



ASHBOURNE  
**EDUCATE TOGETHER**  
NATIONAL SCHOOL

## **Managing Behaviours of Concern appendix to Code of Positive Behaviour Policy:**

### **Introduction**

This policy stems from Ashbourne ETNS's commitment to provide an optimum learning and teaching environment for children with special educational needs. This policy is designed to ensure the rights of children with special educational needs and the staff who support them, so that everyone can learn, work, flourish and develop in an environment that is positive, respectful, safe and inclusive.

Promoting positive behaviour and preventing and managing challenging behaviour is vital to ensuring the safety of all children, staff and families. As a staff, we believe that children have an inherent need for a safe and secure environment. As a school community, we will always endeavour to model positive behaviour by treating children and adults with respect and dignity and building positive relationships with the pupils.

In Ashbourne ETNS we believe that children react well to rules, routines and boundaries. In order for rules and routines to be effective, we feel that continuity and consistency are of the utmost importance.

### **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).

In our school, behaviours of concern are those behaviours that interfere with the child's learning and/or that of others. These behaviours can be triggered by a wide variety of factors and influences, such as being a new pupil in the school, transitioning to a new teacher, or by other external events in their lives.

Children are encouraged and guided to develop respect for themselves, other children and all adults with whom they come in contact with.

### **BEHAVIOUR**

Behaviour is defined as the manner of conducting oneself. It also reflects one's response to one's environment or stimuli. Behaviour may be conscious or unconscious (e.g. quickly pulling one's hand away when one touches something hot). Many factors may contribute to a child's particular behaviour.

#### ***Internal factors include:***

- age and stage of development
- personality and temperament
- personal history and experience
- physical, sensory or medical factors
- skills, ability to learn
- beliefs about self and others
- resilience and self-efficacy

### **External and interpersonal factors include:**

- parental and family patterns and relationships
- social networks - friends and peer groups
- neighbourhood and community factors
- the status and standing of different groups in society
- school factors
- time, opportunity and support for personal and social development

### **6 KEY ASSUMPTIONS IN UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOUR**

Ref: Daly, Patricia. (2019) *Small changes can make big differences*, Limerick: CDU

- **Behaviour is not random:** It is connected to events which occurred before the behaviour and is reinforced, positively or negatively, by reactions to the behaviour. It is therefore controllable in terms of interventions targeted at antecedents, or “triggers” and consequences
- **Behaviour works, has meaning and is not random:** It serves a purpose and has goals, though these goals may not be easy to recognise. The functions of behaviour which negatively affect learning are:
  - o Getting attention, from adults or peers
  - o Getting an object – something the child wants e.g. a ball, a chase
  - o Avoiding something e.g. attention or a particular task
  - o Getting or Avoiding a sensory experience or human contact
- **Children want approval:** Adult approval, particularly affirmation and approval from key adults such as teachers, is as important to children as the air they breathe. Your approval is the strongest reward you have in the classroom
- **Children want to learn:** This has been demonstrated time and again, both in scientific and psychological studies, and is borne out by the experience of teachers over the years. Some may have particular difficulties with the learning process, but they all want to learn
- **Children who know “what” and “how” cannot always “do”:** It takes a while for children to fully know, understand and apply social interactive skills. Not all children grasp them easily and they need to be taught and supported
- **Some behaviour has hidden dimensions:** These are related to a particular child’s unique life experience. We see what happens in the classroom and in the playground but we cannot see the child’s unique history or underlying “invisible” conditions e.g. anxieties, sensory difficulties or learning difficulties. We should always be aware of this, especially with children who display challenging behaviour.

