



ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School

Code of Behaviour Policy

“**The Board**” refers to the Board of Management of ABACAS Kilbarrack.

“**The school**” refers to ABACAS Kilbarrack, Greendale Road, Kilbarrack.

“**The Parent(s)**” refers to the Parent(s), Guardian(s), Foster-Parents and/or Carers of the student attending or applying to ABACAS Kilbarrack.

“**The DES**” refers to the Department of Education and Skills.

“**Department Circulars**” refers to circular letters for all schools issued from time to time by the DES and available at www.education.ie

The use of term “days” implies calendar days unless otherwise state

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| Ratified by Board of Management – January 14 th 2025 Policy Review – January 2027 |
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Code of Behaviour Policy

The school has a central role in children's social and emotional 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 to feel secure and develop new skills. Any school rules in ABACAS will be developmentally appropriate to the individual needs of our students.

Parents can cooperate with the school by understanding the school rules and, where achievable or appropriate, encouraging their child to adhere to them. Parents will be fully informed of any individual supports in place for a 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 Act 2000, Section 23.
- It is part of our Developing School Plan.

Relationship to the School Mission Statement

ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School provides the highest quality of teaching and learning to our pupils. In partnership with the parents/guardians, 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 promote a values-led culture where staff work to ensure our students well-being is at the centre of every decision.
- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces our student's many 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 behaviour support approaches.
- 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 alternatives to behaviours of concern. 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 serious behaviour of concern. 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 culture 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 strengths and differences among pupils.
- Be courteous, consistent and fair to 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 use.
- 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.
- Record behaviours of concern, as directed by behaviour analysts into student's individual, excel tracking forms, which are stored safely on a secure school server.
- Communicate with parents when necessary and provide written 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, 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)

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 their 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 promote 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.
- 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 cooperation and open communication is seen as an important factor in encouraging student well-being and reducing behaviours of concern. 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:

1. Children First Child Protection Guidelines & more specifically, ABACAS' Child Protection Policy
http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child_welfare_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf
2. Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools (2022)
[ca67bccf-2a68-40d2-ba1b-d7ccd7345aba.pdf \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie/c67bccf-2a68-40d2-ba1b-d7ccd7345aba.pdf)

3. Psychological Society of Ireland – Code of Professional Ethics.
[Code of Ethics | Article | PSI \(psychologicalsociety.ie\)](#)
4. Ethics Code for Behaviour Analysts
[Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts \(bacb.com\)](#)

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

ABACAS Kilbarrack’s approach to Behaviour Support acknowledges that the student’s behaviours of concern may be linked to sensory sensitivities, communication challenges and the cognitive abilities of the individual. The school acknowledges that our students all have dual diagnoses (intellectual disabilities and/or mental health diagnoses) and the impact this may have on their behaviour. All 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 functional communication using whatever supports necessary (e.g. gestures, verbal & visual prompts; schedules of reinforcement, communication devices, PECS & Lámh etc.) 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 at the outset of a student’s time in ABACAS. Staff will ensure that demands are introduced gradually and that the primary focus is always to develop a positive rapport with each student. This relationship building and maintenance is an ongoing priority for all teaching staff, SNAs and school management.

Least Restrictive Environment

ABACAS Kilbarrack recognises that there is a wealth of research to support the use of behavioural strategies to decrease behaviours of concern with this cohort of students. However, we adhere strictly to the viewpoint that the least restrictive supports must 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. It is the position of ABACAS Kilbarrack that we do not implement behaviour reduction procedures on any stereotypical behaviour and recognise the calming effect stimming has for many of our students. If a stimming behaviour is self-injurious in nature and reduces the quality of life of a student or their peers, we will activate reinforcement-led strategies to help a young person learn new skills to reduce that behaviour.

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

- Rich, reinforcing and positive teaching environment.
- Relationship building prioritised before demands introduced and throughout every interaction.
- Structured, predictable 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 the learning environment
- Differential reinforcement strategies
- Function-based multi-element behaviour support plans (MEBSPS) that prioritise proactive 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 always prioritised. 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; token/points economies to communicate work effort required throughout the day; and access to preferred items/ activities intermittently throughout the day. 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 five ‘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 to when they feel overwhelmed by the environment. All 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 there 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 choices about their time in a zen den. They can have activities they enjoy, that help them regulate. If students choose to be alone in these spaces, staff will always remain close by and check in every couple of minutes to ensure the child is safe.

