

## **Managing behaviours of concern appendix to Code of Behaviour**

### **Definition of Behaviours of Concern**

Behaviours of concern are often defined as “Culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit or deny access to the use of ordinary community facilities” (Emerson, 1995).

### **Introduction**

There are many strategies which the teacher and SNAs employ in the autism classes to deal with potential challenging behaviour before it escalates. Where deemed necessary, children have an Individual Behaviour Support plan (IBP). This IBP will be discussed with the parents and all staff involved and will be regularly reviewed. This may also be included in a student support plan (SSP).

### **Communication**

When promoting positive behaviour or experiencing challenging behaviour from the children, clear communication is important. The following strategies should be taken into consideration to support the child’s self-regulation:

1. Short, clear and simple language
2. Use of LÁMH, supported by verbal communication, if needed.
3. Use of visual supports
4. Avoid reference to the behaviour that just occurred
5. Distract and re-direct the child to focus their attention back to the tasks in hand.

### **Behaviours**

#### Promoting positive behaviour

The following is a list of strategies used in the autism classes to modify behaviours. Although this list is not exhaustive, some of the strategies used include:

1. Remind the child of the classroom rules. These are displayed using good choice / bad choice visuals in the classroom.
2. Remind the child of their reward and ‘what they are working for’.
3. Use the ‘first-then’ strategy.
4. Distract and re-direct the child to focus their attention back to the tasks in hand.

## **Recovery**

Staff will use a low arousal approach to support the child to return to the classroom / activity. This approach emphasises a range of strategies to restore the relationship between the child and others.

1. Appear calm: Relaxing body posture, avoid tensing muscles (such as clenching fists/ folding arms)
2. Personal space: Do not crowd the child or stand within his/her personal space for too long as this may increase arousal levels.
3. Touch: Some children may be highly sensitive to touch, particularly when in an aroused state, so avoid touching him/her as much as possible.
4. Removing triggers: If possible, staff will identify the triggers and remove them from the environment. If not possible, reassure the child by labelling the trigger. e.g. for a stressful noise "It's just a fire engine, it will be gone soon".
5. Distraction: Distract and redirect the child to a favourite activity in a quiet/ low arousal environment.
6. Communication: use positive language to focus on the transition, *not* the behaviour that has just occurred.

### **\*Note:**

The small safe space is used as a low arousal area where the child can self-regulate, away from the classroom setting. Staff will monitor and observe the child to ensure their safety.

*\*The Department of Education and Skills guideline on the design of schools makes reference to "a small safe place". A child may access the space for the protection of themselves, other pupils and the staff. The child must be supervised from inside or outside the room. Pupils will be encouraged to use the room themselves which will allow them to regulate and reduce their behaviour. Use of the safe space should be reviewed to ensure it is having a positive impact on behaviour. The use of seclusion should be documented in the IEP of the child.*

## **Recording behaviour**

Behaviour of the children will be recorded and monitored by staff present. All incidents should be brought to the attention of the class teacher.

1. Low level incidents will be recorded in the child's daily diary.
2. ABC charts will be completed to monitor reoccurring behaviour.
3. Incident reports will be completed when challenging behaviour results in self-injurious behaviour or physical contact towards staff or other children.

## **Reporting to the principal**

Any time an escalation of challenging behaviour occurs, the class teacher will inform the principal. In the absence of the principal, the deputy principal will be informed.

## **Reporting to parents/guardian:**

## Policy on Manual Handling of pupils

### Introduction:

St. Joseph's N.S. National School is vertical co-educational primary school. The school is fully developed and caters for pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth class. St. Joseph's N.S. also has two ASD classes. Each of these special classes has six pupils. There are also a number of pupils in our mainstream classes with special needs. From time to time children can pose as a flight risk or as a danger to themselves or others.

### Rationale:

The school management recognises the occasional need for teachers or SNAs to lift, move or handle children in the interest of Health and Safety. This can be particularly the case in relation to Junior Infant pupils, particularly at the beginning of the year, or pupils in our special classes.

The following are examples of incidents when the principal, teachers or SNAs may need to intervene physically (intervention will be at a minimum and only used as a necessity for the health, welfare and safety of pupils and staff)

- A child runs towards an exit with the intention of leaving the school
- A child is a physical threat to another child or themselves
- A child is a physical threat to a member of staff
- A child climbs / jumps on an item of furniture and is at risk of injuring himself or another child or a staff member
- A child goes to ground and is a disruptive force in the classroom or the playground
- A child gets stranded on a piece of equipment in the playground, in the classroom, school hall or at a school event and needs assistance to descend
- A child is having difficulty transitioning from one area to another e.g. from the classroom to the PE hall.

In all cases the principal, teacher or SNA must show the utmost care and attempt to protect both him/herself and the pupil.

Approved  
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Chairperson  
28/11/24

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28/11/24