



**ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School**

**Code of Behaviour Policy**

## **Code of Behaviour Policy (Revised 2022)**

The school has a central role in children's social and moral development just as it does in their academic development. In seeking to define acceptable standards of behaviour it is acknowledged that these are goals to be worked towards rather than expectations that are either fulfilled or not.

ABACAS Kilbarrack's approach to Behaviour Support acknowledges that the student's behavioural difficulties may be linked to the triad of impairments, sensory sensitivities, and cognitive abilities of the individual. The school acknowledges that the students may have a dual diagnosis and the impact this may have on behaviour.

All children require a structured and predictable environment in order to feel secure and develop the skills. Any school rules in ABACAS will be developmentally appropriate to the individual needs of our students.

Parents can co-operate with the school by understanding the school rules and where appropriate encouraging their child to adhere to them. Parents will be fully informed and of any individual supports in place for child in relation to behaviour.

A code of behaviour is established to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a safe environment.

## **Rationale**

- It is a requirement under DES Circular 20/90 on School Discipline.
- It is a requirement under the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 23 (1).
- It is part of our Developing School Plan.

## **Relationship to the School Mission Statement**

ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School is dedicated to providing the highest quality of learning, teaching, and care of pupils under our instruction. In partnership with the parents/guardians, families and/or residential personnel of our pupils, we seek to provide: individual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical development.

The dignity of every child is maintained, and we believe that each child is entitled to an education provision. While enabling each pupil to develop his/her potential to the full, we also want our pupils to be happy in school and to enjoy the time they spend in school.

The Code of Behaviour Policy will help to foster harmonious relationships and co-operation between staff, parents and pupils.

## **Aims**

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces our student's achievements
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both appropriate and behaviours of concern.
- Where appropriate, to foster a sense of responsibility and to support positive behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through the availability of policies and an ethos of open communication.
- To encourage the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy.
- To provide guidance for pupils, teachers and parents on behavioural expectations.
- To provide for the effective and safe operation of the school.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others.
- To ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- To assist parents and pupils to understand the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to seek their co-operation in the application of these procedures.

## **Responsibilities of all stakeholders**

### **Implementation**

All stakeholders have a role to play in the implementation of the Code of Behaviour. There will be an emphasis on promoting and reinforcing positive behaviour. School rules will be applied in a fair and consistent manner, with due regard to the developmental stage of the students and to their individual differences. Where difficulties arise, parents will be contacted at an early stage.

### **Board of Management's Responsibilities**

The Board of Management has a role to play in maintaining a good standard of behaviour. It will act to support the principal and staff in the application of a fair *Code of Behaviour* in the school. The Board of Management authorises the principal to suspend a pupil from school for a maximum of 3 school days, or until emergency supports can be sourced, for gross misbehaviour. A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion (*Rule 130 for National Schools*).

### **Principals Responsibilities**

The principal has a responsibility to ensure that all students and staff are provided with a safe environment to learn and work in. To this end the principal will promote a positive school climate and ensure that the Code of Behaviour is implemented in a fair and consistent manner. In the exercising of this duty of care the principal will recognise the value of, and will promote, a high standard of behaviour that is conducive to a positive working environment.

### **Classroom Staff Responsibilities**

- Support and implement the school's Code of Behaviour Policy.
- Create a safe working environment for each pupil.
- Recognise and provide for individual talents and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair to both fellow staff and students.
- Refrain from using personal telephones during school hours outside of scheduled breaks. Personal telephone calls should not be conducted in the school corridors or classrooms during school hours, this also applies to text messaging and internet
- Keep a record of instances of serious behaviours of concern or repeated instances of behaviour of concern. Record using behaviour incident forms and report to principal and/or behaviour analysts.
- Send home copies of behaviour incident reports to parents/guardians and request signature for acknowledgement.
- Monitor behaviours of concern as directed by behaviour analysts into students individual excel tracking forms.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide reports on matters of concern.

