



Our Lady of Good Counsel School
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Chairperson of the Board of Management: Leo Murphy
Principal: Siobhan Allen.

Policy: Child Protection (incorporating Legislative Procedures; Staff Guidelines for the Care and Handling of Pupils; Staff Guidelines for the Intimate Care of Pupils; Code of Discipline/Behaviour Management Protocol and Anti-Bullying Policy for Pupils.)

Date of Issue: 15th June, 2005

Designated Liaison Person: SIOBHAN ALLEN, Principal.

Deputy Designated Person: AISLING HEIDT, Deputy Principal.

Amendments / Reviews

- 20th September 2005: Board of Management
- 14th November '06: Board of Management in consultation with Claire O'Connell (Social Worker)
- Nov. '08: Board of Management
- Oct. '09: Staff – amendment made to page 10 “Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists who must take a ‘hands on’ approach with children should have another adult in the room with them or work in an area where there is clear visibility”.
- June '11: Board of Management – no amendments. Awaiting new guidelines due in September.
- 17th Nov. '11: Teaching Staff – new elements from Circular 0065/2011 included to be ratified at B.o.M. meeting in January 2012
- Jan '12: Reviewed and ratified by BoM. Amendments made in line with Circular 0065/2011.
- Oct '12: Reviewed by BoM, no amendments – 16.
- Jan '13: Section on cyberbullying added to policy. Child Protection/note for parents - no longer separate policy (see Appendix).
- Jan '13: “Team Teach” training added to Code of Discipline.
- Sept. 13: Reviewed by BoM. No amendments – 25.09.13.
- Nov. 14: Reviewed by BoM. No amendments – 15.11.14.
- Jan '15: Guidelines for Using & Reducing Restrictive Physical Interventions added. Code of Discipline/Behaviour Management Protocol Short Version for Parents - added as Appendix.
- June 15: Risk Reduction Review added to policy.
- May 16: Finalised Anti-Bullying Policy for pupils added.

Next review date: September 2016

Aim of Policy: To provide clear guidelines to staff and parents regarding issues relating to child protection, care and handling of pupils, intimate care and behaviour management.

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Introduction

The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all school's practices and procedures. Therefore in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education and Skills Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Board of Management of Our Lady of Good Counsel School has agreed the following policy:

1. The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools as part of this overall child protection policy.
2. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Siobhan Allen, Principal and the Deputy Designated Person (Deputy DLP) is Aisling Heidt, Deputy Principal.
The name of the DLP and the Deputy DLP is displayed in various locations around the school – hallway, staff room, Principal's office and parents' noticeboard. New staff, substitute staff and students on work experience are informed by the Principal during induction/orientation. Parents are informed of the name of the DLP and Deputy DLP by letter at the beginning of each school year and in each newsletter issued by the school during the year.
3. In its policies and practices Our Lady of Good Counsel School will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare.
The School will:
 - Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations.
 - Fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters.
 - Adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the need to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.
 - Develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.
 - Fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child protection matters.The school will also adhere to the above policy in relation to any adult pupil in the school.
4. Policies in use in the school that are relevant to child protection are as follows and are included in a single booklet which is readily available in each classroom such as:
 - Staff Guidelines relating to the General Care and Handling of Pupils by regular staff, multidisciplinary team members, visiting professionals, students on work experience/volunteers, visitors/tradespeople etc.
 - Staff Guidelines relating to the Intimate Care of Pupils
 - Staff Guidelines relating to the Monitoring of Neglect
 - Code of Discipline/Behaviour Management Protocol
 - Anti-bullying Policy
 - Outings/Trips Policy
 - Supervision Policy
 - Incident Reporting
 - Pupil Attendance Policy
 - Visitors to School Policy

5. This policy has been made available to school personnel and the Parents' Association and is readily available to parents on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron if requested.
6. The policy will be reviewed annually in accordance with the terms the Revised Children First Guidelines. The checklist supplied in Appendix 2 of Circular 0065/2011 will be used. School Personnel will be informed that the review has taken place. Parents will be informed in writing that the review has taken place. A record of the review shall be made available to the Patron and the Department if requested.
7. The Stay Safe Programme will be implemented in the school.
8. At each Board of Management meeting the DLP will include the number of cases where reports involving a child in the school has been submitted to the HSE. The DLP will also report the number of cases where advice was sought from the HSE involving a child.

2015/16

PART 1: LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

This document has been drawn up as a response to recent changes in legislation. It further develops previous policy in this area and takes account of the provisions of the following pieces of legislation:

The Education Act 1998

The Child Welfare Act 2000

References:

In all instances of suspicion or allegations of abuse or neglect, the following two resource books will be referenced.

- "Children First" – Department of Children and Youth Affairs 2011- This edition supersedes all others and should be the only one in use.
- Revised Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools – Department of Education and Skills 2011

Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

The Principal will act as DLP. Following ratification by the Board of Management, should circumstances warrant it, the Deputy Principal shall act as DLP. The DLP has specific responsibility for child protection and will represent the school in all dealings with Health Boards, An Garda Síochána and other parties in connection with allegations of abuse. All matters pertaining to the processing or investigation of child abuse should be processed through the DLP. Further information on the responsibilities of the DLP is included in 'Child Protection DES' – Pg. 8 – Section 2.2. Action to be taken by the DLP in cases where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion or where an allegation has been made are in 'Child Protection DES' Chapter 3 – Section 3.2 pg. 11 – 12.

Confidentiality

All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse should only be shared on a need to know basis in the interests of the child. The test is whether or not the person has any legitimate involvement or role in dealing with the issue.

Giving information to those who need to have that information for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused, is not a breach of confidentiality.

The DLP who is submitting a report to the Health Service Executive (HSE) or An Garda Síochána should inform a parent/guardian unless doing so is likely to endanger the child or place that child at further risk. A decision not to inform a parent/guardian should be briefly recorded together with the reasons for not doing so.

In emergency situations, where the HSE cannot be contacted, and the child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, An Garda Síochána should be contacted immediately.

A child should not be left in a dangerous situation pending HSE intervention.

Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse:

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, provides immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of the HSE or any member of An Garda Síochána.

This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith making the report.

The act provides significant protection for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including dismissal. (Child Protection DES Book page 6).

Qualified Privilege:

While the legal protection outlined above only applies to reports made to the appropriate authorities (i.e. The Health Boards and An Garda Síochána), Common Law qualified privilege continues to apply as heretofore. Consequently, should a Board of Management member or school personnel furnish information with regard to suspicions of child abuse to the DLP or the Board of Management chairman, such communication would be regarded under common law as having qualified privilege.

A further definition of qualified privilege is outlined in Section 1.4.2 and 1.4.3, page 6 of Child Protection – Guidelines & Procedures.

Freedom of Information Act 1997

Reports made to Health Boards may be subject to provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 1997, which enables members of the public to obtain access to personal information relating to them which is in the possession of public bodies.

Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types.