### **INFLUENCES ON PUPIL BEHAVIOUR**

There are many potential influences on student behaviour, and many factors that can lead to behaviour that is challenging for schools to deal with. These include:

- **Biophysical factors:** such as medical conditions or disabilities
- **Psychological factors:** including emotional trauma or lack of social skills
- **Behavioural/social factors:** including where a student’s problem behaviour has been learned through reinforcement, consequences or adaptation to social practices (a student with a learning difficulty repeatedly misbehaves knowing that he/she will be removed from the class and this will avoid his/her learning difficulty being exposed)
- **Student group dynamics:** such as bullying and teasing, cliques or student apathy or hostility
- **Environmental factors:** e.g. the level of classroom noise or seating arrangements
- **Classroom organisation issues:** such as inconsistent routines, inadequate materials or obliviousness to cultural differences
- **Teacher behaviour:** e.g. boring or disorganised lessons, over-reaction to misbehaviour or over-reliance on punishment.

In many cases, there is no single “cause” of challenging behaviour, but it is the result of several factors and influences operating in combination.

### **BEHAVIOURS OF CONCERN**

The following behaviours where excessive and infringing on the rights of others are not acceptable:

**Aggressive behaviour:** pinching, biting, scratching, punching, slapping, pushing, pulling, kicking, head butting, pulling hair, using objects against people and themselves.

**Non-compliance:** lying down, non- cooperation, resistance to teaching, refusing to do things.

**Disruptive or threatening behaviour:** shouting, screaming, swearing, repetitive vocalisation, verbal abuse, remarks/discrimination, curses, gestures or threats to harm, teasing, arguing, interrupting, obstructing, taking food or drink from others, setting off the fire alarm, invading personal space.

**Absconding / Flight risk:** wandering outside the classroom without permission, running away or trying to run away.

**Attention seeking:** constantly misbehaving in order to seek attention.

**Sexually inappropriate behaviour:** inappropriate sexual language or sexual gestures including inappropriate comments about the sexuality of others.

**Destruction of property:** damage to property belonging to self, other children or adults or damage to school property.

**Socially- inappropriate behaviour:** spitting, interrupting others, provoking others, making inappropriate comments.

**Temper tantrums:** outbursts of bad temper, emotional reaction

**Self-injurious behaviour:** head banging, scratching, biting and poking.

**Passive challenging behaviour:** glaring, refusing to respond, averting gaze, withdrawal.

It is very difficult to list all possible misbehaviours and eventualities. However, we expect the children to behave in a manner which does not compromise the safety, wellbeing and education of themselves or others.

Positive parental input is paramount in ensuring that the children are supported and encouraged to respect and abide by our values and school rules. We look forward to full co-operation in these matters.



## STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it occurring in the first place. It is important to understand that challenging behaviour usually serves a purpose for the individual. Often it is a means of communication and if we understand what the child is trying to communicate by engaging in the behaviour, we may be able to support the child to learn a safer and more effective way of communication.

Acceptable behaviour is reinforced in a school and classroom climate which is supportive of positive behaviour. In Ashbourne ETNS, we believe that school and home should work co-operatively together in order to enhance and successfully promote positive behaviour.

The following are some of the strategies that have been developed throughout our school for pupils with SEN to promote positive behaviour:

- Developing language and communication skills – eg: PECS, Lámh,
- The use of visual cues to reinforce verbal instructions
- Clear and simple classroom rules and instructions
- The use of timers to plan for transitions
- Visual schedules

- Reward systems
- Choice boards
- Individual behavioural plans
- Regular communication with parents –email, daily journal
- Teaching of social skills
- Use of social scripts(stories)
- Consistent approaches to behaviour by staff members
- Clear, consistent consequences for misbehaviour
- Talk and discussion of behaviour with the child (if capable) – Restorative Practice
- TacPac: to help regulate and calm the pupils, it is also offered as a defusing tool.

## SCHOOL STAFF

### THE SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT TEAM

The school will establish a Behaviour Management Team whose function is to advise and assist those directly involved in a behaviour of concern situation when it arises.

The Behaviour Management Team will consist of those staff members who have special training or experience in the area of Behaviour Management, comprising of the Principal, Deputy Principal, senior staff members.