- All staff will undertake training where necessary in the implementation of student behaviour plans.
- Staff may undertake training in CALM® crisis de-escalation techniques, where this is deemed necessary.
- All staff will adhere to the positive ethos of the school, in order to maintain a positive learning environment.
- Verbal reprimands are not effective with our student population and should be avoided.
- Ensure consistency in implementing behaviour support plans
- Ensure parents are informed of behaviour support strategies and learning goals to support their child and provide training and support to parents where possible.
- Judgment and common sense should be exercised by all staff to maintain the Health and Safety of everyone.
- Make accommodations for students when information from home suggests they will find the school day more challenging e.g. poor sleep or medical issues. (requires good home/school communication)

### **Pupils' Responsibilities to the best of their abilities**

- Show respect for all members of the school community
- Follow school and class rules
- To co-operate with school staff

### **Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities**

- Ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually.
- Be interested in, support and encourage their children's learning
- Be familiar with the code of behaviour and support its implementation.
- Co-operate with the class staff in instances where their child's behaviour is causing difficulties for themselves and others.
- Communicate with the school in relation to any problems which may affect child's progress/behaviour. Especially reporting on poor sleep, diet, medical issues, medication changes or a change in family dynamic which may impact our students during the school day.
- Become familiar with the behaviour support strategies and learning goals necessary to support their child and ensure success and generalisation outside of the school environment.

### **Code of conduct for parents**

- Be courteous and polite towards staff and pupils.
- Make an appointment to meet with a Teacher/ Principal/ Behaviour Support Staff through the School office.
- Keep to scheduled appointment times.
- Protect the confidentiality of students and staff.
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same.

- Supervise children on school premises when collecting or visiting the school.
- Label pupils' property.
- In the event of a grievance with policy or procedure, the following process applies:
  - in the first instance, raise the issue with the relevant teacher
  - if no resolution is found, consult with the principal
  - if there is still no satisfactory outcome, contact the Board of Management
  - if the situation is not yet resolved a parent can contact the Department of Education regarding the issue at hand

### **Before/After School**

Parents are reminded that the staff of the school does not accept responsibility for pupils before the official opening time of 9 a.m. or after the official closing time of 2.40 p.m.

### **Methods of Communicating with Parents**

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to supporting our students.

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 parents have been established and are being reviewed regularly.

Parents should be encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers about any significant developments in a child's life, in the past or present, which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following communication methods are to be used at all levels within the school:

- Parent /teacher meetings
- Home/ school communication via daily emails
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School website
- School email/text
- Phone call through school office

## **Position Statement**

ABACAS have a responsibility to ensure that students who receive a behaviour support service are protected from exploitation, abuse, neglect, and unlawful and degrading treatment. All activities related to behaviour support will be supportive and respectful of the individual needs and goals of the student, as identified through an Individual Education Plan, and based on a current and comprehensive assessment.

In addition, all services provided to children and young people must be in accordance with the standards and guidelines outlined in the following documents:

- BCBA - Guidelines for Professional Conduct  
<http://www.bacb.com/index.php?page=100165#guidelines>

-Psychological society of Ireland – Code of Professional Ethics.  
<http://www.psihq.ie/DOCUMENTS/Code%20of%20Professional%20Ethics.PDF>

-Children First Child Protection Guidelines & more specifically ABACAS' Child Protection Policy

[http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child\\_welfare\\_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf](http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child_welfare_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf)

## **School Wide Positive Behaviour Support**

ABACAS Kilbarrack's approach to Behaviour Support acknowledges that the student's behaviours of concern may be linked to the triad of impairments, sensory sensitivities, and cognitive abilities of the individual. The school acknowledges that the students may have a dual diagnosis and the impact this may have on behaviour. All of these factors will be assessed and will inform the approach taken when providing behaviour support for individual students. The school is committed to working with parents to help reduce behaviours of concern; however, the complex needs of individual students will always inform the ultimate approach adopted.