- neglect
- emotional abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse

A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time. Definitions for each forms of abuse are detailed in 'Children First' – (Dept. of Health & Children) Chapter 3 Sections 3.2 – 3.5 pgs. 31 – 33.

Guidelines for Recognition of Child Abuse:

A list of child abuse indicators is contained in Appendix 1 'Children First' – Pg. 125 – 131. It is important to stress that, no one indicator should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse; it may indicate conditions other than child abuse. All signs and symptoms must be examined in the total context of the child's situation and family circumstances.

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse.

These are: -

- i. Considering the possibility
- ii. Looking out for signs of abuse
- iii. Recording of information

Each of these stages is developed in 'Children First' Pg 34 – 35 Section 3.9.

Handling Disclosures From Children:

'Child Protection' – Pg. 9 Section 2.4 gives comprehensive details of how disclosures should be approached.

When information is offered in confidence the member of staff will need tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. The member of staff will need to reassure the child, and retain his/her trust, while explaining the need for action and the possible consequences, which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him/her but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else.

The following advice is offered to school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse.

- Listen to the child.
- Take all disclosures seriously.
- Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child.
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises.
- Do not stop a child recalling significant events.
- Do not overreact.
- Explain that further help may have to be sought.
- Record the discussion accurately and retain the record.

This information should then be passed onto the DLP.

If the reporting person or member of the school staff and the DLP are satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion/allegation, the procedures for reporting as laid out in 'Children First' – Section 4.4 pg. 38 will be adhered to. Standardised reporting forms may be photocopied from 'Children First' Appendix 8 – Pg 159.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed before the DLP makes contact with the relevant authorities unless the situation demands that more immediate action to be taken for the safety of the child in which case the Chairman may be informed after the report has been submitted. Details of what should be included in the report are outlined in 'Children First' – Section 4.5.1 – Pg 39.

Any professional who suspects child abuse should inform parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the Health Board or An Garda Síochána unless doing so is likely to endanger the child. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, and a duty social worker is unavailable, Garda Síochána should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending HSE intervention.

Allegations or Suspicions Regarding School Employees:

The most important consideration for the Chairperson, Board of Management or the DLP is the safety and protection of the child. However, employees also have a right to protection against claims, which are false or malicious.

As employers, the Board of Management should always seek legal advice as the circumstances can vary from one case to another.

There are two procedures to be followed (Section 4.1.3 Page 15 'Child Protection')

- i. The reporting procedure
- ii. The procedure for dealing with the employee.

The DLP has responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board. The Chairperson, Board of Management has responsibility, acting in consultation with his/her board, for addressing the employment issues.

If the allegation is against the DLP, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will assume the responsibility for reporting the matter to the Health Board.

Reporting:

When an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee, the DLP should immediately act in accordance with the procedures outlined in Ch. 3, Section 3.2, Pg. 11 – Child Protection.

A written statement of the allegation should be sought from the person/agency making the report. The DLP should always inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management. School employees, other than the DLP who receive allegations against another school employee, should immediately report the matter to the DLP. School employees who form suspicions regarding conduct of another school employee should consult with the DLP. The procedures outlined in Section 4.2.3, pg16 – 'Child Protection' will then be followed.

The employee, the chairperson and DLP should make the employee aware privately

- a) An allegation has been made against him/her.
- b) The nature of the allegation.
- c) That the Health Board or Gardaí has been informed.

The priority in all cases is that no child be exposed to unnecessary risk. Therefore, as a matter of urgency, the Chairperson should take any necessary protective measures. These measure should be proportionate to the level of risk and should not unreasonably penalise the employee in any way unless to protect the child.

If the nature of the allegations warrants immediate action in the Chairperson's opinion, the Board of Management should be convened to consider the matter. This may result in the Board of Management directing that the employee absent him/herself from the school forthwith while the matter is being investigated (administrative leave).

When the Board of Management is unsure as to whether this should occur, advice should be sought from the Gardaí and/or the Child Care Manager of the Health Board and the legal advisers to the Board of Management and regard be had to this advice.

Administrative Leave:

Should the Board of Management direct that the employee absent him/herself as above, such absence of the employee would be regarded as administrative leave of absence with pay and not suspension and would not imply any degree of guilt. The DES should be immediately informed. (Children First – Pg. 17).

Board of Management:

The Chairperson should inform the Board of Management of all the details and remind the members of their serious responsibility to maintain strict confidentiality on all matters relating to the issue and the principles of due process and natural justice.

PART 2: STAFF GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE GENERAL CARE & HANDLING OF PUPILS

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Aim of this policy:

- To establish norms so that children can expect consistency from staff throughout their school day.
- To ensure that persons coming in contact with students respect their dignity at all times.

This can be done in many ways, for example:

1. Allowing the child to become part of the decision making process and then acting on the child's contributions.
2. Giving praise and compliments as much as possible.
3. Allocating ability and age appropriate responsibilities such as getting own lunch, putting away own coat etc.
4. Setting tasks that are achievable for the child.
5. Being careful not to talk about children when they can overhear
6. Attempting to get eye-contact when we speak to them.
7. Using reduced language or signs to assist their understanding.
8. Thanking children when they co-operate.
9. Apologising if we make a mistake.
10. Never calling children names
11. Using a firm but **kind** approach. – Children should not be shouted at **unless** it is to alert them to an immediate danger such as running across the road.
12. Trying to find ways of giving children some element of control over their lives e.g. bus-time now – help me get your coat.
13. *Keeping to a minimum the use of negative words and phrases - replace them with a positive request, for example, instead of saying 'Don't go on the road,' say 'Stay on the footpath' or instead of 'Don't hit' say 'Hands down' or 'Lips closed' instead of 'Stop shouting' or 'Sit on chair' instead of 'Get off the table' or Keep your coat on instead of 'Don't take it off'. The school does not approve of telling a child he or she is 'bold'. Reframe the correction in a positive format as suggested above.*
14. Never using sarcasm to belittle or humiliate a child.
15. Calmness, clear messages and consistency are three key elements to remember when working with children with special needs.

Physical Handling/Use of Restraint:

The school has a very clear guidelines on using and reducing the use of restrictive practices and physical interventions which involve careful planning, parental consultation, staff training and review. See Part 5 of this policy.

Witnessing Possible Abuse:

If any staff member witnesses staff behaviour towards a pupil which could be considered abusive such as shouting, pushing, pulling, dragging, ridiculing, or adopting threatening poses, this behaviour must be reported to the principal as soon as it is possible to do so. It is not acceptable to ignore the behaviour or to “gossip” about it with others. The principal will listen to your report and return to you in confidence.

Multi-Disciplinary Team Members and Part-time Teachers:

Multi-disciplinary team members and part-time teachers must ensure that the child's class team knows that he/she is working alone with a child and must always work in a room where there is clear visibility. Physiotherapists and Occupational therapists who must take a 'hands on' approach with children should have another adult in the room with them or work in the hall, classroom or therapy areas where there is clear visibility.

Visiting Professionals:

Visiting staff must ensure that the child's class team knows that he/she is working alone with a child and must always work in a room where there is clear visibility.

