principal and the Chairperson or a member of the Board of Management. In the event that the Chairperson or another member of the Board of Management is unavailable, and the School Principal considers it necessary, the Gardai will be contacted.

Following an incident, parent/guardians will be informed through the existing parent/guardian/school communication arrangements, as outlined in the Bohermore NS Parent/guardian/School Communication Policy. Where a pupil has absconded once, the school will assess the ability of the school to protect the child in the context of trips outside the school, etc. Absconding will affect the various plans and types of education the school can put in place for that child.

PART 5: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

LINKAGE WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Admissions and Participation Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- Parent/School Communication Policy

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

All staff, under the guidance of the Principal participate in and contribute to the implementation of an effective and equitable Code of Behaviour Policy for pupils attending Bohermore NS.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Transition from our old policy to this new policy will take place over a period of 6 months. This begins from the approval of this policy. The purpose of this timeframe is to provide adequate time for the following to be put in place:

The school evaluates the success of the policy through:

- staffing training - to be undertaken
- staff implementation of this training into school practice
- feedback from all staff
- feedback from parent/guardian

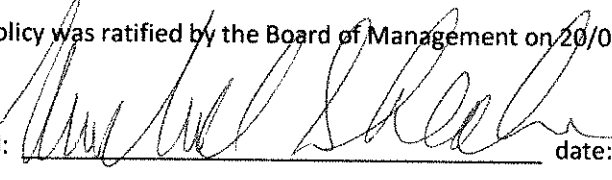
TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

A review will be conducted based on the success criteria outlined, and also on an annual basis.

RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 20/3/25 2025 and copies are available on the school website.
- New parent/guardians will receive copies along with the School Place Letter of Offer and school places will be offered conditional on parent/guardians signing the School Code of Behaviour Policy Acceptance Form.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 20/03/2025.

Signed:  date: 20/3/25

Michael Sheahan, Chairperson, BOM

APPENDIX 1 PARENT ACCEPTANCE FORM CODE OF BEHAVIOUR



Bohermore National School

PARENT ACCEPTANCE FORM CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

I/We _____ (Please print name(s))
have read the contents of the Bohermore National School Code of
Behaviour and agree that it is acceptable.

I/We agree to make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with this
code by my/our child _____ (please print
pupil's name).

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____ Date: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____ Date: _____



environment



respect



potential

APPENDIX 2 CRISIS PREVENTION INTERVENTION (CPI)

RESTRAINTS AND HOLDS APPROVED BY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

WORKBOOK Pg 16

The Supportive StanceSM

- Communicates respect
- Appears non-threatening
- Maximises safety

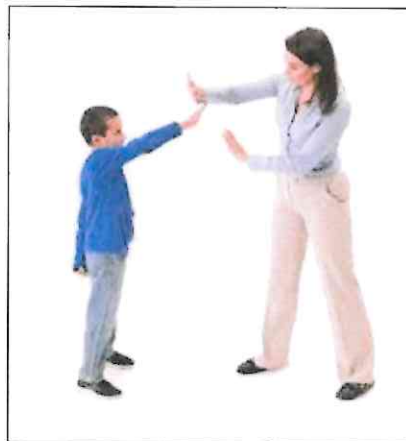


The diagram shows a woman in a light blue shirt and tan pants standing in a supportive stance, facing a man in a blue shirt and brown pants. The woman's feet are shoulder-width apart, and her arms are slightly away from her body. The man is pointing his right hand towards the woman. An orange arrow points from the text to the woman's stance.

CPI

STRIKES

- Demonstrate (Upper body strike)



- Demonstrate (Lower body strike)