The school ethos supports an evidence-based approach when supporting students with behaviour of concern. Behaviour that may present a challenge to others is adaptive and functional for the student; that is to say that the behaviour exists in the student's repertoire because it has been learned and serves a function for the student (e.g. a student may engage in aggressive or destructive behaviour as a means of communicating that a task that he/ she finds particularly demanding). The approach of school staff in ABACAS is to decrease behaviour of concern by adjusting the environment to support the student (e.g. providing choice or differentiating tasks to scaffold learning) and by teaching and reinforcing alternative skills that serves the same function (e.g. teaching the student an appropriate means of asking for a break from a demanding task without resorting to behaviour of concern).

Within ABACAS all staff capitalise on learning opportunities throughout the day across all school settings to teach appropriate functional communication using whatever supports necessary (e.g. gestures, verbal & visual prompts; schedules of reinforcement, communication devices, PECS & Lámh etc.) in order to reduce as much as possible instances of behaviours of concern.

The positive school ethos extends to all members of the school community adopting a positive, approach to challenges that may be encountered from time to time. Every effort should be made to ensure that the classroom and school environment is enriched with frequent opportunities for students to encounter social praise and acknowledgement for achievements and to experience a varied schedule of activities to be enjoyed across the school day. The school recognises the need to prioritise relationship building activities at the outset of a student's time in ABACAS. Staff will ensure that demanding tasks are introduced gradually, and that the primary focus initially is to develop a positive rapport with each new student.

### **Least Restrictive Environment**

ABACAS Kilbarrack recognise that there is a wealth of research to support the use of behavioural strategies to decrease behaviours that challenge. However, we adhere strictly to the viewpoint that the least restrictive supports should always be used. ABACAS will support students using antecedent based strategies first and then if necessary use differential reinforcement strategies. ABACAS will **never use seclusion, time out, or response cost** (removal of earned privileges) in behaviour support plans.

### **Examples of strategies widely used and encouraged to address behaviour of concern:**

- Rich, reinforcing and positive teaching environment
- Relationship building/rapport before demands introduced
- Structured activities
- High visual environment
- Large degree of choice available
- Regular sensory breaks and sensory activities available
- Activities match needs and are of high interest
- Calm/low arousal setting
- Triggering antecedents removed (where possible)
- Teaching replacement skills to behaviours of concern e.g. functional communication
- Non-contingent reinforcement – lots of reinforcement freely available in learning environment
- Token economies for learning
- Differential reinforcement strategies

### **Prohibited Practices**

Prohibited practices which are criminal offences and civil wrongs may lead to legal action. Prohibited Practices include those that may not be unlawful, but are unethical.



Prohibited Practices include those that:

- Cause physical pain or serious discomfort;
- Restrict access to basic needs or supports;
- Are degrading or demeaning to the pupils;
- Are aversive;
- Are unethical.

***The safety, dignity & welfare of pupils are prioritised at all times. Aversive stimuli, which can include sounds, smells, tastes, visual images or physical sensations that cause pain/overall discomfort are strictly prohibited at ABACAS.***

### **Strategies/Incentives**

Reinforcement strategies may be developed by staff to decrease behaviours of concern and/or reinforce the teaching of new skills. These may include, but are not limited to: social praise and acknowledgement; merit awards for achievements; token/points economies for work completed throughout the day; access to preferred items/ activities intermittently throughout the day; access to break-times following an appropriate request or the completion of a particular task; group-based reinforcement contingencies for classroom rules. Assistance may be recruited from the on-site behaviour analyst(s) to develop additional reinforcement strategies as required.

### **Calming Locations – The Zen Den**

ABACAS Kilbarrack recognises that the students attending our school have sensory needs and sensitivities and that ‘time away’ from the busy classroom environs can be beneficial to our students and can help them regulate. ABACAS have 4 ‘Zen Den’s’ in different locations around the school. These are child-friendly spaces with soft furnishing and reduced noise and light. They are locations that students can go when they feel overwhelmed by the environment. All of our students can be taught to proactively use these spaces as part of their behaviour support plans. The aim of the use of the Zen Den is that students learn to go here when they feel overwhelmed. We do not send children to a zen den but instead teach them to go to these spaces when they wish to do so.