Volunteer Workers and Students:

Volunteer workers and students may not be left alone with a child in a room. Should this occur the circumstances need to be reported to the Principal as soon as possible.

Visitors/Trades-people:

Visitors and trades-people who are working in the school must report to the Secretary's Office or the Principal's Office, such visitors are not permitted to be alone in a room with a pupil from the school under any circumstances. Visitors may not spend prolonged periods of time in any classroom or area occupied by children unless by prior arrangement with the Principal who will ensure that pupils are adequately supervised. Visitors wishing to view the school and its facilities are escorted by the Principal or person nominated by her.

Bruises, rashes or marks:

Unexplained bruises, rashes or marks which are a cause for concern must be immediately reported to the class teacher who must then notify the Principal. Any bruises or marks sustained at school must be reported to the Principal as soon as it is feasible to do so.

Accident/Incident Recording:

The accident/incident report book is located in the Principal's office. A standard reporting form is available from the office for reporting incidents. The incident report should record what happened, the action that the staff member(s) took to manage the situation and the reason why it was necessary to take this action. Information provided should be brief and factual and should avoid emotional, judgemental language. If SNAs only are present during an incident it is good practice to fill the incident report out with the class teacher if possible so that s/he is fully aware of the incident.

RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE:

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible and may not be clearly observable. If a child appears to have suffered an inexplicable injury, seems distressed, displays unusual behaviour problems, appears fearful in the presences of others or makes a direct or indirect disclosure, please report your concerns to a class teacher or the principal immediately. *Do not question the child or comment on your concerns with him/her.*

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time. The following are summaries of definitions found in the “**Children First Guidelines.**”

1. Neglect:

Neglect is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, medical care, attachment to and affection from adults.

2. Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a caregiver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child’s needs for affection, approval consistency and security are not met.

3. Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child.

4. Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his/her own gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

The following advice is offered to school personnel to whom a child makes a disclosure of abuse.

- Listen to the child.
- Take all disclosures seriously.
- Do not ask leading questions or make suggestions to the child.
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises.
- Do not stop a child recalling significant events.
- Do not overreact.
- Explain that further help may have to be sought.
- Record the discussion accurately and retain the record.

This information should then be passed onto the DLP.

Please read *Part 1* of this policy for further advice and information or contact the DLP.

PART 3: STAFF GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE INTIMATE CARE NEEDS OF PUPILS

Code of Good Practice – Intimate Care Needs

This policy is necessary to safeguard the interests of pupils and staff when carrying out tasks such as nappy changing, dressing, undressing and showering and assisting with menstruation.

Aims:

1. To safeguard and protect children because:
 - Some children are dependent on adults to look after their intimate care needs on a daily basis.
 - Lack of speech or an inability to communicate effectively makes children vulnerable as they may not be able to 'tell' or are at risk of being misunderstood.
 - Children may be over-protected leading to passivity and over-reliance on adults.
 - Those that are more dependent than others due to lack of mobility are at greater risk.
 - Children with challenging behaviour are at greater risk of physical and verbal abuse.
2. To safeguard staff so that they do not put themselves or others in situations where they could be vulnerable to intentional or unintentional false allegation.

Toileting:

- Let another staff member know that you are assisting a child to a toilet area. (School or public toilets.)
- Do not lock yourself into a toilet alone with a child under any circumstances.
- It is good practice to have a second adult in the vicinity when attending to a child's intimate hygiene needs. The adult may not actually be in the cubicle but is readily available for support if necessary. In the event that a child has soiled heavily and requires intensive cleaning two staff may be required in the room.
- Assist only as much as is necessary. Allow the child to do as much as possible for him/herself.
- Talk through your actions with the child in a quiet manner, allowing the child as much dignity as possible

Swimming:

Swimming is an activity that requires intimate care. Children may need to be completely dressed /undressed and their bodies dried off.

- Ensure that another employed staff member knows that you are in the dressing room area if you are alone with a child.
- Only employees who are Garda vetted may dress/undress children. This includes bus escorts who are acting as volunteers with the permission of the Principal.
- Students on work experience may dress and undress children if school employee is also present.
- Parents who act as volunteers may dress and undress their own children. **They may not dress other children.**
- Allow child to be as independent as possible allowing for time constraints, etc.
- Talk through your actions with the child allowing them as much dignity as possible.

Hugging/Sitting on Laps:

Hugging children and sitting them on the laps of staff is discouraged however the Board of Management recognises that there are certain instances where a child requires reassurance or support requiring physical contact from staff. The following applies:

1. Reassuring physical contact should be limited to the hands, lower arms and the backs of shoulders of children. Staff should actively avoid touching other areas of the child's body unless it is part of attending to a care need. Touches should be brief and open. It is important to remember that some children with sensory issues actively avoid touch and staff should respect this.
2. Pupils in the senior section of the school should not be placed on the laps of staff.
3. Pupils in the junior end of the school should only be placed on laps when it is deemed absolutely necessary to soothe a crying/upset child and the child seeks this comfort or requires this support to attend to some activities such as watching a play or concert in the hall. In such cases staff should be aware of the level of physical contact being made e.g it is preferable that the child sits sideways on the lap facing away from the staff member. Staff should limit contact with the pupils to shoulders, lower arms and hands and should move the child off the lap as soon as possible. Staff should also be aware of the possibility of receiving a head butt from a child who is sitting on a lap. It is best practice to have another adult in the vicinity if this is necessary. A struggling child should be removed from the activity if they do not settle.
4. Direct hugging of senior pupils is actively discouraged. Sometimes a child/young person will approach a staff member for a hug. It is best practice to encourage a 'high five' instead. If the child insists it is good practice to turn sideways and 'hug' by placing your arm across the back of the child's shoulders briefly. The school's revised Stay Safe programme addresses this issue with pupils.
5. Visitors/students on work experience and volunteers should be instructed not to hug children or allow them to sit on their laps.
6. The hands of young children may be held to prevent absconding
7. Older pupils arms may be 'linked' as per Team Teach Training to prevent absconding
8. Staff should use the techniques and strategies outlined in their Team Teach Training when managing incidents of challenging behaviour to protect themselves and others from kicks, punches, hits etc **See Part 5 of this policy**

PART 4: BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL – SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN / SAFEGUARDING STAFF (CODE OF BEHAVIOUR)

Aims / Ethos

1. To provide a happy, positive teaching and learning environment for the pupils and staff of OLG.C.
2. To promote a positive, proactive, preventative approach to discipline and behavioural issues in OLG.C.

Parents

The importance of working with parents in all areas cannot be overemphasised. This is especially true when managing children with behaviours that are considered challenging. Parents provide staff with invaluable information, advice, support and reinforcement and school staff should always seek to work with parents as partners in the process of developing behaviours that are appropriate and acceptable.