Choices in the Zen Den (Visually displayed on Zen Den doors)

- With a teacher or alone
- Door open or closed – NEVER LOCKED. There are no locks on internal doors anywhere in ABACAS Kilbarrack. This is a conscious decision of school management to ensure we are creating the least restrictive environment possible.
- Music on/off
- Weighted blankets
- Fidget toys
- Deep pressure massage

Reducing Behaviours of concern

‘Challenging behaviour’ (we use the term ‘Behaviour of Concern’ in ABACAS as we feel it better communicates the response needed from the adults/professionals supporting our students) 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 focus on relationship building in the first instance and support 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 be used in isolation and should only be employed as an element within a comprehensive *multi-element behaviour support plan* (MEBSP).

ABACAS operates under the mantra of the **‘SO WHAT RULE’**. This is our school's positionality when it comes to intervening on behaviours of concern. It is chosen to ensure we are not engaging in restrictive practices unnecessarily. There are times when behaviours of concern are disruptive or impacting learning, but this does not mean we should design behavioural interventions to reduce it. Instead, we will look to our environment and teaching and learning to see if minor adaptations/new learning goals or staff training can support a reduction in the behaviour.

It is the position of ABACAS Kilbarrack that we do not implement behaviour reduction procedures on any stereotypical behaviour and recognise the calming effect stimming has for most of our students. If a stimming behaviour is self-injurious in nature and reduces the quality of life of a student or their peers, we will activate reinforcement-led strategies to help a young person learn new skills to reduce that behaviour.

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 seriously 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. To achieve this, the BSP includes the following elements:

1. The operational definition of the behaviour of concern.
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 several forms, including skills teaching, generalisation planning, parental supports, low arousal reactive strategies, environmental adaptations, and direct interventions.
4. All strategies chosen for implementation must have an evidence base in the literature for this cohort of students.
5. Frequency of occurrence data that will be collected to determine the success (or not) 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 details and results
- Direction Intervention based on evidence-based practices – e.g. reinforcement strategy to be used.
- Alternative Skills to be taught to replace behaviours of concern
- Environmental Accommodations (Antecedent Interventions)
- Reactive Strategy –low arousal response communicated in the body of the MEBSP and if necessary, on an escalation/de-escalation bell curve attached to the plan.
- Measurement & criteria for change
- Generalisation Plan
- Review Date
- Authors/Staff Sign Off

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| Behaviours of concern: (operational definition) Function Assessment Results: (interviews, questionnaires, and direct observations) | | Measurement: (What we will count) Criteria for change: (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. Include information relating to setting events (triggers) and how school day may be adapted when information relating to | Include all information relating to prescribed behavioural technology. 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</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. |

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| sleep, health etc., is provided. | <i>increase in line with Joe's success on this plan.</i> | | |
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Rationale for Support plan: Include information relating to the reasons the plan has been implemented (barrier to learning, health and safety concern, etc.)
Fading steps: How the elements of the plan will be faded to natural contingencies, include info on generalisation to home in latter stages of fading
Informed Consent: Has parental consent been obtained? Has pupil consent been obtained? Use social stories or contracts where appropriate.

Figure 1: Sample template of a multi-element behaviour support plan which every student attending ABACAS who has a behaviour impeding their education will have.