Those directly involved may be experiencing a behaviour of concern for the first time and will require advice and assistance in dealing with it. This can be a junior teacher or SNA.

### STAFF TRAINING

In Ashbourne ETNS we promote Continuous Professional Development to help SNAs and teachers to develop their skills and confidence to work successfully with students who have challenging behaviour. This also helps support positive behaviour. The school staff have trained in Restorative Practice. We have completed whole staff training (teachers and SNAs) with Michelle Stowe from ConnectRP and as a school will continue to explore further CPD in Restorative Practice

## RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

**Teachers** will be responsible for:

Providing a safe and supportive classroom environment which promotes the educational, social, emotional and behavioural development of all students. This includes communication with the student's parents/guardians as early as possible to discuss concerns, suggest forms of support and encourage co-operation.

- Implementing suitable classroom management practices and appropriate intervention strategies for students who are at risk of developing challenging behaviour.
- The creation of Behaviour Management Plans where needed.
- Participating in professional development that contributes to skill development in the pupils and a clearer understanding of students with challenging behaviour.
- Documenting all challenging behaviour incidents as they occur. Incident reports will be written when needed.
- Reporting all challenging behaviour and incidents to the principal and parents/ guardians.

**Parents/Guardians will be responsible for:**

- Communicating with the child's teacher or school principal in relation to concerns about their child's behaviour.
- Providing suggestions which could assist in the development of Behavioural Support Plans and Individual Educational Plans.
- Cooperating with interventions and behavioural strategies that are proposed by the child's teacher and the principal.
- Working co-operatively with the school with the best interest of the child at heart.

**The Principal will be responsible for**

- Facilitating the development of a supportive school environment and implementing the 'Behaviours of Concern Policy' within the school.
- Leading the school in relation to the management of students with challenging behaviour and supporting staff in relation to these students.
- Facilitating access of all staff to programs of professional learning in relation to students with challenging behaviour as deemed appropriate by the principal.
- Providing the opportunities for specialised teachers within the school to develop higher level skills so they can provide additional support and advice within the school.
- Seeking outside support and advice, such as: support from our NEPS psychologist and the NCSE in relation to behavioural supports for pupils with SEN.
- Deciding on a final course of action when all intervention programs have been exhausted e.g. reduced day, suspension, expulsion (as a last resort).
- Health and Safety: In the event that a pupil poses a risk to themselves or others, they will be removed from their class or setting to ensure their safety and the safety of others. If this is not possible, the other children will be removed. If the threat to safety persists, the child's parents/guardians will be asked to take the child home.

**Sanctions (in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy)****Minor challenging behaviour:**

- Will be discussed with the child (Restorative Practice)
- Will be dealt with at class level and privileges will be withdrawn as appropriate.
- Focus initially on positive behaviour demonstrated by other students.

**Minor challenging behaviours which are ongoing:**

- Will be discussed with the child
- Will be reported to parents/ guardians.
- The parents may be asked to come to the school to discuss their child's behaviour – the parents may be asked to take the child home.
- Will be dealt with appropriately.

**Damage to property:**

- Child will be spoken to by staff directly involved.
- Will be reported to class teacher.
- Will be reported to parents/guardians and the parents may be asked to come to the school to discuss their child's behaviour. The parents may be asked to take the child home.
- A written/verbal apology will be given by the child/parent to the owner of the property.

### **Aggressive behaviour – threats:**

- Will be discussed with the child
- Will be reported to parents/guardians.
- The parents may be asked to come to the school to discuss the child's behaviour and appropriate sanctions may be put in place.