Objectives

1. To increase the time spent by pupils on positive learning activities.
2. To encourage positive assertiveness and the ability to communicate needs in pupils.
3. To provide staff with clear long-term and short-term guidelines so that pupils can expect and experience consistency throughout their school day.
4. To increase staff confidence when managing inappropriate and/or challenging behaviours.
5. To reduce the time spent by staff on dealing with inappropriate and/or challenging behaviours thereby reducing the number of incidents which disrupt the work of others.
6. To increase opportunities for success for all by minimising opportunities for conflict and confrontation.

Long Term Positive, Preventative Approaches

1. *Help the pupils establish positive relations with a small number of peers and adults in his/her immediate environment*– this facilitates the development of repeated opportunities for interacting so that the child’s method of communicating is understood by staff and vice versa.
2. *Formalise judgements amongst the adults in the classroom about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and inappropriate behaviour for that particular group of children* – this provides feedback to children as to what is acceptable and unacceptable and avoids contradictory and confusing responses.
3. *Match activities to the child’s strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes.*
4. *Focus on teaching language and communication* – methods of communication learned by the child must receive consistent and prompt responses so that the pupils can learn the power of communication in ordinary settings thus helping them to meet their own needs.
5. *Help the child to anticipate the sequence of daily events and activities* – use routine and structure to devise timetables which make sense to the child thereby reducing their anxiety. A child who is confident and relaxed is less likely to engage in challenging behaviours.
6. *Provide opportunity for pupils to opt out of activities from time to time* – some pupils may need to withdraw from the group to reduce their stress levels. This could take many formats i.e. taking messages to other rooms, working at a preferred activity on their own, etc. Anticipating when a child needs this takes skill and an in-depth knowledge of the child and his/her needs.
7. *Convey adult expectations clearly and provide feedback to other adults in the room, when necessary, to maintain uniformity of approach.*

8. *Ensure that all new methods of working with a child are known to the significant people in that child's life if appropriate. This includes V.E.C teachers, escorts on transport etc. **This is the responsibility of the teacher.***
9. *Reinforce positive behaviours in a way that is rewarding for that child. (See below)*
10. *Use praise and positive attention. (See below).*
11. *Work with the environment making appropriate environmental changes if possible which will reduce anxiety and stress for the child.*
12. *Work with the relevant professionals of the multi-disciplinary team to develop programmes of activities that are holistic in nature. A collaborative approach which strives to meet the needs of the pupils will help to prevent behaviours of a challenging nature to occur in the first instance.*

Short-Term Positive Behavioural Management Techniques/Strategies

1. Redirect the child to another activity.
2. Distract the child.
3. Reason with/cajole the child.
4. Use social stories to clarify expected acceptable behaviour.
5. Use schedules/personal diaries and other appropriate visual/communication aids.
6. Use "planned ignoring" (particularly useful for minor difficulties). Ignore the behaviour but NOT the child.
7. Define boundaries and space for the child.
8. Use Cause/Effect or Response/Cost (child's action results in a loss of privilege). This is only effective if the child clearly understands the connection / association between the loss of privilege and their behaviour.
9. Use praise and positive attention when the child is behaving acceptably.(See below).
10. Use rewards to reinforce acceptable behaviour. (See below).
11. Foster peer support.
12. Use the child's augmentative communication system where appropriate to assist understanding.
13. Use the SPHE programme as an opportunity to discuss behaviour(s).
14. Use Behavioural Support Plans (which are agreed with parents and other relevant team members) where appropriate. These must be signed off by the Principal.
15. Encourage the pupil to assume responsibility for his/her own behaviour through the use of contracts or recording notebooks which he/she assists to fill in themselves if they have the cognitive ability to do this.

Use of Praise / Rewards

Praise is a very effective way of reinforcing acceptable behaviours and boosting confidence. Rewards are something concrete or tangible to provide added incentive. Make sure the child knows what is expected of them in order to receive the reward. The reward *must* be very appealing to the child if it is to be effective. Combine rewards with praise where possible. As for sanctions, praise and rewards should be immediate and consistent.

1. Give specific praise e.g. "well done, you shared your toys" or "very good, you walked in the corridor this time."
2. Praise in front of others.
3. Praise with smiles, eye contact and enthusiasm.
4. Praise with pats and gestures.
5. Catch the child being good.
6. Praise using rewards and/or tokens.
7. Reward a child by allowing him/her to have a favoured activity or object.
8. Display good work.

9. Foster peer support by clapping, cheering etc.
10. Allow the child extra responsibility or to do a popular message etc.
11. Allow the child to “Be the Person in Charge”
12. Send a note home so that parents can further reward pupils if they wish.
13. Send the child to the principal for praise.
14. Praise for non-occurrence of unacceptable behaviours.

School Rules

Rules should be few, **flexible, relevant**, realistic, child-centred, positively articulated, clear, consistent *and understood by the child.*

General Rules

1. We are friends; we are kind to each other.
2. We wear the school uniform.
3. We walk in school.
4. We don't hurt each other – (kind hands, kind feet).
5. We don't use bad language – (kind words).

Playground Rules

1. We are kind to each other (we do not hurt each other or use bad language).
2. We eat our lunch in the classroom (not in the playground).
3. Running, pushing and pulling on playground equipment are not allowed.

Transport Rules

1. We stay in our seats until it is time to get off the bus.
2. We keep our seatbelts on and use our booster seats
3. We are kind to each other. (We do not hurt each other or use bad language).
4. We say ‘Thank You’ to the bus driver and to the escort.

Sanctions/Consequences

Unacceptable behaviours should be responded to immediately and consistently by reiterating what would have been more acceptable using positive comments and statements. Every child, irrespective of their ability must be accorded respect for their rights as individuals. Restrictive measures should only be adopted as per the school's guidelines on Using and Reducing the Use of Restrictive Practices and Physical Interventions

Please remember the following:

- ***The competencies and functional abilities of the child are crucial in deciding on the appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.***
- ***The child who presents with challenging behaviours is extremely vulnerable.***
- ***The support of relevant members of the multi-disciplinary team to manage persistent unacceptable behaviour must be sought as soon as possible.***
- ***If particular sanctions are regularly being used to control the behaviour of a child, especially from 3-9 below, it should be recognised that the sanction being applied is not working. It is important at this stage to seek additional support to manage the child's behaviour (see supports for staff below). Parents should be contacted at an early stage and included as partners in this process.***
- ***The sanction must be reasonable for the behaviour presented.***

Possible Sanctions/Consequences to Consider

1. Use of facial expression.
2. Use of a firm tone of voice (**avoid** shouting).
3. Quiet Time – removing the child from the group or activity for a short period. The amount of time should be short – the recommended guideline is one minute per year of age of child. As a general rule 5 minutes is usually sufficient for the pupils in our school. The child should always be under the supervision of a competent adult. Use as a preventative if possible rather than a sanction. A timer may be useful to ensure that the pupil finishes the Quiet Time at the recommended time.
4. Removing others from the vicinity of the child.
5. Putting the child “on notice” of a possible consequence of their behaviour.
6. Sending a note home.
7. Withdrawal of privileges for a reasonable period of time realistic for the individual child – USE THIS SANCTION WITH CARE. It should not be overused.
8. Sending a child to another class (of children of similar age) for a short period. This could be used as a distraction technique rather than a sanction.
9. Rewarding other children for desired behaviours.
10. Sending a child to the Principal. Where the behaviour is very serious such as aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards other pupils or staff the parent may be asked by the principal to take the child home for the rest of that day.