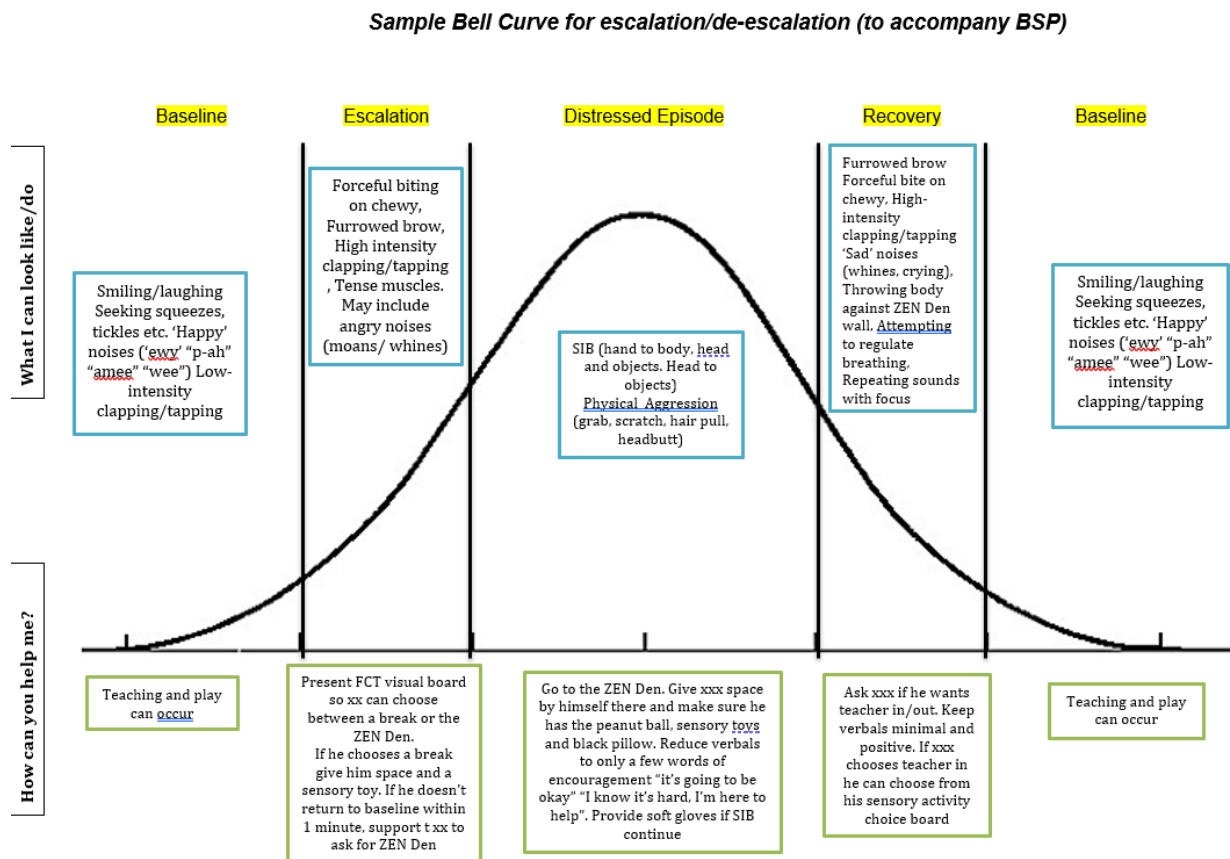


Figure 2: Sample escalation/de-escalation bell curve to accompany all MEBSPs where a low-arousal reactive strategy is called for from school staff.

Steps in scripting/compiling a Behaviour Support Plan

The process by which behaviour of concern is identified as requiring support can take several 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 recording of behavioural incidents will be taken (unless highly dangerous)
- Observation of student by on-site BCBA.
- 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 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 after any changes to approach during the lifespan of the plan. Parents are welcome at any time to meet with the Behaviour Analyst to discuss their child's behaviour support plan or attend 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 an informed 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 decide when elements of the plan will be faded or discontinued. Each student in ABACAS has an individualised Excel chart, and 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 the multi-disciplinary team in the 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's 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 actively involved with the provision of care and/or support to the child/young person (e.g., teacher, SNAs, Occupational or Speech and 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 into all behaviour support measures. Changes to medications and/or dosages of medication must be reported to school by parents, and these changes will be recorded in student files.

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. On commencement of a new MEBS, a call will be made by the scripting behaviour analyst to parents to ensure they understand the function of behaviour support plans and have ample time to ask any questions.

