

St. Anne's National School Castlerea

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Behaviours of Concern and Physical Intervention Policy

Introduction

This policy stems from St. Anne's National School's commitment to providing 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 St. Ann's National School, 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). They 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 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.

Behaviour

Behaviour reflects a response to an environment or stimuli. It 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.

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:

- Getting attention, from adults or peers
- Getting an object – something the child wants e.g. a ball, a chase
- Avoiding something e.g. attention or a particular task
- Getting or avoiding a sensory experience or human contact relationships in the school community physical, sensory or medical factors.

● **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. 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, internal and external factors. 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. We should always be aware of this, especially with children who display challenging behaviour.

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

<p>Internal factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 ● anxieties or learning difficulties ● Biophysical factors: such as medical conditions or disabilities ● Psychological factors: including emotional trauma or lack of social skills 	<p>External and interpersonal factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● parental and family patterns and relationships ● social networks - friends and peer groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student group dynamics: such as bullying and teasing, cliques or student apathy or hostility ● neighbourhood and community factors ● the status and standing of different groups in society ● school factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. ● time, opportunity and support for personal and social development ● learned behaviours that have developed through reinforcement, consequences or adaptation to social practices (a student with a learning difficulty repeatedly misbehaves knowing that he/she
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	will be removed from the class and this will avoid his/her learning difficulty being exposed)
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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.
- **Emotionally dysregulated episodes:** 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 cooperation in these matters.

Strategies for promoting positive behaviour

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent it from 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. St. Attracta's National School believes that school and home should work cooperatively together in order to enhance and successfully promote positive behaviour.

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

Whole school approaches and strategies for promoting positive behaviour

The approaches below are a sample of ongoing strategies. It is amended as necessary.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual of our four key rules in the school- be kind, be tidy, be safe and healthy and be.. • Friends First Programme • Developing vocabulary, language and communication skills across all classes through oral language, SPHE, • Use of emotion cards as a communication tool to identify emotions when regulated or dysregulated • Visual cues to reinforce verbal instructions • Clear and simple classroom rules and instructions • The use of timers to plan for transitions • Visual timetables • Choice boards • Teaching of social skills • Use of social stories • Talk and discussion of behaviour with the child (if capable) • Zones of Regulation • Class-based strategies/interventions/reward systems • Home/School strategies/interventions/reward systems • Modelled co-regulation • Behaviours of concern tracking, incident logs, and checklists on Aladdin • Social Skills Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurture Focus Tasks, Nurture Space • Drawing and Talking Programme (Weaving Wellbeing/Talkabout/ Stop, Think, Do Programme) • Buddy Systems • A place of safety • Sensory Regulation Plans/Movement Breaks • Individual behavioural plans, classroom/school/school support plus Pupil Plan • School Code of Conduct • Consistent approaches to behaviour by all staff members • Clear, consistent consequences for misbehaviour from the school's code of behaviour • Regular communication with parents –Aladdin Connect, email, daily journal, phone call • Assemblies- promote and reward good behaviour • Individual class reward schemes • “catch them being good” at the earliest • Always focus on the positive rather than the negative • Being specific about what has been good- well done for....
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Staff training

In St. Anne's National School we promote Continuous Professional Development to help SNAs, SCP and teachers to develop their skills and confidence to work successfully with pupils who have challenging behaviour. This also helps support positive behaviour. The school engages with NEPS and the NCSE/NBSS for advice also. Our School Completion Officer also engages in training and provide targeted supports to students who are at risk of educational disadvantage, aimed at enhancing social, emotional and behavioural skills, attendance, engagement, resilience and self-belief”.

External Agencies

In addition to the above, external agencies are contacted to provide advice, support and assessments where applicable for pupils with consistent behaviours of concern in consultation with parents

- Referral to HSE/Disability Network Teams
- Multi-Disciplinary Teams/External Agencies/Meitheals
- Referral to EWO/ TUSLA if deemed necessary and advice
- NEPS Consultations
- Referral to SENO for advice
- Consultation with NCSE/NBSS regarding modified individualised timetables/school day in compliance with circular 0047/2021

Support for School Staff

St. Anne's National School recognises that those directly involved in working with a child experiencing a behaviour of concern may need support, advice and assistance in dealing with it. Please contact the assigned SET or SENCO. There is also personal support available through the Employee Assistance Service.