Please note:

- *Pupils may not be put ‘outside the door’ unsupervised.*
- *Pupils may not be ‘kept in’ at lunchtime as a detention but it may be necessary to keep pupils in classrooms with employed staff (not work experience students) during lunch-time if their behaviours in the yard are considered to be a risk to other pupils. If this is considered necessary please inform the Principal.*

Challenging Behaviour

A ‘challenging behaviour’ is any act by the child which disrupts their activities or the activities of others; which causes injury or poses risk to themselves/others; which puts themselves/others in danger and which requires intervention from staff. Examples of ‘challenging behaviours’ can include: pushing, pulling, spitting, grabbing, pinching, biting, hitting, striking, punching, slapping, scratching, kicking, refusal to comply/to move, throwing objects, attempting to choke or ‘headlock’ another, head-butting, running away, persistent loud vocalisations/screaming, self-injury, as well as inappropriate touch, smearing and stripping.

An extremely ‘challenging behaviour’ exists where a challenging behaviour is persistent, unrelenting, continual OR is of increased intensity, severity or inappropriateness. For example, if any physical act results in a fellow pupil, member of staff or any individual requiring medical attention, that may be an extremely challenging behaviour. However, it can also be said to exist where an injury did not occur but the behaviour had the *potential* to cause injury.

One of the most common causes for challenging behaviours can be raised levels of anxiety leading to situations whereby the pupil loses control of their own behaviour and are unable to calm themselves without intervention. Other pupils’ inability to express themselves can also lead to challenging behaviour as their way of getting needs met. The age and strength of pupils also increases the likelihood of incidents leading to injury.

Should a pupil present with behaviours which are challenging, the school may employ the following procedures depending on the context:

1. Referral to the school psychologist.
2. Establishment of a Positive Handling, Support and Intervention Plan in consultation with parents and members of the Multi-Disciplinary Team. (This plan will attempt to identify the antecedents and triggers of the challenging behaviours and focus on prevention.)
3. Frequent meetings/phone calls with parents as part of the process to manage the behaviours and to keep parents fully informed.
4. Requesting support from Trasna Training services to prepare a Functional Analysis of the behaviours.
5. Keeping incident reports, copies of which are made available to parents if they wish to have them.
6. Informing the Special Educational Needs Organiser of the need for possible extra resources to support the pupil.
7. Sourcing relevant extra training for staff.

Serious/Crisis Behavioural Incident

If the behaviour of a pupil appears to be escalating staff can respond in a variety of ways such as:

- Use communication supports
- Read a relevant social story
- Start where they are – describe what they are doing in a calm, factual manner – I see that you are standing in the hall, sitting on the floor, etc.
- Find something to praise.
- Avoid implied blame - use sentences that start with 'I' rather than 'you'. e.g. I'll stand over here and wait until things have cooled down'.
- Use a pre-prepared 'Pupil Script' (see back of Incident Report).
- Use 'Change' symbol if recommended.
- Reduce demands and requests on the pupil.
- Reduce language, noise and other sensory input.
- Reduce number of pupils/staff in the child's environment.
- Provide routine sensory activities as prescribed by the O.T.
- Do an 'On the Spot' Risk Assessment.
- Repeat simple, clear directions with prompts/guidance if required.
- Take your time if it is safe to do so – think about your options.
- Ask yourself – what function does this behaviour serve?
- Redirect to a schedule/timetable.
- Using a 'break' card.
- Escort the pupil to a calm, clutter free space.
- Give them a favourite object/book/or activity if it is known that this may calm him/her down.
- Respect their personal space (move away and reduce requests).
- Try not to over-react or take the behaviour personally.
- Stick to the most important issue and deal with that.
- Avoid a power struggle.
- Take a step back – mentally and physically.
- Redirect the pupil to another activity.
- Use sensory diet activities if recommended.
- Use Behaviour Support Plans/Risk Assessments.

- Remove other pupils from the vicinity.
- Stay in a safe space.
- Use pupil support rooms if recommended for the child.
- Use Team-Teach intervention strategies as a last resort as per Part 5 of this policy
- Share known ‘triggers’ with colleagues
- Debrief as per policy if necessary.

Following a serious behavioural event the following procedures are recommended:

- Re-establish a rapport with the pupil.
- Keep everything calm – your voice and movements.
- Reassure the pupil.
- Report to Principal, home, residence.
- Return to normal activity as soon as the pupil is ready.
- DOCUMENT the INCIDENT.

REMEMBER: All forms of physical/corporal punishment by staff are strictly prohibited and may result in suspension pending investigation by the Board of Management.

Physical Interventions/Restraint

There are separate policy guidelines for Using and Reducing the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions. See Part 5 of this policy.

Physical handling of pupils should be kept to a minimum. Staff behaviours towards pupils which could be considered abusive include shouting, pushing, pulling, dragging, ridiculing, nagging, adopting confrontational/threatening pose and focussing on negative behaviours. In instances where physical intervention is considered necessary for the safety and health of the pupil, staff or others, **the circumstances must be recorded and reported to the Principal as soon as possible**. Restrictive measures should only be used with regard to Part 5 of this policy - ‘Guidelines for Using and Reducing the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions’.

Restrictive Practices:

The following restrictive practices are in use in the school under certain circumstances:

1. High handles on some classroom doors to prevent absconding of children.
2. Coded padlocks on external gates in school yard to prevent absconding of children – two codes are used - 4878 or 1181.
3. Some doors/gates are secured to prevent pupils entering into areas that are unsupervised or unsuitable at certain times.
4. Harnesses/seat belt guards for some children are provided on school buses if the pupil has demonstrated that they will open their seatbelt or engage in behaviours that put other vehicle users at risk.
5. Front Door Access System using fobs is installed at the main doors to reduce the risk of pupils absconding from the building and preventing access to the school by unauthorised visitors.
6. The hands of pupils may be held by staff to prevent a pupil absconding or attempting to hit out at others.
7. Pupil Support Rooms/Safe Spaces are available for certain previously identified pupils to provide a safe area to which they can retreat to for a break from the classroom routine or be escorted to by staff for the health and safety of other pupils. Doors may only be secured in accordance with Part 5 of this policy.

8. Jumpsuits may be considered for pupils who have demonstrated that they will strip in school. This is a restrictive practice and can only be used in accordance with part 5 of this policy.

Suspension / Expulsion

In exceptional cases, the pupil may be suspended or expelled where the continued presence of the pupil in the school at the time would represent a serious threat to the safety of pupils or staff of the school. This action will be taken when the Board is of the opinion that *the resources available to the school are not adequate to meet the challenge posed to the welfare of the pupil, other pupils or staff*. In these instances the procedures and guidelines as stipulated in the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 24 will be followed by the Board which are outlined in the National Educational Welfare Board's Guidelines for Schools

The pupils may be suspended for a temporary period initially to allow the school authorities to investigate whether or not additional support structures would alleviate the situation and to apply for same. The pupil may be re-integrated back into the classroom on a phased basis depending on the school's ability to provide the necessary resources to manage the behaviours.