### **Aggressive behaviour – assaults/ Serious challenging behaviour:**

Where there is a need for a child to be assessed in relation to specific behavioural problems, the school should endeavour to raise concerns with parents/guardians sensitively and to give families as much support as possible. Referrals will be made by the Principal with the support of the parent/guardian

The following steps will be taken when serious or gross misbehaviour is persistent. These steps are in accordance with the Department of Education & Skills guidelines and Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools:

- Communication by Principal with parents/guardians – verbal or in writing
- Meeting between Principal and parents/guardians
- Chairperson of Board of Management is informed
- Parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend school to meet the Principal
- Parents/guardians must endeavour to support their child and school to comply with rules and aim to give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future. On failing this, the pupil will be suspended for a temporary period
- In the case of gross misbehaviour, the Board authorises the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians. The maximum initial period of suspension is three school days
- The Board of Management can authorize a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupils or pupils parents/guardians
- In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management will authorize a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed

Every effort will be made to have an emotionally disturbed child referred for psychological assessment without delay. Help will be sought from support services within the wider community, e.g. Community Care Services

### ***The School's Capacity to meet the needs of the child***

The school will discuss with the parents the needs of the child and the ability of the child to adapt to the school setting.

Some children will exhibit behaviours of concern arising from distress or anxiety due to their inability to cope with what they perceive to be the overwhelming experience of being in a mainstream classroom. In such cases, it is important that both parents and school recognise children in such situations can respond by displaying behaviours of concern as a coping mechanism. Parents should be aware that such behaviours, where they are aggressive or violent, will often frighten other children and cause further social isolation.

The school will discuss with the parents what learning or social needs the child may have in relation to attending school.

The school will seek and receive full co-operation from the parents in relation to how the school will work with them and their child to meet his/her needs.

The school will analyse all relevant data pertaining to the child's behavioural issues so that the school can begin to understand the reasons why the child is behaving as s/he does.

The school will make the parents aware of the role of NCSE and the SENO and ask for all relevant data which might assist the school in seeking the required resources from NCSE or DES in relation to their child. The school will also work with parents to design and teach the child alternative and more socially acceptable responses/behaviours for

the child. These new responses or behaviours will promote better acceptance by peers and a stronger, positive relationship with teachers.

### **Reduced School Day**

Circular 0047/2021 was issued to schools, as Guidelines for the use of Reduced School Days in Schools, which came into effect from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2022. They can be accessed here <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/63545-the-use-of-reduced-school-days>

In the context of challenging behaviour, reduced school days should only ever be considered in very limited and time-bound circumstances. It is acknowledged that a reduced school day may be helpful in exceptional circumstances as part of a transition or reintegration intervention, based on the needs of individual students. Any such arrangement should be short term and transitional, and designed to assist the student to attend for the full school day along with his/her peers.

- Where in exceptional circumstances schools are placing a student on a reduced school day, the school authorities:
- Must have previously engaged with the relevant support services and professionals, including the special educational needs organiser (SENO) where appropriate, and have developed and implemented a student support plan for an appropriate period of time.
- Have clear evidence-based reasons for considering a reduced school day as a relevant and appropriate intervention with the best interests of the student at the core of the decision.
- Have the written consent of the parents/guardians of the student, and must also document if parental consent is subsequently withdrawn.
- Shall notify Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) of the decision to place a student on a reduced school day no later than the first day of the commencement of each episode of a reduced school day.
- Should notify the NCSE/SENO of the decision to place the student on a reduced school day where the student has special educational needs.
- Should formulate and agree a plan for the reduced school day intervention which will specify the following: start, review and end dates; any educational supports or interventions to be provided for the student during the period of the reduced school day; the actions required to support the student's return to school and reintegration to a full-time school day.
- The plan with respect to the reduced school day intervention and return to school will have regard to any relevant medical reports or other relevant information held in the student's support file. The intervention and return to school plan must be discussed and agreed in collaboration with the parent/guardian.
- Ideally, the period for which the student is on a reduced school day, should not exceed six school weeks. A reduced school day cannot be carried forward from one academic year to the next.
- Must include in the plan of action outlined above, the name of a contact person in the school with whom the parents/guardians may communicate with, and, where appropriate, any work plan for the time during which the student will not be in attendance at the school.
- Shall provide the parents/guardians with a copy of the agreed plan, signed by parents/guardians and the school principal, and retain a copy which must be given to the Educational Welfare Officer or a member of the DE Inspectorate if requested. A copy should also be retained on the student support file. Should consider a graduated regime of school attendance which increases steadily and incrementally towards full attendance.
- Shall submit a new notification form to TESS when the period during which the student has been on a reduced school day is extended no later than the first day of renewal of the plan.
- Shall keep a record of all instances of students being placed on a reduced school day and access to this list should be made available to TESS educational welfare officers and the Department of Education Inspectorate if requested.
- Shall inform the parents/guardians of their right to withdraw consent at any time.
- Should inform the parents/guardians that TESS educational welfare officer can provide assistance and advice if required. TESS will provide support and guidance to both parents and schools in relation to the use of a reduced school day.

