Policy on Supporting Behaviours of Concern

School Address*: Our Lady of Good Counsel School,*

Innishmore, Ballincollig, Cork. P31FH22

Phone number: *0214878370*

Roll number: *18208A*

School Patron: *The Bishop of Cork and Ross, Bishop Fintan Gavin*.

Principal: *Aisling Power*.

Deputy Principal: *Nollaig Moynihan.*

Chairperson: *Harold Brooks*

Chairperson Change Sept 26- Billy Murphy.

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Policy on Supporting Children's Behaviour of Concern

Chairperson - Harold Brooks
Principal - Aisling Power
Policy ratified by the BoM on 15/02/2022
Policy to be reviewed on or before 15/02/2024
Reviewed by BOM on 28th Sept 2026- New Chairperson Billy Murphy.

1. Rationale and Policy Considerations

Our Lady of Good Counsel School require a policy that supports children's positive behaviour.
To achieve this, it is essential to ensure that the physical, emotional, social and general wellbeing of all of the children attending the school is positively supported in a happy, safe, well-planned and controlled environment.
It is very important for children to be able to: relate well to other children and adults; make friends and get on with others; feel secure and valued; explore and learn confidently and feel good about themselves.

The approaches for supporting children when their behaviour is challenging, in ways that are appropriate for their age and level of development, must also be set out.
Pupil and Staff wellbeing is at the heart of this Policy. Inclusive practices and a safe physical and emotional environment are of greatest importance for all pupils.

2. Legislation and regulatory requirements

Our Lady of Good Counsel School is committed to promoting positive behaviour, emotional wellbeing, dignity, safety and participation for all pupils. This policy is informed by:

- Education Act, 1998
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, 2004
- Disability Act, 2005
- Children First Act, 2015
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- Data Protection Act, 2018 and GDPR
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- Department of Education Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2023)
- NCSE Guidance on Supporting Behaviour and Regulation
- Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) guidance relating to restrictive practices
- Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) Principles and Standards
- Dynamis Positive Handling and Conflict Management Training

The school recognises that every pupil has the right to:

- Feel safe, valued and respected.
- Access meaningful educational opportunities.
- Have their communication needs understood and supported.
- Develop emotional regulation and social skills.
- Have their rights, dignity and wellbeing protected at all times.

The school also recognises its duty of care to ensure a safe learning environment for pupils, staff, families and visitors.

3. Characteristics and Prevalence

Characteristics and behaviours associated with emotional disturbance and/or behavioural problems may include aggressive or anti-social behaviour, inattentiveness, distractibility and impulsiveness; impaired social interactions; general inability to cope with the routine of daily tasks; obsessive and repetitive behaviours; attention-seeking behaviours such as negative interactions or a poor attitude towards work, peers or teachers; and depressed behaviours such as withdrawal, anxiety or mood swings
(Signposts, 2009).

4. Policy Statement

We inform parents/guardians about this policy on enrolment and seek information from families about the behaviour guidance strategies they use at home.
We recognise that it is important to understand the expectations of parents/guardians regarding our approach to behaviour guidance in the school. We do our utmost to keep open lines of communication with families on an ongoing basis.Our Lady of Good Counsel School adopts a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach.

Positive Behaviour Support is a person-centred framework that seeks to understand the purpose or function of behaviour and improve quality of life through proactive and preventative supports.

The school recognises that:

- Behaviour is a form of communication.
- All behaviour occurs for a reason.
- Pupils may communicate distress, anxiety, unmet needs, sensory difficulties, frustration, pain or communication challenges through their behaviour.
- Pupils learn best when relationships are positive, supportive and respectful.
- Positive emotional regulation is developed through co-regulation with trusted adults.
- Restrictive interventions should be reduced wherever possible.

The school's approach focuses on:

Prevention

- Building positive relationships.
- Supporting communication.
- Providing structured and predictable environments.
- Providing sensory supports.
- Planning successful transitions.
- Developing emotional regulation skills.