The National Educational Welfare Board will be informed using a Notice of Decision to Expel form. This information is required to allow the NEWB to intervene before the decision to expel takes effect. (A pupil may not be expelled before the passing of 20 school days following receipt of notification to expel by the Educational Welfare Officer).

This action will be taken when there is no alternative and with due consultation with parents, NEWB and Multi-Disciplinary Team members.

Available Resources

1. Other teaching and SNA colleagues.
2. Pupil Support Team.
3. Multi-disciplinary team.
4. Principal.
5. Agreed Risk/Restraint Reduction Plans / Behaviour Support Plans.
6. Parents.
7. Special Education Support Service
8. Brothers of Charity Services.
9. Trasna Training Services.
10. Board of Management
11. Special Educational Needs Organiser
12. National Educational Welfare Board.

Child Protection

Allegations, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse/neglect must be reported to the Designated Person – Siobhan Allen, Principal. In her absence the Deputy Principal, Aisling Heidt or next Senior Teacher is the designated person. The school follows the policies and procedures as laid down in the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, "Children First" in all matters relating to child protection. A copy of this document is available from the Principal's Office. Please also refer to parts 1 and 2 of the school's Child Protection Policy.

PART 5: GUIDELINES FOR USING AND REDUCING RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS.

Introduction:

It is recognised that there are many times when physical contact is used in our school such as patting a child on the arm in affirmation, administering first aid, meeting intimate care needs and physical prompting to support learning. However, our duty of care to others means that it may also be necessary to use a restrictive physical intervention to prevent children from harming themselves or others or causing significant harm to school property. This policy reflects the school's ethos and is written in consultation with the following partners – staff, parents and patron. It is noted that the pupils attending this school have diagnoses of Moderate Learning Disability. A small percentage of pupils have additional diagnoses for example Downs Syndrome, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, etc.

Our school, in the first instance, applies the principles outlined in our Code of Behaviour, available in the staff information folders, school website or from the Principal. This provides guidelines to staff on the use of day to day behavioural management strategies. These are intended to help all pupils to manage their own behaviour in the long-term. Where these strategies are not working and it is foreseeable that a pupil might engage in high risk behaviours requiring a restrictive physical intervention, this policy applies.

The paramount concerns are for the safety and welfare of the pupils in the school as well as for the safety and welfare of the adults who look after them.

NOTE: The continued placement of pupils who require repeated high levels of restraint or seclusion will be reviewed as per our Admissions Policy. Such pupils may be expelled if their safety or the safety of other children and staff is of significant concern and cannot be managed with available resources. In this instance the child's placement will be reviewed in consultation with parents, Multi-Disciplinary Team, Educational Welfare Office and Special Educational Needs Officer. See 'Placement Review

For the purpose of this policy a child is defined as any child attending the school regardless of age.

Other associated school policies:

- Health and Safety Statement.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Intimate Care Policy
- Code of Behaviour.
- Admissions and Enrolment
- Grievance Procedures.
- Incident Debriefing.

The policy is based on guidance from the following:

- Education and Welfare Act 2000.
- Human Rights Working Group on Restraint and Seclusion 2005 (Northern Ireland).
- Best Practice Guidelines on the Use of Physical Restraints: Special Residential Board 2006.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2007 Safety, Health and Welfare At Work Act, 2005 (as well as other statutes and standards).

- Physical Contact; Care, Comfort and Restraint; Bernard Allen, 2011.
- Children First Guidelines 2011.
- Guidelines for Schools on Supporting Students with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties - An information guide for Primary Schools: DES 2013.
- ‘Physical Interventions: A Policy Framework’: British Institute of Learning Disabilities.
- National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities, January 2013: Health Information and Quality Authority.
- Fuller Safer Lives: Policy for Restrictive Practices, Brothers of Charity Southern Services, 2012.

The aims and objectives of these policy guidelines are to:

- a) Prevent/reduce injuries to pupils, staff and others and prevent significant damage to property.
- b) Provide clear guidelines to staff, pupils and parents regarding the use of restrictive physical interventions.
- c) Emphasise a culture within the school of prevention and reduction of the use of restrictive physical interventions.
- d) Promote the development of effective relationships, mood management and interpersonal skills.
- e) Manage serious incidents when they occur.

Our school uses the British Institute of Learning Disability’s (B.I.L.D) three categories to describe restrictive physical interventions as follows:

Category 1: Direct physical contact between a member of staff and pupil. Examples include:

- Using manual guidance to prevent someone wandering into a busy main road.
- Holding a person’s hand to limit repetitive movements which may cause self- harm.
- Holding a person’s arms and legs to prevent them from hurting someone.

Category 2: The use of barriers, such as locked doors, to limit freedom of movement. Examples include:

- Placing a child in a chair with a desk in front so that they cannot easily stand up or move away.
- Placing door catches or bolts beyond the reach of pupils.
- Holding the handle of a door to prevent a pupil leaving a room.
- Locking doors in *emergency* situations where there is significant risk of injury or damage to property.

Category 3: The use of materials or equipment to restrict or prevent movement. Examples include:

- Strapping someone into a wheelchair/buggy/Brookfield Chair to prevent absconding.
- Using harnesses on vehicles to prevent pupils standing up in vehicles.

STAFF TRAINING:

The Team Teach Ltd. system of ‘positive handling’ training is used in the school. Ensuring that training is accredited by a recognised independent body is evidence of due diligence by employers. The Team-Teach system of positive handling applied within a positive behavioural support framework has achieved international recognition, supporting services in Europe, the Middle East, Hong Kong, Australia and the Caribbean.

Team-Teach was one of the first organisations to be accredited under a scheme run by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) and supported the development of that scheme. In 2015 Team-Teach achieved additional accreditation, as a Quality Training Centre under the new scheme established by the Institute of Conflict Management (ICM). Established with the support of the UK Health & Safety Executive, ICM has grown in influence. ICM also acts as the secretariat at the UK House of Commons for the All Party Parliamentary Group on Work Related Violence. Team-Teach holds the prestigious National Training Award and remains affiliated to the General Services Association. From 2015 onwards, Team-Teach will be supporting the ICM accreditation scheme."

Teaching and SNA staff and some bus escorts attend a two-day course led by qualified trainers with a single day refresher undertaken every two years. The school has three trained tutors who are licensed to deliver training to the school's employees. Their training is refreshed every 18 months. The courses are specifically designed to meet the school's needs in this area. A list of trained staff and tutors is available from the Principal. 95% of training focuses on prevention, de-escalation and diffusion strategies and the remaining 5% covers physical interventions. Following a review of incident reports and staff discussion it was agreed that the following are examples of *some* physical interventions that are likely to be required to manage the level of behaviours that present in our school setting.