HOLDS

Hold and Stabilise: Wrist/Arm



Pull/Push: Wrist/Arm



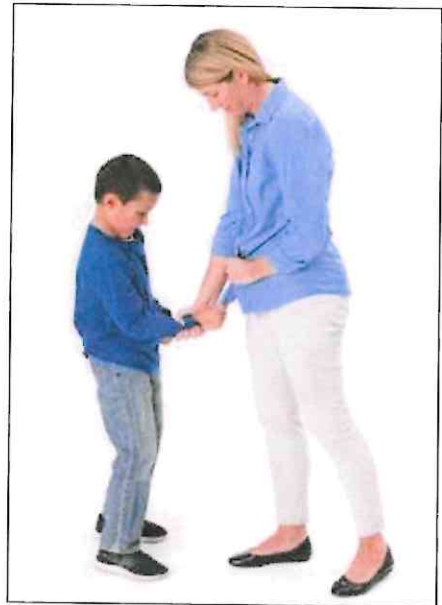
Lever: Wrist/Arm



Hold and Stabilise: Clothing



Pull/Push: Clothing



Lever: Clothing



Hold and Stabilise: Hair



Pull/Push: Hair



Lever: Hair



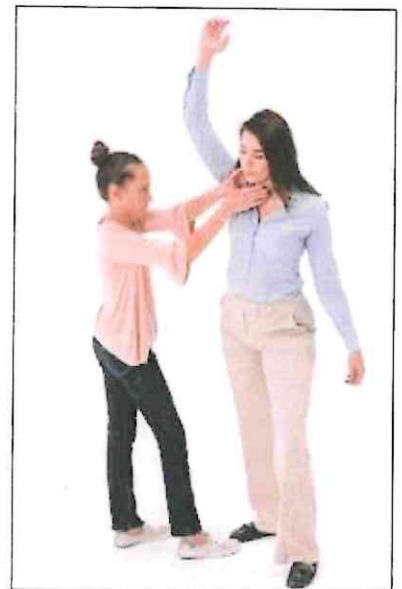
Hold and Stabilise: Neck



Pull/Push: Neck



Lever: Neck



Hold and Stabilise: Body



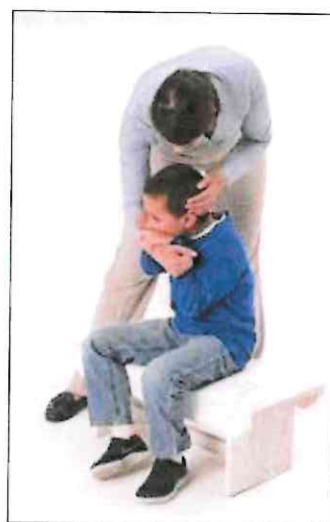
Pull/Push: Body



Lever: Body



Hold and Stabilise: Bite



Pull/Push: Bite



Low Level of Restriction in a Seated Position



Medium Level of Restriction in a Seated Position



High Level of Restriction in a Seated Position



Low Level of Restriction in a Standing Position



Medium Level of Restriction in a Standing Position



High Level of Restriction in a Standing Position



Low Level of Restriction in a Seated Position



Medium Level of Restriction in a Seated Position



High Level of Restriction in a Seated Position



Low Level of Restriction in a Standing Position



Medium Level of Restriction in a Standing Position



High Level of Restriction in a Standing Position



Warning Signs of Distress

The events leading up to a crisis situation and the struggling that occurs during any type of restraint can result in a great deal of stress for the individual who is being restrained. This negative stress is sometimes called distress. Consequently, it is not unusual for a restrained individual to show signs of distress, and staff should be trained to check for these signs. The chart below provides some examples of responses to restraint that may indicate a serious problem.

If this sign of distress appears:		This system of the body may be involved:
— Shallow, rapid breathing — Grunting — Bluish tinge to fingernails or around mouth	— Flushed or pale complexion — Cold extremities — Nasal flaring — Absence of breathing	Cardiopulmonary
— Confusion/disorientation/flashbacks — Seizures — Vomiting — Diarrhea	— Difficulty breathing/hyperventilation — Unconsciousness — Headache	Neurological
— Pain — Bruising/redness — Discolouration — Swelling	— Crepitus, or a crackling, crinkling, snapping, or grinding feeling or sound under the skin, around the lungs, or in the joints	Musculoskeletal

Please Note: This chart is for informational purposes only and is not intended to substitute for consultation with your facility's medical advisors regarding other specific concerns that may affect the population you serve. Your policies and procedures should address elements such as: what signs staff are to look for, how staff will be trained to monitor these signs, and what protocol is to be followed if signs of distress appear.