Teaching

Pupils will be taught alternative ways to:

- Communicate needs.
- Express emotions.
- Request help.
- Cope with frustration and disappointment.
- Solve problems.
- Participate appropriately in school life.

Response

Where behaviours of concern occur, responses will:

- Maintain dignity and respect.
- Reduce risk and distress.
- Promote learning and recovery.
- Focus on understanding rather than punishment.
- Seek long-term solutions through assessment and support.

5. Procedures & Practices

It is essential for all staff to understand that there are many influences on a child's behavior.
The National Education Psychological Service (NEPS, 2010) define behavioural, emotional and/or social difficulties (BESD) as 'difficulties which a young person is experiencing which act as a barrier to their personal, social, cognitive and emotional development. These difficulties may be communicated through internalising and/or externalising behaviours. Relationships with self, others and community may be affected and the difficulties may interfere with the pupil's own personal and educational development or that of others. The contexts within which difficulties occur must always be considered, and may include the classroom, school, family, community and cultural settings
The role that families play, especially parents/guardians, is crucial to the success of the behaviour guidance approach at Our Lady of Good Counsel School.
Parents/guardians will be provided with regular opportunities to contribute to the school's general approaches to promoting positive outcomes for children as well as the development and review of their own child's individual care and education plan.

The role of the adult
Adults who are kind, patient, and firm help children to learn that it makes sense to act in certain ways. Behaviour guidance based on trust, respect, kindness and consistency helps children to build self-esteem and self-discipline. Adults can help children to avoid inappropriate behaviour by helping

them to understand rules and guidelines. When a pupil does something inappropriate, adults can help them look at the consequences of their actions and think about what they can do to make things better. Adults always need to consider whether a pupil may have some unmet need that is leading to the inappropriate behaviour or is experiencing some distress, and look at ways to address this in addition to helping the pupil with managing their behaviour.

- Staff interact frequently with the pupils in a calm, friendly, positive, respectful manner.
- Staff are available and responsive to the pupils.
- All pupils regardless of race, religion, family background, culture, gender or ability are treated with respect and consideration.
- Independence is encouraged and scaffolded, as pupils are ready.
- Pupil's efforts, achievements and feelings are acknowledged and given sincere encouragement leading to growth in self-esteem and self-regulation.
- Pro-social behaviours among pupils are recognised and encouraged.
- Staff expectations for pupil's social behaviour are developmentally appropriate – children's level of understanding and maturity are taken into account.
- Pupils are encouraged to communicate feelings, ideas and interests.
- Pupils are distracted from unwanted behaviour.
- When behaviour is unacceptable, staff explain to pupils why it is unacceptable in a way they can understand.
- Pupils need movement and sensory integration activities for their learning and development, and are allowed to move freely for a significant part of the day.
- Soft, quiet spaces are provided for children to withdraw comfortably when they are feeling tired or overwhelmed or just want to be alone.

Strategies recommended in *Aistear* and in *SESE Supporting Behaviour Management in Schools (2011)* that we use include:

- Anticipating conflict and supporting pupils in resolving it, coming to the assistance of frustrated pupils and helping them find solutions.
- Modelling social behaviour when interacting with adults and pupils, thus helping them to learn from others' social skills such as taking turns, listening, sharing, asking/gesturing/signing/pointing for something. Encouraging pupils to help each other during their activities, play and routines.
- Helping pupils share skills and knowledge with each other.
- Encouraging and acknowledging spontaneous co-operative efforts made by the pupils

Boundary/limit setting and rules

- Any limits are clearly related to the safety, welfare and protection of the pupil themselves and others around them.
- Limits are communicated in a way that is respectful of all.

- Rules are as few as possible, consistently upheld and within the pupil's understanding.
- Clear, reasonable boundaries on behaviour are provided and explained.
- Rules are communicated positively, e.g. 'we walk inside' rather than 'no running'.
- Pupils are allowed enough time to respond to requests for them to behave within the rules or codes of behaviour, according to their needs and understanding –some pupils may take more time to think through what is being asked of them.