Students will be given lots of choice about their time in a zen den. They can have activities they enjoy and that help them regulate.

Choices in the Zen Den

- With teacher or alone
- Door open or closed – NEVER LOCKED
- Music on/off
- Weighted blankets
- Fidget toys
- Deep pressure massage

## **Reducing Behaviours of concern**

Challenging behaviour may be defined as: “*Behaviour...of such an intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion.*” (Royal College of Psychiatrists et al, 2007)

The approach adopted by ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School in response to behaviours of concern is to affect a decrease by increasing skills that meet the same need the behaviour of concern is communicating. This should be achieved through the employment of environment adaptation, reinforcement strategies and positive programming. No strategy will ever never be used in isolation and should only be employed as an element within a comprehensive *multi-element behaviour support plan* (MEBSP).

Consultation with external professionals within each student’s HSE disability team will be sought where behaviours of concern are a health and safety risk and are not decreasing when the school has made all reasonable environmental adaptations and have implemented a MEBSP. This is done through a referral system known to staff and only with parental consent.

## **The Behaviour Support Plan**

The behaviour support plan (BSP) is the component of the IEP that attempts to reduce behaviours that impede education and/or present a health and safety risk to the student, peers or staff. The BSP will outline strategies to reduce the occurrence of behaviours of concern and increase alternative skills. In order to make this connection the BSP includes the following elements:

1. The operational definition of the behaviour impeding instruction.
2. A reference to the key results of a Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA). The full results of the FA will be available in the case file of the child / young person should further consultation be required. A functional assessment is conducted to determine the purpose (function) the behaviours of concern serve for the student. At ABACAS we require both *direct observation* functional assessment e.g. ABC narrative reports, scatterplots or functional assessment observation reports (FAO) and indirect questionnaires e.g. Functional assessment interviews (FAI) with teachers or parents or questionnaires like the Questions about behaviour Function (QABF).
3. The strategies to be used. These are selected based on the function(s) of the behaviours. Such strategies and supports are reinforcement based and may also include curriculum and instructional modifications, and changes in the classroom environment. These strategies may take a number of forms including skills teaching, generalisation planning, parental supports, low arousal reactive strategies, environmental adaptations, and direct interventions.

- The behavioural data that will be collected to determine success of the plan, review dates and staff sign off.

### **Elements of the Behaviour Support Plan**

- Definition of behaviours we wish to support a decrease in
- Functional Assessment Results
- Direction Intervention – e.g. reinforcement strategy to be use
- Alternative Skills to be taught
- Environmental Accommodations (Antecedent Interventions)
- Reactive Strategy –low arousal response
- Measurement & criteria for change
- Generalisation Plan
- Review Date
- Authors/Staff Sign Off

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Behaviours of concern:</b> (operational definition)<br><b>Function Assessment Results:</b> (interviews, questionnaires and direct observations)  |   | <b>Measurement:</b> (What we will count)<br><b>Criteria for change:</b> (when we review the plan)   |  |
| <i>Proactive Strategies</i>   |   |   | <i>Reactive Strategies</i>   |
| <i>Environmental</i>  | <i>Direct Behaviour Support</i>   | <i>Replacement Skills</i>   |  |
| Include all information related to antecedent adaptations in place to reduce the likelihood of behaviours of concern occurring.<br><br>Include information relating to setting events (triggers) and how school day may be adapted when information relating to sleep, health etc., is provided.  | Include all information relating to prescribed behavioural technology.<br><br>E.g., Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviours (DRO) - <i>Joe will have a visual rule linked to a time interval. If he follows the rule for the agreed time, he will receive a preferred item of his choice. The interval duration will increase in line with Joe's success on this plan.</i> | Include all information relating to functionally equivalent replacement behaviours that will be taught to the pupil to help replace behaviours of concern. E.g., Social skills group to help with attention based physical aggression in school yard. | Include all information relating to how school staff should respond in the presence of any of the behaviours of concern. |
| <p><b>Rationale for Support plan:</b> Include information relating to the reasons the plan has been implemented (barrier to learning, health and safety concern, etc.)</p> <p><b>Fading steps:</b> How the elements of the plan will be faded to natural contingencies, include info on generalisation to home in latter stages of fading</p> <p><b>Informed Consent:</b> Has parental consent been obtained? Has pupil consent been obtained? Use social stories or contracts where appropriate.</p> |   |   |  |

