

## **Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa Junior School**

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# Positive Behaviour Support for Behaviours of Concern (Supporting Document to Positive Behaviour Policy)

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# **Positive Behaviour Policy -Behaviours of Concern**

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## **1. Mission Statement:**

At Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa Catholic Junior School, we nurture hearts and inspire minds by fostering a community built on trust, kindness, and empathy. We are committed to creating a welcoming environment where every person is respected and valued, celebrating diversity and promoting happiness. Together with the support of parents and caregivers, we strive to enable all students to reach their potential through a rich variety of educational experiences and activities.

## **2. Rationale and Ethos**

This document supports the School Positive Behaviour Policy by outlining how Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa responds to behaviours of concern in a way that is supportive, safe and inclusive for all pupils.

It is designed particularly to support pupils with additional needs, including pupils attending the school's Autism Classes. Guided by our mission statement, the approach outlined here complements the positive ethos of our school, where respect, kindness, empathy and safety are central to the school community.

The aim is to:

- Promote positive behaviour and emotional regulation
- Support pupils to feel safe, understood and included
- Provide clear guidance for staff when behaviours escalate
- Ensure consistent responses across the school
- Maintain the safety and dignity of all pupils and staff

This document is informed by:

- Bí Cinealta & Kiva School policies
- Whole-school Positive Behaviour Policy
- NCSE Autism Good Practice Guidance
- NCSE Relate
- Berry Street Education Model
- The understanding that regulation precedes learning

### **3. Understanding Behaviour**

In Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa we recognise that behaviour is a form of communication.

Children may display behaviours of concern when they are:

- overwhelmed
- anxious
- unable to communicate a need
- experiencing sensory overload
- finding a task difficult
- struggling with change or transitions
- dysregulated or tired

For some pupils, particularly those with autism, behaviour may occur because of:

- sensory sensitivities
- communication differences
- difficulty understanding social expectations
- uncertainty or changes to routine
- challenges with emotional regulation

Our aim is always to understand what the behaviour is communicating and support the child in developing more effective ways to express their needs.

#### **Responsibility of all:**

All of the adults encountered by the children at school have the duty to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other as their behaviour sets an example and builds positive relationships.

### **4. Principles Guiding Our Practice**

Our responses to behaviours of concern are guided by the same ethos and values outlined in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

#### **Relationship First**

Positive relationships between staff and pupils are central to supporting behaviour.

Example: A teacher noticing a child becoming upset may quietly check in with the child, offering reassurance and support before the situation escalates.

#### **Regulation Before Expectation**

Children must feel calm and safe before they can engage with learning or problem solving.

**Prevention Over Reaction**

Staff focus on proactive supports to reduce the likelihood of behaviours occurring through the use of strategies such as visual schedules, giving advance notice of transitions, and preparing pupils for changes to routine.

**Dignity and Respect**

All responses must preserve the child's dignity and self-worth. Staff will address behaviour quietly and respectfully rather than correcting a child publicly.

**Individualised Support**

Some pupils require additional supports and individual behaviour plans. A pupil with sensory needs may have access to movement breaks or a quiet regulation space as part of an agreed support plan.

**Consistency with the School Positive Behaviour Policy**

All responses to behaviour reflect the expectations, values and graduated responses outlined in the school's Positive Behaviour policy.

## **5. Preventative Approaches**

The school prioritises proactive strategies to reduce behaviours of concern.

These may include:

- Explicit teaching of social and emotional skills – social stories, SPHE lessons, roleplay, circle time
- morning meetings
- predictable routines and clear expectations
- visual schedules and supports
- preparation for transitions
- social stories
- sensory breaks or movement breaks
- calm spaces for regulation
- modelling positive behaviour
- acknowledging positive effort

These strategies are used across classrooms and autism classes where appropriate.

## **6. Early Signs of Dysregulation**

Staff are encouraged to recognise early signs that a pupil may be becoming distressed.

These may include:

- withdrawal or refusal
- increased movement or agitation
- raised voice
- repetitive questioning
- difficulty following instructions

Early support may include:

- reducing task demands
- offering a short break
- quiet reassurance
- redirecting attention
- providing sensory supports

## **7. Responding to Behaviours of Concern**

When behaviours occur, staff aim to respond calmly and consistently.

Responses may include:

- calm verbal prompts
- offering choices
- redirecting attention
- allowing space
- reducing the audience around the child
- supporting the child to access a quiet space

When the child is calm, staff may help the pupil reflect on what happened and practice alternative responses.

## **8. Responding to Physical Behaviours**

Occasionally pupils may display physical behaviours such as:

- hitting
- kicking
- biting
- throwing objects

- pushing
- attempting to leave a safe space

These behaviours usually occur when a child is highly distressed or dysregulated.

Staff will:

- remain calm
- prioritise safety
- use minimal language
- allow space where possible
- remove other pupils from the area if necessary
- support the child in moving to a calm or regulation space

## **9. Physical Intervention**

Restrictive physical intervention is used only as a last resort.

It may only occur when:

- there is an immediate risk of harm to the child or others and other strategies have not been effective

Any intervention will:

- aim to prevent injury
- last the shortest possible time
- respect the dignity and wellbeing of the child

Incidents involving physical intervention will be recorded and reviewed and parents/guardians will be informed. In line with guidance from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), where restrictive practices such as physical restraint are used, particularly where they are repeated or form part of an individual support plan, the school will report this to the NCSE in accordance with national guidance and procedures. The school is committed to reducing and eliminating restrictive practices wherever possible through preventative approaches, positive behaviour support and individualised planning.

## **10. Individual Behaviour Support Plans**

Some pupils may require an Individual Behaviour Support Plan.

These plans may include:

- triggers for behaviour
- early warning signs
- preventative strategies

- regulation supports
- agreed responses for staff

Plans are developed collaboratively with parents, teachers, SNAs and relevant professionals where appropriate.

## 11. Partnership with Parents

Parents and guardians are important partners in supporting children.

The school will:

- communicate concerns early
- share strategies that support the child in school
- work collaboratively with families to support positive behaviour.

## 12. Suspension and Expulsion

At Scoil Oilibhéir Naofa we adopt a pro-active, preventative and solution focused approach to supporting all children with regulation in order to support and include every child. Suspensions/expulsions will only be considered after every possible avenue of support has been explored. School staff will have reviewed the reasons why these supports have not worked before considering suspension/expulsion. In the event of a suspension/expulsion, the Board of Management will follow the procedures as detailed in the NEWB Guidelines:

[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines\\_school\\_codes\\_eng.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/guidelines_school_codes_eng.pdf)

This policy will be reviewed as required by the Board of Management.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 16/6/26

Signed:



**Miriam Marsh (Chairperson B.O.M.)**

DENIS H<sup>C</sup> NEZIS



**Maria White (Principal)**