- Disengagement strategies for staff from grabs, hair-pulls, bites, etc.
- Dealing with punches and kicks.
- Separating Children – Steering Away, Arm Waltz
- Physical Guides and Holds to transition from one place to another – Friendly Hold, Single Elbow, Double Elbow, Double Elbow to Chairs, Small Child Escort, T Wrap for Small Child.
- Seclusion in our Pupil Support Area (see Seclusion p.30)

Holds and restraints that are not needed are not taught. Prone restraints are not used in the school. Staff are reminded at every training session of the elevated risks associated with leaning children forward and applying pressure to rib cages and abdomens. Staff are reminded of the following:

- Errors made in good faith will be supported by management but over-zealous or unreasonable responses may be considered a breach of this policy and may be dealt with under Circular 60/2009 or Circular 72/2011 as applicable.
- Staff may be vulnerable to Prosecution under the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997 if they fail to follow their training.

The continued placement of pupils who require repeated high levels of restraint or seclusion will be reviewed as per our Admissions Policy. Such pupils may be expelled if their safety or the safety of other children and staff is of concern. In this instance the child's placement will be reviewed in consultation with parents, Multi-Disciplinary Team, Educational Welfare Office and Special Educational Needs Officer.

PUPIL SUPPORT TEAM (PST): Refer also to 'Pupil Support Team Description' in School Plan
The PST consisting of two teachers and two SNAs support pupils who would benefit from additional support outside of the classroom for a variety of reasons, as identified by the class teacher or other professionals, e.g. pupils who need a more tailored curriculum to allow for different learning styles and/or pupils who need a low distraction environment or break from their own class. The Team is also specifically responsible for supporting pupils who present with behaviours that significantly compromise safety and pupils who engage in self-injurious behaviours. The support to these pupils is provided in various ways as follows:

- Scheduled time out from regular class.

- Guidance for regular class staff to manage behaviours.
- Development of Risk/Restraint Reduction Plan (RRRPs) for specific pupils in conjunction with parents.
- Training for all staff.
- Fostering whole school awareness of effective positive management strategies.
- Fostering effective mood management including the promotion of well-being amongst pupils.
- Fostering integration with peers.
- Co-ordinating support from the school's multi-disciplinary team where applicable.

In accordance with our Code of Behaviour, the PST seeks in the first instance to be proactive at all times to prevent and minimise risk by employing de-escalation strategies and environmental alterations as follows:

DE-ESCALATION STRATEGIES:

Sensory breaks, calm stance and facial expression of staff, careful use of tone of voice and choice of words by staff, change of staff, distraction/diversion, use of humour, negotiation, offering choices, outlining limits/boundaries, positive reminders, planned ignoring, reassurance, short tasks only, time given to process/cool down, verbal supports, visual schedules, praise, use of rewards, close supervision.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

- a) *Proactive Environmental Accommodations:* Comfort areas, pupil support rooms, 1:1 teaching areas, access to preferred activities where possible, increased access to exercise, access to preferred or skilled staff where possible, timetables organised to minimise risks, increased pupil:staff ratios, increased access to specialist staff, shortened school day.
- b) *Restrictive Physical Accommodations:* Fixed furniture in some areas, high handles on some doors, locks on some doors, coded access to front door and staff room, fenced in playgrounds – these restrictive accommodations are used as a norm in the school to safeguard vulnerable pupils from absconding or to prevent access to unsafe areas or equipment. Where additional measures are required, for example securing doors in the event of a high risk incident, a Risk/Restraint Reduction Plan is required. See below.

RISK/RESTRAINT REDUCTION PLAN (RRRP):

These are devised by the Pupil Support Team for pupils who are at the greatest risk of needing restrictive physical interventions and for whom the strategies outlined in the Code of Behaviour are not sufficient to keep them or others safe. Pupils who require such plans are referred to the school's psychologist. Other multi-disciplinary support services are requested as necessary.

This plan, which should be signed by parents and the Principal, may contain the following elements:

- a brief history of the pupil;
- a brief outline of likes/dislikes and known triggers;
- a functional assessment of the behaviour using information from several sources such as parents, previous staff, carers, and appropriate behavioural assessment charts and graphs;
- a multi- element behaviour support plan outlining environmental alterations, direct interventions, skills teaching and reactive strategies;
- de-escalation strategies to employ when behaviours start to occur;
- recommended physical interventions which may be employed when de-escalation strategies are unsuccessful or not possible;

- planned reviews of any recommended restrictive practices with a view to reducing risk;
- a list of strategies which will help the student to recover and repair relationships with staff/other pupils;
- a list of persons to whom the plan needs to be communicated;
- risk assessments for specific risks e.g. restricting liberty in a specified room/area;
- signed by parents and Principal.

DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO USE RESTRAINT?

The following persons are authorised to use restraint in the school in the circumstances outlined below:

- Unforeseen or Emergency Situations:** e.g. a child suddenly tries to climb over a fence or run out on a road, or attempts to hurt another unexpectedly – **all staff** must use their judgement and take appropriate action to safeguard pupils or staff whilst calling for assistance from trained staff.
- Pupils with Risk/Restraint Reduction Plans:** The school will endeavour to ensure that staff with up to date training and knowledge of the pupil’s plan are available to these pupils. In the event that this is not possible any staff member should take appropriate action to safeguard the situation whilst calling for assistance from trained staff.

DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT:

The school endeavours to encourage staff to STOP AND THINK before employing restraint as outlined in the following checklist:

ACT	BALANCE	CHOOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STOP AND THINK • Adopt a calm, non-threatening stance and posture. • Use a slow controlled voice. • Give clear verbal directions. • Pause and allow time for compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The likely outcomes if force is used against the likely outcomes if it is not. • Short term risks versus long term risks. • Best interests of the child against the best interests of other children and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons who are most likely to succeed. • Best place available • Best time available. • Minimum use of force necessary to achieve the desired result.

LAST RESORT/EARLY INTERVENTION:

Restraint should be used as a last resort. This does not mean that all other possible strategies must be tried and tested beforehand - it means that staff must make a considered judgement balancing the risks involved, thus allowing informed decisions to be made. Some children may have stereotypical patterns of behaviour which alert staff to a developing crisis. Early action may prevent a risk of injury, thus justifying the use of the physical intervention and this should be included in the child’s Risk/Restraint Reduction Plan.

USING A RESTRAINT:

If a restraint is used staff must ask him/her-self the following questions:

- Am I trained? If not is there a trained member of staff nearby who can help?
- Am I using the minimum force for the shortest time?
- Is the hold I’m using correct?
- Can I reduce the amount of pressure?

- How best can I communicate with the child and with other staff?
- Can I manage this? Should I ask someone else to take over?

Staff should ask themselves “What would I want someone else to do, in similar circumstances if this was my child ?”