Provide choice

- Negotiating choices can help pupils take appropriate responsibility and prepares them with positive life skills such as listening and reasoning.
- Whenever there is an opportunity for a real choice to be made, pupils are given the chance to exercise choice and then follow through on it.
- Pupils are given choices within limits, as appropriate to their level of development, e.g. "would you like an outdoor blue break or a break in the classroom?" "do you need help with your lunch, or will I just open the lid of the box?"

Positive reinforcement and encouragement

Positive behaviour, however small, is encouraged and affirmed with words/signs/visuals and body language (e.g. nods, smiles). When a pupil is behaving well and when they are trying to stop themselves engaging in negative activities, this is noticed and acknowledged. This builds self-confidence and encourages pupils to repeat positive behaviour. Negative behaviour is ignored when it is judged safe and appropriate to do so.

Schedules, routines and transitions

Schedules, routines and transitions serve as a framework from which pupils gain trust, security and order. These are always flexible, with as few transitions as possible, but they provide clear guidelines about what is expected. Any changes to the scheduling within the timetable will be clearly communicated to the pupils (and their families where necessary.

The physical environment

The way in which physical space is arranged and used can either encourage or discourage desired behaviour. Space is aesthetically pleasing, planned and well organised to diminish the potential for problems.

- Space is sufficient so pupils can play and work creatively in a relaxed setting.
- The outdoor space provides opportunities for pupils to move more freely, be louder without restrictions and become calmer.
- Active, loud and energetic play spaces are balanced with soft, passive, quiet and peaceful areas both indoors and outdoors.

Toys, materials and resources

Resources for working with pupils are developmentally appropriate and in good condition. Open-ended materials allow for pupils to use them in whatever way they choose and support engagement in play. There are enough easily

accessible materials and equipment with enough complexity to keep pupils engaged for long enough without having to share too much or wait too long.

6. **Responding to behaviours that challenge.**

A Problem-Solving Approach
Scott et al., (2010) propose four steps common to all tiers of behaviour support that are equally applicable across the whole-school, among pupils who do not respond appropriately to whole school approaches and for pupils who require intensive support:
(1) Prediction informed by an analysis of specifically identified challenging behaviours, which includes the context in which they typically occur;
(2) High probability interventions that include a focus on relationships, differentiated instruction and behaviour management;
(3) Consistency to ensure and build staff consensus to implement behaviour management practices in the same manner;
(4) Assessment to monitor key outcomes that may be used to inform databased decision making.
.6A: Restrictive Practices Governance

- **Restrictive Practices Governance**

The Board of Management and staff of Our Lady of Good Counsel School recognise that any restrictive practice involves a limitation on an individual's freedom and rights and therefore must only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Definition

Restrictive practices may include:

- Physical intervention.
- Environmental restriction.
- Restriction of access.
- Removal of an item where necessary to prevent harm.
- Any intervention which limits a pupil's freedom of movement for safety reasons.

Principles

Any restrictive practice used within OLGC School must be:

- Lawful.
- Necessary.
- Proportionate.
- Reasonable.
- Evidence-based.
- The least restrictive option available.
- Used for the shortest time possible.

Restrictive practices must never be used:

- As punishment.
- For staff convenience.
- In response to non-compliance alone.
- To force participation in activities.
- In a way that compromises dignity or wellbeing.

Restrictive interventions shall only be considered when there is an immediate and significant risk of harm to the pupil or others.

6B: Position on Seclusion

OLGC School does not use seclusion as a behaviour management strategy.

Seclusion is defined as placing or leaving a pupil alone in a room or area from which they are prevented from leaving.

The school recognises that seclusion can represent a significant restriction of liberty and may have implications for a pupil's rights and wellbeing.