## ***Suspension***

Examples of grounds for suspension:

- the student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- the student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety to themselves and others in the school community.
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.
- the student is responsible for a single incident of serious misconduct.

After other interventions are tried and reasons why these have not worked are reviewed, the decision to suspend a student can be made. This decision will be made by the Board of Management. Each case will be looked at individually taking into account the child's circumstances.

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

## ***Expulsion***

Examples of grounds for expulsion:

- the student's behaviour is a persistent cause of significant disruption to the learning of others or to the teaching process
- the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a real and significant threat to safety
- the student is responsible for serious damage to property.

Expulsion will only be considered when the Board of Management have tried a series of other interventions and believes all possibilities for changing the student's behaviour have been exhausted.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the Board of Management forms the opinion that a student should be expelled for a first offence (for instance, a serious threat of violence against another student or member of staff, actual violence or physical assault, supplying illegal drugs to other students).

When expulsion is considered, the following steps will be taken:

- A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal.
- A recommendation 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 Educational Welfare Officer.
- Confirmation of the decision to expel.
- The decision to expel will take effect 20 days after the National Education Welfare Board has received notification in writing
- Where the school has expelled a pupil and all appeals processes both internal and external have been exhausted, the student's expulsion will be reported on the student absence report form.

## **Methods of communicating with parents/guardians**

Communicating with parents/guardians is central to maintaining a positive approach to working with children. Parents/guardians and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school

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/guardians are being established and will be reviewed regularly.



Parents/guardians 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 child will be spoken to by staff directly involved.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the class teacher.
- A written report will be made on the incident and recorded in the Incident folder.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the principal.
- Each incident will be reported to parents/guardians.
- If the behaviour recurs, the same procedure will be followed and the Behaviour Management Plan will be reviewed after each incident.
- If the behaviour persists, parents will be invited into the school to attend a meeting with the teacher and the principal and appropriate sanctions may be put in place- this may be that the child is sent home or put on a reduced school day.
- In the event of the situation not improving, the child will be suspended by the Principal. (The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed).
- Further serious infringements may warrant longer suspensions. (The Chairperson of the BOM will be informed)
- If no improvement is made the matter will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management for consideration and a decision as to what actions should be taken.
- Continuous disruptions and/or violent behaviour may result in expulsion of the pupil. This will be considered where the student's behaviour is causing persistent and significant disruption to the learning, safety and wellbeing of themselves or others.
- When the child has had six day's suspension, the Education Welfare Officer will be informed.
- For suspensions lasting more than three days, in exceptional circumstances, the matter will be monitored by the Chairperson of the BOM, in consultation with the principal.
- If a decision is made in relation to expulsion, the parents/guardians will be informed of their rights according to Section 29 of the Education Act and a copy of the application form to appeal the decision will be forwarded to the parents/guardians.

### **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 staff and the Principal. This policy should be used to assist in dealing with difficult situations.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff members of Ashbourne ETNS must adhere to the 'Behaviours of Concern Policy'. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all staff adhere to this policy.