**Figure 2:** *Blank template of a Multi-element behaviour support plan which every student attending ABACAS who has a behaviour impeding their education will have.*

### **Steps in scripting/compiling a Behaviour Support Plan**

The process by which behaviour of concern is identified as requiring support can take a number of forms. One potential identification of need takes the form of a referral from the child/ young person's parents regarding a behavioural issue of concern. Other examples are where the staff in the school witness a behaviour of concern episode and report it to the school's Principal, Behaviour Analyst or class teacher.

The steps that will be followed in the identification of behaviours for further attention and the compiling of a BSP are as follows;

- Identification of behavioural issue requiring further analysis.
- Baseline of behavioural incidents will be taken (unless highly dangerous)
- Observation of behaviour of student.
- Consult with student and/or parent/s of the student.
- Consult with staff working directly with the child/young person.
- Carry out functional assessment and/ or collect additional data.
- Consult literature and tactics available to ensure an evidence-based approach.
- If necessary, consult external multi-disciplinary support services. This will especially be the case where students are receiving medication which may have an effect on behaviour.

### **Scripting a Behaviour Support Plan**

Plans are written by resident Board Certified Behaviour Analyst(s) (BCBA), sometimes in conjunction with trainee BCBA's who are working directly with the student.

Receive the informed consent from the child/ young person's parent/s.\* **See Appendix 1**

Training for staff implementing BSP and the signature of staff when the BSP has been explained.

\*Informed consent will be sought for all new Behaviour support plans regardless of the specifics of the interventions. This must be renewed annually and when after any tactical changes during the plans lifespan. Parents are welcome at any time to meet with the Behaviour Analyst to discuss their child's behaviour support plan or attend for a parent support session to witness first hand the components of the plan.

### **Maintaining Data**

ABACAS adheres to an ethos of data collection and analysis to guide the decision-making process. This ensures an objective view of behaviours of concern. Once a BSP has been implemented, data will be maintained on how the plan is supporting the student. This data will determine if the supports in place are effective or not. This is an essential part of any behaviour plan, as it ensures objectivity in decision-making. If the behaviours of concern are decreasing, the behaviour support team will make a decision as to when elements of the plan will be faded or

discontinued. Each student in ABACAS has an individualised excel chart, staff log all data required by the behaviour support plan (as listed in the measurement section) daily. Graphs for interpretation can be readily created to influence decision making.

### **Role of Multi-disciplinary team in BSP**

All steps in the provision of behaviour support may require collaboration with a range of parties including (but not limited to):

- the child/young person (where appropriate);
- the child/young person parents or carers;
- significant others who are important to the child/young person (e.g. siblings, extended family members, friends/ where appropriate);
- professionals who are involved with provision of care and/or support to the child/young person (e.g. teacher, tutor, Occupational or Speech & Language therapist, neurologist, paediatrician, psychiatrist, Psychologist, and Behaviour Analyst);
- Practitioners from other disciplines who are involved in providing a service to the child/young person, or to others within their support system (e.g. mental health worker, Social worker).

ABACAS will make referrals to HSE disability teams linked to a student when their behaviours of concern are a health and safety risk to themselves or others and the supports available to the school have not resulted in a decrease in the concerning behaviours.