Pupils may independently access:

- Quiet spaces.
- Sensory regulation areas.
- Calm spaces.
- Withdrawal spaces.

These spaces are:

- Voluntary.
- Supportive.
- Supervised as appropriate.
- Designed to assist regulation and emotional wellbeing.

No pupil shall be locked in or prevented from leaving a calming space.

6C: Behaviour Risk Assessment

A Behaviour Risk Assessment may be completed where a pupil presents with behaviour that poses:

- A risk of serious injury to themselves.
- A risk of injury to others.
- Significant self-injurious behaviour.
- Persistent absconding.
- Serious property destruction.

- Repeated need for physical intervention.

Risk assessments shall:

- Be person centred.
- Be informed by data and observation.
- Be completed in consultation with parents/guardians.
- Consider environmental and communication factors.
- Identify preventative strategies.
- Identify early warning signs.
- Set out agreed responses should risks escalate.

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- At least annually.
- After significant incidents.
- Following any substantial change in circumstances.
- Following recommendations from relevant professionals.

6D: Physical Intervention and Positive Handling

OLGC School is committed to reducing the use of restrictive physical intervention through proactive planning, environmental supports and Positive Behaviour Support.

Physical intervention may only be used where:

- There is an immediate risk of serious harm.
- Less restrictive alternatives have been attempted or are clearly inappropriate.
- The intervention is proportionate to the level of risk.
- Staff have received approved training.

When physical intervention is necessary:

- The minimum force necessary shall be used.
- The intervention shall last only as long as required.
- The pupil's dignity shall remain central.
- Continuous monitoring shall occur.
- The intervention shall cease immediately when the risk reduces.

Following any significant physical intervention:

- Parents/guardians will be informed.
- An incident report will be completed.
- Staff will participate in a review and debrief process.
- Support strategies will be reviewed to reduce future occurrence.

6E: Incident Review and Staff Debriefing

- **Post-Incident Review and Staff Wellbeing**

The school acknowledges that serious behavioural incidents can impact pupils and staff.

Following significant incidents:

Pupils

Pupils will be supported through:

- Emotional regulation supports.
- Re-establishment of routine.
- Restorative conversations where appropriate.
- Review of support strategies.

Staff

Staff may be supported through:

- Debriefing meetings.
- Reflective practice discussions.
- Additional training or coaching.
- Occupational health supports where appropriate.

Incident reviews will focus on:

- Understanding causes.
- Identifying preventative measures.
- Improving supports.
- Maintaining safety and wellbeing.

The purpose of review is learning and improvement rather than blame.

6.F Crisis Prevention Intervention Training, Dynamis Training

A specialised provider of evidence-based conflict management, personal safety, and positive handling training for professionals in education, healthcare, and corporate sectors

Core Offerings & Solutions

- ***Positive Handling in Schools:*** Teaches de-escalation, restraint reduction, and safe physical intervention techniques for schools

- ***Conflict Management:*** Equips teams with proactive, person-centred strategies to identify, prevent, and manage difficult interactions with dignity and respect.

- ***Senior Leadership Support:*** Provides risk-pattern analysis, strategic behavior management alignment, and regulatory compliance assurance.

Delivery & Methodology

- ***Blended Learning Model:*** Combines mandatory online pre-learning theory with focused, practical in-person sessions (such as a 3-hour practical module or full INSET day) to minimize classroom disruption
- ***SCENA Approach:*** Utilizes scenario-driven training design based on real-world incident logs and common workplace flashpoints rather than extreme hypotheticals.
- ***Legal & Regulatory Alignment:*** Courses are grounded in duty of care, human rights considerations, and health and safety legislation tailored to specific regions (including the UK and Ireland)

7. Communication Plan

Expectations and agreed codes of behaviour are accessible and communicated to all, using a variety of media, e.g. School Website, Seesaw, Facebook, Admissions policy, handbooks, Aladdin, email and texts, posters and pictures. They are communicated in a way that ensures that they are understood according to the levels of understanding of every child.
All parents/guardians are informed of the Policy on Managing Behaviour on enrolment. Staff members check with parents/guardians that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.
A summary of this policy is included in the Parents'/Guardians' induction meetings. This policy will also be included in staff induction and annual staff training.
A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to all staff and to parents/guardians in the Policy Folder located in the office, and online on the school website; www.olgcballincollig.ie
Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the full policy at any time upon request. Parents/guardians and staff will receive written notification of any updates.