Employee Assistance Service/Spectrum Life

Offers confidential support 24 hours a day/365 days a year.

SMS: Text 'Hi' to 087 145 2056

WhatsApp: Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010

Freephone IRE : 1800 411 057

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 pupils. This includes communication with the pupil's parents/guardians as early as possible to discuss concerns, suggest forms of support and encourage cooperation.

- Implementing suitable classroom management practices and appropriate intervention strategies for pupils who are at risk of developing challenging behaviour e.g. contacting an SNA to withdraw a pupil where there is a behaviour concern
- 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 pupils with challenging behaviour.
- Documenting all challenging behaviour incidents on Aladdin as they occur. Incident reports will be recorded on Aladdin also.
- Reporting all challenging behaviour and incidents to the principal and parents/ guardians.
- Sometimes it may be necessary for a class teacher to seek support from a neighbouring class teacher or SNA. SNA's are on call in St. Ann's N.S. throughout the school day.

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 school support plans.
- Cooperating with interventions and behavioural strategies that are proposed by the child's teacher and the principal.
- Working cooperatively 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 pupils with challenging behaviour and supporting staff in relation to these pupils.
- Facilitating access of all staff to programs of professional learning in relation to pupils with challenging behaviour as deemed appropriate by the principal.
- Providing opportunities for specialised teachers within the school to develop higher-level skills so they can provide additional support and advice within the school.
- Seeking external support and advice, from our NEPS Psychologist and the NCSE in relation to behaviours of concern for pupils with SEN or delegate this to the SENCO who will then advise or update SETs and the class teacher accordingly.
- 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.

Steps to be followed for behaviours of concern

At the earliest stages of emerging behaviours of concern, or minor behaviours of concern as outlined in the school's code of behaviour, the positive strategies in managing behaviours of concern for children with SEN will be utilised. following steps to de-escalate the behaviours of concern will be used.

1. Speak to the pupil in a calm tone and ask them to stop using affective statements or "non violent communication.
2. Acknowledge appropriate behaviour by another pupil nearby
3. Gradually move closer to the pupil's space, while continuing to praise other pupils behaving appropriately who are in close proximity. It is not necessary to make eye contact as this may escalate the situation in some cases.
4. Ask a question to divert the pupil's attention from engaging the behaviour e.g. Joe is there something wrong, I can see you are not happy.
5. If the question fails, time to give a brief direction (again privately / discreetly). "Joe, it's time to, thanks". The "thanks" at the end conveys the expectation that the pupil will comply with the directions.
6. Allow the pupil some 'wait time' to get going, rather than risking escalation by saying "immediately" or using a confrontational tone of voice
7. If the pupil begins an argument "I don't want to do it" or "I don't feel like it" then acknowledge what has been said and then redirect to the request once again. "maybe you'd prefer not to do this ... but this is our .../ learning time so I want you to Thanks."

Before intervening a member of staff physically should seek to deploy other behaviour strategies as outlined above and where these have failed, the member of staff should, wherever practicable, use the steps below, remembering it is always about de-escalating the situation at all stages.

1. tell the pupil using their name who is misbehaving to stop (naming the behaviour), and what you would like them to do.
2. The member of staff should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
3. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and
4. Staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil (Be mindful of non-verbal eg facial gestures and verbal gestures)
5. Sometimes a member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency), for example, when dealing with an older pupil, or a physically large pupil, or more than one pupil, or if the teacher believes he/she may be at risk of injury.
6. Where there is a risk to other pupils or a staff member themselves or where there is no help unless it is an emergency, such as a pupil who is stronger and physically large or more than one pupil,
7. In those circumstances, the member of staff should remove other pupils who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary telephone the Police. The member of staff should inform the pupil(s) that he/she has sent for help. Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally and try to prevent the incident from escalating.
8. Situations where a pupil refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom need to be handled carefully as they can be a prelude to a major confrontation, especially if reasonable force is used to eject older pupils.
9. Where a pupil persistently refuses to leave a classroom and the teacher/SNA believes that the use of physical intervention will endanger the teacher or other pupils, the school should have an emergency response procedure whereby assistance can be summoned quickly- All staff will have a red card with their name on it which another pupil will be asked to give it to a neighbouring staff member which will alert for immediate assistance, for example, a trusted pupil is sent for help.

Considerations when devising a behaviour plan that may require physical intervention

If a school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of physical intervention, a plan will be devised as how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- managing the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, physical interventions if necessary)
- involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking
- ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate through red card system.