### **Medication & Behaviour Support**

Parents are asked to inform the school if their child is receiving any regular medication. Where prescribed medications are known to have a behavioural effect these possible effects will be factored in to all behaviour support measures.

### **Informed Consent**

During the process of scripting a Behaviour Support Plan the proposed interventions are discussed with the parent and they are made aware of all potential outcomes or consequences of any proposed intervention. Consent will be sought in written form. The legal guardians will be presented with a consent request form and the behaviour support plan in question and their signature will be requested.

### **In the event of Parental/Guardian Consent not being granted**

Behavioural interventions implemented in the school will only be done so with full parental/guardian support. In situations where parental/guardian support for the best practice intervention as selected is not forthcoming, a meeting will be held with the child/ young person's family to present and examine all of alternative interventions available. It may also be appropriate to involve the relevant external support services for the student in question (HSE disability teams). The potential effectiveness, outcomes, and consequences of each intervention

will be discussed with reference to the school's duty of care towards all its students and staff. After all outcomes and risks have been examined a decision will be proposed. If agreement cannot be arrived at then the matter is referred to the Board of Management of ABACAS Kilbarrack for consideration.

### **Exceptional behavioural supports**

Due to the complex learning and behavioural needs of our student population, a situation may arise where a parent cannot be contacted prior to a crisis situation. In this event the staff will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the student, his/ her teachers, and the other students in the school. An exceptional response may be required in situations where there is a clear and immediate risk of harm linked to behaviour(s) and there is no Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) in place. The risk may impact on the child/ young person or on others. In such circumstances immediate intervention may be considered necessary in order to manage the risk to the student and staff. This is referred to as an emergency response.

The incident must be recorded on a *behaviour incident report form* (see appendix 2) and will be completed by all staff involved in the incident, the form will also be signed by parents as proof of receipt. As such, it must be fully documented, any level of injury reported and dealt with appropriately in accordance with *Health and Safety* requirements. A copy of all behaviour incident reports will be kept in the child/young person's file in school and a second copy will be sent to the child/young person's legal guardian/s.

An exceptional behavioural response may require the use of emergency behavioural support in order to prevent serious self-injury or harm to another person. After any *emergency responses* the staff, students and witnesses involved will be debriefed, while the behaviour incident report form is completed and receive any supports that the school can provide. Their feedback on the incident will be requested and changes made to supports based on the feedback gathered.

As soon as practicable after an *emergency response*, steps should be taken to have a *Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)* developed in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. The family of the child/ young person will be informed of any *emergency response* that occurs in writing in order to confirm their understanding of the incident in question. ABACAS will offer any support that it can to the child/ young person in question and the family of this individual.

### **Crisis Management**

*This section of the policy should be read in consultation with ABACAS Kilbarrack's Physical Restraint Policy.*

Episodes of behaviour of concern may occur from time to time at varying levels of intensity. At all times the health and safety of all students and staff is our priority. For this reason, the school trains staff in the BILD (British Institute for Learning Disabilities) accredited physical intervention system, CALM® (Crisis and Aggression Limitation and Management). CALM®

has been developed as a set of procedures designed to avoid physical confrontation, to de-escalate a situation, and to manage crises in the safest way possible.

Staff at ABACAS who are required to work with students who display behaviour of concern that can result in physical harm to the student or others will be trained in CALM® procedures, and competency measures required by BILD (British Institute for Learning Disabilities). Physical Interventions Accreditation Scheme must be met in order to become and remain CALM® certified. Re-certification will be on a yearly basis through on-site training.

CALM® provides school staff with a repertoire of crisis management techniques; it is not intended to be used as a behaviour intervention program. Crisis management techniques may be prescribed as part of a comprehensive behaviour support plan for a student with a history of intense levels of behaviour of concern/ behaviour that may pose a risk to self/ others. In such cases informed parental consent must be obtained in writing for the use of the procedures.