7A. Recording, Data Protection and Confidentiality

The school maintains behaviour records to support pupils, improve practice and fulfil legal obligations.

Records may include:

- Incident reports.
- Behaviour monitoring records.
- Tally sheets.
- Risk assessments.
- Positive Behaviour Support Plans.
- Functional Behaviour Assessments.

Records shall:

- Be factual and accurate.
- Be completed promptly.
- Be stored securely.
- Be shared only with authorised personnel.
- Be managed in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Parents/guardians may request access to records relating to their child in accordance with data protection legislation and school procedures.

8. Supporting Policies in OLGC School

- Child Protection and Welfare Policy 2021
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Admissions and Enrolment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy 2021
- GDPR Policy.
- Record keeping and documentation Policy.
- Communication Policy
- Policy on Accidents and Incidents
- Complaints Policy
- Supervision Policy

9. Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively.

The Board shall:

- Approve and review this policy.
- Monitor implementation of Positive Behaviour Support practices.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training.
- Review anonymised behavioural and incident trends annually.
- Ensure compliance with child protection, health and safety and data protection legislation.
- Promote a culture of dignity, inclusion and wellbeing for pupils and staff.
- Ensure that restrictive practices are appropriately governed and reviewed.

The Board will receive anonymised reports sufficient to fulfil its governance responsibilities while protecting pupils' confidentiality.

10. References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation.

- Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016
- Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework
- Guidance for Designated Centres: Restraint Procedures (GDE3) Health Information and Quality Authority 2016
- Mental Health Commission, Rules governing the use of seclusion and mechanical means of bodily restraint, Version 2, 2009. 12 Mental Health Commission, Annual Report 2017.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework
- Aistear Síolta Practice Guide
- Supporting Young Children's Behaviour Skills, Barnardos, 2016
- Supporting Quality: guidelines for professional practice in early childhood services (3rd edition) by Geraldine French, Barnardos, 2008
- Early Years Education Inspection (EYEI) Framework (Department of Education and Skills)
- Scott et al., (2010)
- Supporting Behaviour Management in School for Students with Behavioural, Emotional and/or Social Difficulties (BESD) Dr. Sean O'Leary Deputy Director Special Education Support Service (2011)
- United Nations Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006: Equality Act, 2010

11. Who Must Observe This Policy

- Staff
- Pupils
- Parents
- Volunteers

If you, as a staff member or a parent, consider that this policy is not being implemented, you can follow the Complaints Policy and Procedure to make a complaint.

12. Contact Information

If you need more information about this policy, contact Aisling Power at principal@olgcschool.ie

Name	Aisling Power
Phone number or email	021 4878370

Policy Created

• Date this policy was created • Reviewed by new Chairperson Billy Murphy	15/02/2022 26/09/2026

Approved by	Harold Brooks, Chairperson	15/02/2022
Approved by	Billy Murphy	26/09/2026

Review Date

Date this policy will be reviewed	15/02/2028

Appendix 1.

School Name:

Photo:

About Me 2022/2023

My Name:
DOB:
My Class:
My Teacher:
My SNAs:

This report was written on my behalf by:

My Parents/Guardians read this report on this date_____ and agreed with it by signing her

Parents/Guardians
Signatures:_____

This report will be reviewed every 6 months or earlier if need be.
Review- _____***.***

Some important things you should know about me before you read anything else:

The top 10 things you need to do every day to make my day

Behaviours of Concern.