Physical intervention

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to physically intervene, to prevent a young pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something. School staff will never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. Staff will avoid touching or holding a pupil in any way that might be considered indecent.

Aims and objectives:

1. To provide clear guidelines to staff, pupils and parents regarding the use of physical interventions in schools.
2. To emphasise a culture within the school of prevention and reduction of the use of physical contact/intervention practices.
3. To manage serious incidents when they occur.
4. To reduce the risks associated with serious incidents such as injuries to self or others or serious damage to property.

Rationale for physical contact/intervention:

There are times when physical intervention is used in our school, such as affirming a child with administering first aid. Occasionally there are times, when challenging behaviour or behaviours of concern can emerge depending on the particular circumstances/needs of a child– for example, an unforeseen or emergency situation: e.g. a child suddenly tries to climb over a fence or run out on a road, or attempts to hurt another unexpectedly, a child can become a flight risk or be a danger to him/herself or others. On such occasions school staff may need to physically intervene in the interest of health, safety or welfare of the child and/or others. In such circumstances any such intervention will be for the **shortest time** and at the **minimum level required**.

Steps when physical intervention is required

Level 1: Presence: a staff member will stand in front of the child – no physical contact, the **child retains full mobility**/ physically interposing between pupils/ standing between a door and the pupil to prevent entry into the room due to ensuring the safety of others in the room/ blocking a pupil's path

Level 2: Touch: A staff member will place a hand on the child's shoulder, lead, guide, usher, or block door handle, the **child retains a lot of mobility**

Level 3: Holding: A staff member will hold the child's hand- the **child still retains mobility**/ leading a pupil by the arm e.g. if a child goes to run out of the school grounds to the footpath outside the school

Level 4: Holding: Staff member will hold the child under the arm whilst sending for extra help in case the situation escalates (red card and the staff member's name on it) the **child has some mobility**

Level 5: Holding: Two staff members, one on each side will hold a child under each arm

Level 6: Restraint: Two staff member/s will hold child by arms and legs. **Child is restricted from moving around.**

Once the child has become emotionally regulated following an incident, the behaviour of concern will be discussed with the child and sanctions used as outlined in the [school's code of behaviour](#) taking into account the child's age, and specific needs.

The SET teacher assigned to the class of the pupil who has engaged in the behaviour of concern and pupils involved will be notified of the concern verbally and it will be recorded on the behaviours of concern document by the staff members present at the time of the incident. The SET and class teacher will monitor for antecedents, the behaviour and consequences so as to put interventions in place at the earliest to prevent behaviours of concern from arising or escalating.

Steps following the incident

- 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 on Google Drive folder and sent to the principal.

- Each incident will be reported to parents/guardians.
- If the behaviour reoccurs, 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
- If the behaviour continues to persist, following the code of conduct, the principal will be informed and parents will be invited into the school to attend a meeting with the teacher and or 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 the expulsion of the pupil. This will be considered where the pupil'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 via the NCSE School Portal.
- 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.

Where there is a need for a child to be assessed in relation to specific behavioural problems, or engaging in frequent episodes of emotionally dysregulated behaviour/s the class teacher/SET/SNA/SCP will discuss this with the SENCO at the earliest. The SENCO may advise as to the next steps to take and or engage with NEPS for further advice for the most appropriate assessment route. There may be times however where a child needs to be monitored for a period of time before assessment occurs or where other services require families to engage with services such as family support.

Parents/guardians will be given as much support as possible with this process. Other external services may be availed of through the wider community where applicable, e.g. NCSE/NBSS, NEPS, CDNT, CAMHS, Behaviour Therapist, Play and or Community Care Services. The referral process is outlined below and further information is on the next page.

- Referrals to GP will be made by parents or the school nurse
- Referrals to the Children's Disability Network Team(CDNT) will be made by the parents and SET/SENCO. SETS will inform SENCO where they have made a referral with a family to the CDNT or where they have become aware a family have made a referral to the CDNT and insert it in the log of actions of the child's support file.
- Referrals to CAMHS will be made by the school doctor or GP once they see the child in a consultation in their practice. Families may be asked to engage with speech and language assessments and family support in advance of being reviewed by CAMHS for a place on the waiting list.
- Referrals to TUSLA will be made by the Principal/HSCL in consultation with the parents and SENCO. Parents will be informed about the drop in clinics available in the local Family Resource Centre.
- Referrals for play therapy in the Family Resource Centre will be through the SENCO and HSCL who will liaise with the local Family Resource Centre

- Engaging with Rainbows Ireland/VETA House for families dealing with bereavement, separation anxiety can be made by the SENCO/parent/EWO.
- Engagement or indirect consultation with NEPS through the SENCO.
- All referrals to external agencies will be noted in the log of actions of the support file by the assigned SET teacher of the child and also inserted on the document rating to children undergoing or awaiting assessments.