The school will document instances where CALM® techniques have been used. Consultation with external professionals will be sought when reporting suggests that incidents requiring crisis management are occurring at a high frequency. **Our aim at all times in ABACAS is to NOT use crisis management techniques** because we have activated all of our proactive strategies previously outlined in this document. This approach has worked very well for this school and our use of CALM® techniques is a very rare occurrence.

Key points of crisis management:

1. Emergency procedures should only be used when there is a real and present need to protect the student, and/ or others in the environment.
2. The protection of the health and safety of the person with whom intervention is taken should be paramount in the decision as to which emergency procedure is used.
3. The use of emergency procedures should occasion an assessment of the factors leading up to its use and consideration of the measures, if any, that should be taken to reduce or eliminate the need to use the procedure in the future.
4. The Behaviour Support Plan should be reviewed whenever a CALM® restraint has been warranted.

Parents should be informed by phone and in writing via incident report forms following a crisis incident. School copies of incident report forms should also be maintained.

A full debriefing meeting should be conducted following any intense/ crisis level episodes of behaviour of concern. These meetings should involve all relevant staff and pupils. The standard behaviour incident reporting format developed within the school should be used.

### **Suspension/Expulsion**

Before serious sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are used, the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilised. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

For extreme behaviours of concern or repeated instances of serious behaviour of concern which poses a safety risk to students and staff, suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will

be invited to come to the school to discuss the incidents with school staff. Aggressive, threatening, or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour.

Where there are repeated instances of serious behaviours of concern and all of the supports available to the school have not proved effective in reducing the concerning behaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend a meeting with the Chairperson, the principal and the school behaviour analyst. Parents are required to give an undertaking to cooperate with the School in developing strategies to address the problem behaviour.

Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with members of the staff involved, with due regard to records of previous behaviour of concern, their pattern and context, interventions used and their outcomes, and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of extreme behaviour that has resulted in injury to staff or students, where it is necessary to secure the safety of the pupils and staff, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days. A student should not be suspended for more than three days, except in exceptional circumstances, in order to achieve a particular objective.

If a suspension longer than three days is being proposed by the Principal, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, giving the circumstances and the expected outcomes

The objectives of a longer suspension will be discussed at a meeting with the student's parents/guardians. Where the outcome of these discussions result in the conclusion that the school and/or family requires the support of external professionals to support readmission, this 3-day period of suspension can be extended until such a time as these supports become available. Referrals for these exceptional supports will be made immediately by the school with the consent of the student's parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

After following the protocol for expulsion/extended suspension the parents will be notified by the Board of Management in writing of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management. The content of the letter will provide information to access Circular 22/02 and other related forms

### **Removal of Suspension (Reinstatement)**

Following or during a period of extended suspension, the parent/s may apply to have the pupil reinstated to the school. The application will be considered with reference to any necessary support and resources required by the school (e.g. physical changes, consulting other experts



where applicable etc.). The Principal and the Behaviour Analyst will facilitate a review of the existing behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

### **Procedures in respect to Expulsion**

Where an assessment of the facts confirms serious levels of concerning behaviour that could warrant expulsion the following steps apply:

- A detailed investigation carried out by the principal.
- A recommendation to expel to the Board of Management by the principal.
- Consideration by the Board of Management of the principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
- Board of Management deliberations and actions following the hearing.
- Consultations arranged by the Education Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.

### **Appeals**

Under Section 29 of the Education Welfare Act 1998, parents are entitled to appeal to the Secretary

General of the Department of Education & Science against some decisions of the Board of Management, including;

- Permanent exclusion from a school and
- Suspension for a period which will bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 school days or longer in any one school year.

Appeals must generally be made within 42 calendar days from the date the decision of the school was

notified to the parent. Parents/guardians must be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management in relation to suspension or expulsion included in the written notification.

### **Limitations**

This document is not designed to list all the possible situations that may arise, nor state all the possible strategies to address challenging behaviour, but to serve as a general guide to the students, the teacher, and the Principal to be used to solve individual problems.