These are behaviours that happen are likely to lead to me or other people getting hurt or upset. They communicate messages that are important for me and responding to this message is the most effective way to respond. They might also require interventions that are different from my normal daily supports to help me calm quickly and keep me and everyone else safe. These interventions are included in the reactive strategies section.

Behaviour of Concern	How Often	How Intense?
Refusals: ***Outburst behaviours:*** ***Absconding:*** ***.SIBs:***		

Coping and Communication Skills

1. What's the Message some of the message(s) my behaviours are communicating?	**2. Current Skills** Some other ways that I (a) communicate these needs, (b) meet these needs myself or (c) cope with difficult situations
3. Teaching New Skills	**4. Encouraging Current Skills**

Reactive Strategies

Section 1- a summary of each of the different zones that I may go through when showing behavioural distress.	**Section 2**- a summary of the different ways that I should be supported when I am each of the different levels of upset.
Green Zone (Anxiety): *These behaviours are a sign that I am starting off-form & something is bothering me*	***Green Zone Support (Supportive):*** *Actively supporting me when I am starting to show signs of distress.*

Amber Zone (Defensive): *When what usually works for me does not work, I become even more upset and engage in these behaviours*	***Amber Zone Support (Directive):*** *Changes to make when I am not listening to directions*
Red Zone (Risk Behaviour): *These are the behaviours that I display when I am in most distress. They might pose a danger to other students, staff and me*	***Red Zone Support (Physical Intervention):*** *Keeping everyone safe and resolving the problem quickly and safely* .
Lilac Zone (Tension Reduction): *When I display these behaviours, it is a sign that I am starting to calm down and am better able to work with you again*	***Lilac Zone Support (Therapeutic Rapport):*** *Building Rapport and getting back on track*

Appendix 2
(Incident Report Sample)
Incident Report Form
Pupil(Initials): Date: Time:
Location:

Describe the behaviour.						
Whom/what was at risk?						
What did you do? Be factual and brief.						
How was this in the best interest of the child?						
Did you need to use restrictive practise or physical intervention? (Be specific)						
How was pupil assisted to recover? List any de-escalation/positive intervention strategies you used to diffuse the incident						
Number of staff needed to manage incident Outcomes for staff(e.g. debriefing/go home/sick leave)						
Does pupil have a PSP. If yes were all strategies in place.						
Was anyone injured. Was medical assistance required?	No Yes (If 'Yes' describe) In the event that medical assistance was required an additional report will be completed.					
Was there an obvious (definite) reason for this behaviour.						
Actions to be taken. Informing parents, adjustments to schedule/environment, PSP,						
Rate this incident. (Attached criteria to help rate behaviour)	Minor Bring to attention of support team within a week.		Significant Bring to attention of parents and pupil support team **<u>within one day.</u>**		Critical Pupil support team and management to be involved **<u>immediately.</u>**	
Other staff present:						
Signed:				Date:		

<u>Signed</u>: _____(Member of Management Team)

Our Lady of Good Counsel School Tally Reporting Template

Purpose: To record recurring low-level risk patterns and near misses, enabling review of trends and early intervention.

Date: _____

Class/Group: _____

Staff Completing Record: _____

Review: _____

Time	Location	Child(ren)	Category	Observation	Outcome

Approved Tally Categories

- Playground contact-risk play
- Transition contact/grabbing
- Lunchtime sensory/contact risk
- Near miss around equipment
- Early crisis indicators
- Other defined low-level risk pattern

Triggers for Full Incident Report

- Injury to any child or adult
- Significant distress
- Safeguarding concern
- New or escalating behaviour
- Peer impact or targeting
- Significant physical intervention
- Any staff **concern requiring explanation**

Daily / Session Summary

Number of tally entries: _____
Patterns noted (time, location, peers, activity):

Actions required / Support plan updates:

Date: _____

Chairperson: _____

Signature: _____

Review Date: _____