### **Policy Review/Ratification**

It is fully acknowledged by all parties that this Behaviours of Concern Policy will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it is kept up to date and that it retains its relevance. Ongoing evaluation and new approaches to education and/or DES guidelines may require this document to be modified.

Policy ratified in September 2022, to be reviewed in June 2024.

## **Modifying Behaviours in the Autism Classes**

### **Introduction**

There are many strategies which the teacher and SNAs employ in the autism class 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

### **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
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.
5. Use LÁMH to support verbal instructions.
6. Quiet time / Thinking time.
7. Promoting acceptable behaviour through the use of social scripts(stories)

#### **Sensory seeking behaviour**

The following is a list of strategies and methodologies used in the autism classes to help the children self-regulate when sensory overload is impacting on their behaviour.

1. Follow prescribed OT programme when given by an Occupational Therapist (if applicable).
2. Breathing exercises.
3. Visit to the multi-sensory room.
4. Movement break.
5. Use gross motor equipment.

6. Access sensory activities to target oral, visual, auditory and tactile input where applicable.

### **Attention seeking behaviour**

On occasions, staff will notice attention seeking behaviour and ignore it. *Planned ignoring* is a strategy where staff give no outward sign of recognising a behaviour.

- 1) No eye contact
- 2) No verbal response
- 3) No physical response

Planned ignoring is a strategy for a child to learn appropriate ways of gaining attention. However, staff are aware of the behaviour occurring and monitor the child (to ensure their safety and the safety of others when applicable).

### **Self-Injurious behaviour**

When the child displays self-injurious behaviour, they might have no other way of telling staff their needs, wants and feelings. The following strategies will be used and outlined in detail in the child's IBP:

1. Distract and redirect
2. Light physical guidance (for example: provide a pillow between the head and the hard surface)
3. Low arousal approach
4. Remove sensory discomforts (for example: give the child ear defenders to block out loud noises)
5. Reduce demands
6. Guide the child to a safe space/shared spaces to ensure their safety and the safety of others

### **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:**

Any time an escalation of challenging behaviour occurs, it is school policy that it is recorded.

1. Home School Communication document is used to communicate
2. Parents will be telephoned and informed of any escalating behaviours.
3. Parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss persistent challenging behaviour.

**Requesting clinical support:**

The class teacher will contact clinical support if a child’s challenging behaviour persists and additional support is needed.

## **Modifying Behaviours in the Mainstream Setting**

We are aware that some children may need extra supports in relation to their behaviour in the mainstream setting.

We are committed to helping children to modify their behaviour to enable them to engage in learning opportunities and have a positive experience of school. Positive strategies as outlined in our code of behaviour will be utilised in the first instance.

Failing this, the following strategies will be used to encourage pupils to self-regulate and take ownership of their behaviour. Each individual child may require an individualised response which may include.

- A movement break to prevent the behaviour from escalating further
- Quiet time
- Sensory input
- Distract and re-direct
- Breathing and relaxation activities
- Removing triggers

The child will return to class and re-engage in activities when it is evident that the child has self-regulated and is calm.

When it is appropriate to discuss this behaviour with the child, a discussion can take place. The aim of this discussion is to help the child to demonstrate an understanding of their behaviour and to identify strategies to prevent this behaviour in the future.

If a pattern of behaviour is identified, extra supports will be sought to support the child and the teachers. The behaviour will be recorded through using an ABC chart. Supports may be sought from the National Behaviour Support Service (NCSE) & other outside agencies if needed.

## Policy on Manual Handling of pupils

### Introduction:

Ashbourne Educate Together National School is vertical co-educational primary school. The school is fully developed and caters for nearly four hundred and fifty pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth class. Ashbourne ETNS 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.

Signed:



Chairperson of Board of Management  
Date: 29/09/22

Signed:



Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management  
Date: 29/09/22