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 or external circumstances to school. 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 cooperation 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.

Where the behaviours of concern are ongoing, the school will discuss family support options such as parenting coaching, play therapy and local groups that may be of help in supporting the child in dealing with the behaviours at home.

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 1st 2022.

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 pupils. Any such arrangement should be short-term and transitional, and designed to assist the pupil to attend for the full school day along with his/her peers.

Where in exceptional circumstances St. Anne's N.S. places a pupil on a reduced school day, the school:

Circular [0047/2021](#) was issued to schools, as Guidelines for the use of Reduced School Days in Schools, which came into effect from January 1st 2022. They can be accessed [here](#)

In the context of challenging behaviour, reduced school days will 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:

- a. Must, prior to consideration of a reduced school day, 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.
- b. Need to 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.
- c. Shall have the written consent of the parents/guardians (Appendix 1) of the student, and must also document if parental consent is subsequently withdrawn.
- d. Shall notify TUSLA Education Support Service (TESS) through the portal 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.
- e. Should notify the NCSE (Local SENO) of the decision to place the student on a reduced school day where the student has special educational needs (SEN).
- f. 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.
- g. Must include in the plan of action outlined in (f), 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.
- h. 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.
- i. Should consider a graduated regime of school attendance which increases steadily and incrementally towards full attendance.
- j. Will arrange for a review with the student and their parents/guardians if a student is still on a reduced school day as the time limit of the plan approaches.
- k. Should consider an extension only in exceptional circumstances and only with the further written consent of parents/guardians
- l. 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.
- m. 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.
- n. Shall inform the parents/guardians of their right to withdraw consent at any time.

- o. Should inform the parents/guardians that TESS educational welfare officer can provide assistance and advice if required.

Where suspension or expulsion is warranted, [St. Anne's N.S. code of behaviour](#) will be invoked.

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

The following are examples of grounds for expulsion but the list is not exclusive or exhaustive.

- 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 pupil's behaviour have been exhausted.

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

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 **check it can happen immediately but it is when there are 20 days cumulatively for suspension/expulsion**
- Where the school has expelled a pupil and all appeals processes both internal and external have been exhausted, the pupil's expulsion will be reported on the pupil absence report form.

Methods of communicating with parents/guardians

Communication between home and school is central to maintaining a positive approach to working with children as the child see there is a consistent joint approach to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school

A high level of cooperation and open communication is seen as an important factor in 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 in place and reviewed regularly. These include face to face meetings, phone calls to the school number and emails.

Parents/guardians are encouraged at all times to speak 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.

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 pupils, parents, staff and the Principal. This policy should be used to assist in dealing with difficult situations.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff members of St. Anne's National School 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 on 18th June 2025 , to be reviewed in 2028.

Mary Mullarkey

18th June 2025

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date

Jacinta Ní Chonghaile

18th June 2025

Principal

Date

Appendix 1



St. Anne's N.S.
Castlerea,
Co. Roscommon
F45 WN59

Consent for transfer of special category data and reduced school day

(to be retained at school level and made available to the Department of Education Inspector if requested)

(i) Consent of Parent/Guardian to special category data (ethnic or cultural background)

I _____ (Parent/Guardian) give consent for the school to transfer the special category data in this question to Tusla Education Support Services and the Department of Education. The legal basis for the processing this data by Tusla Education Support Services is Section 28 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000.

Name of Parent/ Guardian

Date

Signature of Principal or member of staff who the Board
of Management have delegated authority on Reduced School Days to

Date

(ii) Consent of Parent/Guardian to reduced school day

I _____ (Parent/Guardian) consent to the use of a reduced school day as outlined above for the student named above. I am aware that I can withdraw my consent at any time and I have been informed of the process involved.

Name of Parent/ Guardian

Date

Signature of Principal or member of staff who the Board
of Management have delegated authority on Reduced School Days to

Date