### **Policy Review**

It is fully acknowledged by all parties that this code of behaviour policy will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it is kept up to date and that it retains its relevance. Ongoing evaluation and new approaches to education, Ministry guidelines and DES agreements may require this document to be modified.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**John Dennehy, Chairperson**

**Board of Management, ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School**

**Signed: 10/ 01/2022**

**John Dennehy**

**Chairperson Board of Management, ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School**

**Ratified by the Board of Management on: 22/12/2021**

**Review date: 10/01/2023**

**APPENDIX I- Informed consent form**



Informed consent

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Re:** Behaviour Support Plan No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

This document is written with the intention of keeping you informed of all details of the behaviour support plan in place for your child. The details of the proposed behaviour support plan are attached to this document. Please read the information contained within it and sign below if you are satisfied with the plan as proposed. Should you have any further queries in relation to this document, please contact the plan author in order to discuss this behaviour support plan further.

- 
1. As legal guardians for \_\_\_\_\_, I/we hereby consent to the use of the behaviour support procedure described on the previous pages in the educational programme of our son/daughter.
  2. I/We acknowledge that no guarantees have been made to us regarding the results of this behaviour support programme.
  3. I/ We understand that within the scope of the behaviour support programme there is full intent to increase skills in line with functional assessment findings.
  4. I/We realise that the behaviour support programme described will be closely monitored and supervised, and in the event of the observation of any side effects which may be in any way injurious or detrimental to the student the behaviour support plan will be immediately terminated. We further understand that the decision to terminate may be made by ourselves or by the staff in ABACAS. (Typically this is a joint collaborative decision.)
  5. If I/we had any queries about the plan they were addressed either in person or over the phone. (Please call Trish/Ursula if you have any queries).

Please PRINT your name(s) & relationship to student \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ABACAS Kilbarrack, c/o Scoil Eoin, Greendale Rd, Kilbarrack, Dublin 5.  
T/F 01 8396705

**APPENDIX 2- Behaviour Incident Report**



## Behaviour Incident Report

Behavioural incident reports provide documentation of events that have occurred involving students that may, or will have implications for future consequences of that behaviour. **These reports describe incidents that are deemed serious, and/or so unusual to warrant a written record.** These records become part of a student's file and may be used to better design behaviour support interventions. A useful rule to observe when deciding if an incident should be reported is: When in doubt, document it.

The individual responsible for writing a report is s/he who was directly involved, first observed, or received knowledge of the incident. The sequence of events in an incident may require separate reports from different adult observers/participants.

**Remember:** your report may be read by parents, officers of the court, or others who may be legally entitled to the information. And, it may be read at times when you are not present to explain the meaning of your statement. Thus, the report should be written with sufficient factual detail that it will be clearly understood without additional explanation.

|                      |                            |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Student name:        | Time and Date of incident: |
| Report completed by: | Report date:               |

Name of behaviour: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses to incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Opportunity for break provided to staff directly involved: Accepted  Declined

1. What was happening immediately prior to the incident (programme/activity)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Were there any environmental stimuli or possible setting events for the behaviour?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Describe the student's behaviour during the incident / what did they do?

4. What was the immediate reaction to the behaviour (staff and other students)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. If a CALM<sup>®</sup> procedure was used name it and describe your rationale for using it. If Child Restraint, Directing Part 1 or any Level 4 intervention was used record in CALM<sup>®</sup> Reporting Book (principal's office) & complete debrief session. (if not go to question 7)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What was the student's reaction to actions taken by others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What do you think was the reason the student engaged in the behaviour was? Give your impression of why the person engaged in the behaviour.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Indicate any recommendations you have for follow-up.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisory notes, actions to be taken (*e.g., debriefing, staff training, review of behaviour supports*)

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Dear Parent/Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign this slip to acknowledge that you received this incident report dated \_\_\_\_\_ and return to the school.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_