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 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 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, and any level of injury must be 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 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 support that the school can provide. Their feedback on the incident will be requested, and changes will be made to support 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 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 some 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 harm, de-escalate a situation, and manage crises in the safest way possible.

A cohort of staff at ABACAS will be trained in CALM® procedures, and competency measures required by BILD (British Institute for Learning Disabilities). Physical Interventions Accreditation Scheme must be met 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 approach. 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. Again, this is where our ‘SO WHAT’ positionality is used, and all staff know that restraints are for crisis situations only. This approach has worked very well for this school, and our use of CALM® techniques is a very, 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. Other less restrictive responses should have been considered, tried and ruled inadequate to protect health and safety.
4. 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.
5. 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.

Procedures in respect to Suspension

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

For extreme behaviours of concern or repeated instances of serious behaviour of concern which pose 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 or violent

behaviour towards a teacher or pupil or the student themselves will be considered serious behaviours of concern.

Where there are repeated instances of serious behaviours of concern and all 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 principal, and the school behaviour analyst. Parents are required to give an undertaking to cooperate with the school in developing strategies to address the behaviour of concern.

Where possible, prior to suspension, 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 or psychiatric information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Act 2000.

In the case of extreme behaviour that has resulted in injury to the student themselves, staff or other 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, to achieve a particular objective.

If the principal proposes a suspension longer than three days, the matter should be referred to the Board of Management for consideration and approval, the board should be provided with the circumstances and the expected outcomes. The Principal shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act if a longer suspension is deemed necessary.

The objectives of a longer suspension will be discussed at a meeting with the student's parents/guardians. Where the outcome of these discussions results 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 by the school with the consent of the student's parents.

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, staff training, consulting other experts where applicable, etc.). If reinstatement is possible, the Principal and the Behaviour Analyst will facilitate a review of the existing support plans for the pupil and will formally re-admit the pupil to the class once all necessary adaptations have been made.

Procedures in respect to Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Act 2000. As previously stated, before an extended suspension or

prior to an expulsion the Principal shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act.

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.
- Invite parents to attend a meeting with the Board of management to discuss the Principal's recommendation to expel your child.
- School inform EWO of process in action and EWO arranges a meeting with parents under Section 24 rules to discuss and agree next steps. At this point parents are welcome to introduce new information.
- Board of Management meets to confirm or overturn the decision.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel provided to parents and EWO.

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

Appeals

Under Section 29 of the Education 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 school's decision was notified to the parents. Parents/guardians must be informed of their entitlement to appeal a decision of the Board of Management regarding 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 behaviours of concern, 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, guidelines and DES agreements may require this document to be modified.

Ratified by the Board of Management on: January 14th 2025

Signed: _____

John Dennehy, Chairperson
Board of Management, ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School

Signed: _____

Laura Kelly, Principal
Board of Management, ABACAS Kilbarrack Special School

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 reports provide documentation of events that have occurred involving students where behaviour has occurred that is concerning in some way. **These reports describe incidents that are deemed serious, and/or sufficiently unusual as to warrant a written record.** These records become part of a student's file and may be used to design behaviour support interventions better. 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 will be read by parents, and may be read by 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. *Please avoid the use of setting specific language.*

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 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. Was there any information from home that may have had a factor in the incident (sleep, illness etc)?

2. What was happening in the environment immediately prior to the incident (activity, other students actions, etc)?

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® procedure was used, name it and describe your rationale for using it. If used record frequency and duration in students' daily behaviour excel file

6. What was the student's reaction to actions taken by staff during and after the incident?

7. Indicate any recommendations you have for follow-up.

Signed: _____

Witnesses: _____

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

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:** _____

| CALM REPORT LOG | |
|---|--|
| Date/ Location /time | |
| Student | |
| Staff involved & Witness | |
| Intervention used | |
| Duration | |
| Rationale (Keep brief more info in main incident report) | |

SIGNATURE(s) -

Date: _____

RECORD ALL CALM INTERVENTIONS IN STUDENTS' DAILY BEHAVIOUR EXCEL FILE (FREQUENCY AND DURATION) AND REPORT TO PARENTS