USING WITHDRAWAL TO PUPIL SUPPORT ROOMS:

Sometimes a child cannot manage in a classroom setting for a variety of reasons and needs to be withdrawn to allow teaching and learning to continue for the rest of the pupils. This can happen in three ways:

1) **Withdrawal to Calm Down:**

This may be used informally for pupils who need time or space to calm/cool down, i.e. child is encouraged or prompted to move to another table, chair or designated area for a period of time or may be sent ‘on a message’. The purpose of this is to divert or distract the pupil or reduce overstimulation.

2) **Withdrawal from Classroom to Pupil Support Rooms (PSR)**

This may be used to move children to a PSR where he or she is continually supported or monitored by staff who remain in the room with the child. This may involve physically intervening to move the child and/or preventing the child from leaving the area until staff consider that it is safe to do so. Doors may or may not be secured in this instance depending on the risk to safety. *It is important to note that if staff members are in the room with the child and the door is secured, it is still considered to be a deprivation of liberty because the pupil cannot leave the room without staff intervention.* Incident reports **must** be filled out for each instance where a door is secured in this way. This is to ensure that the Principal is aware of the incident and can provide support to staff and pupils to reduce the risks associated with the practice. The purpose of this is to safeguard pupils and staff in situations that have the potential to be high risk to themselves or others

3) **Seclusion:**

Removal to the Pupil Support Rooms where the door is secured from the outside is only considered in exceptional circumstances. The purpose of this is to safeguard pupils and or staff in situations of high risk to themselves or others.

1. A Risk/Restraint Reduction Plan (RRRP) agreed with parents is essential in this instance. **The Plan should contain a specific risk assessment agreed with parents governing the use of this practice.** This is called a Seclusion Risk Assessment. This is the responsibility of the Pupil Support Team. *Ideally a psychologist should be involved in the drawing up of the RRRP for these pupils. If this is not possible, due to the unavailability of a psychologist, the RRRP should be sent to a psychologist as soon as possible for their input/comment.* A psychologist should also ideally be involved in reviews of this practice.
2. The use of this intervention must be proportionate to the risk presented by the pupil. It may be used at times where the potential risk of significant injury to pupils or staff are very high or there is a risk of significant damage to school property and it is not practicable to otherwise communicate with the child.
3. The child may be moved using an appropriate physical intervention to a pupil support room and the door secured from outside to prevent the pupil from charging out onto the corridor where other pupils/staff may be walking.

4. A stopwatch should be used to measure the length of time the door is secured.
5. To ensure their safety and emotional well-being pupils should be continuously monitored from outside the room by staff through a glass panel.
6. Strategies that are known to help the child to calm and settle should be used, such as using calm voice/stance/scripts, visuals or other communication aids. This is to increase the likelihood of communication and negotiation thus reducing risk. These should be specific to the child, outlined in the Risk Assessment in advance and noted in the Incident Report afterwards.
7. Drinks/food or other preferred items may be offered if it is judged that such offers will help the child to calm. Access to adjacent toilets/outdoors should be allowed if it is safe to do so.
8. The Principal or Deputy should be called as soon as possible to monitor the safety of the child and to oversee the event.
9. The Principal or Deputy should be contacted if the door is secured for more than the time specified in his/her RRRP.
10. The Principal or Deputy may decide that it is in the best interests of the child to contact parents and ask them to take the child home depending on circumstances.
11. A doctor may be called if there are any concerns regarding the physical or emotional well-being of the child.
12. The child should be assisted to recover from the incident afterwards and assisted to 'repair' his or her relationship with staff/other pupils.
13. Incident Reports must be filled out for each instance where the liberty of the child is deprived by securing/locking a door.

The frequency of the use of this strategy is continuously monitored by the Principal and/or Deputy Principal both by observation of the event as it occurs and reviewing Incident Reports. The focus will always be on reducing the occurrence and frequency of the intervention. Follow up actions are monitored by the Principal to ensure that they are put in place. See Risk Reduction Review below.

USE OF THIS OR ANY OTHER RESTRICTIVE PRACTICE FOR REASONS OF SANCTION/PUNISHMENT OR STAFF CONVENIENCE IS NOT PERMITTED. THIS MAY BE UNLAWFUL AND WILL BE DEALT WITH AS APPROPRIATE BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT, CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES AND GARDAI.

POST INCIDENT SUPPORT:

Following an incident the priority is to look after the pupils and staff involved before reports are filled out and reviews held.

Incident Report/Debriefing:

Incident reports should be filled out by the staff involved following the use of force or restraint. It is sometimes difficult to judge when an incident report should be filled out but the following criteria can be used as a guide:

1. 'Near miss' – the situation had the potential to be a risk to safety.
2. Someone received an injury from a kick, bite, thrown item, etc.
3. A restraint/force was used.
4. Liberty was restricted by securing a door from outside.
5. A pupil became significantly emotionally distressed.

If unsure the Principal or Deputy should be contacted for guidance.

If a pupil or member of staff receives an injury requiring medical attention a separate Accident Report is also sent to the school's insurers via the office of the Director of Services, Brothers of Charity Southern Services, Lota.

Risk Reduction Reviews

The best time to fill out an Incident Report is when the situation has settled and the pupil and staff have had time to recover. The form is checked by the Principal and Deputy to decide if any follow up action is required, to provide any further care or reassurance to pupils or staff, to review the interventions used by staff and to inform any future recommendations.

It is the school's practice to provide parents with copies of incident reports on request subject to data protection. The incidents are recorded in the Pupil's RRRPs for discussion with parents as agreed. Some parents wish to be informed of every incident after they occur; others prefer to be informed at review meetings. *The Principal is the only person authorised by the Board to release an Incident report to a parent.* The Principal may defer to the Chairperson of the Board if necessary.

Debriefing/Recovery:

Pupils are assisted to recover from an incident by staff. Useful strategies to assist a pupil to recover should be identified in the pupil's RRRP.

In accordance with our Health and Safety Statement, there is a separate Incident Debriefing Policy for staff available in the Class Information Folders.

Risk Assessment Checklist for Principal/Deputy Principal:

CHECK	RECORD	REPORT to	REVIEW (if necessary)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has anyone been hurt? (pupils or staff). • Is medical attention required? • Check emotional well-being of pupil and staff. • Does anyone need a drink of water/rest? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Incident Report and decide if any follow up is required • If injuries were sustained, fill out Accident Report for insurance purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents (as agreed). • BOM if necessary. • Insurers if medical attention was necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk/Restraint Reduction Plan. • Policy Guidance. • Risk Assessment. • Staff Training.

REVIEW:

A report will be made at each B.O.M. meeting detailing the number of RPI's used since the last meeting. Particular attention will be paid to the use of seclusion.

An annual review of all incident reports involving RPIs will be conducted by the Principal and Deputy to inform practice for the following year taking account of:

- Number of incidents involving RPIs
- Types of RPIs used and their effectiveness
- Incidents involving seclusion
- Recorded injuries requiring medical attention
- Risk reduction strategies and techniques for inclusion in the following year's Risk Reduction Plan

Feedback from the review will be presented to the Board of Management, members of the Multi-D Team, the parents involved and staff. Their comments/suggestions will be included in the Risk Reduction Plan for the following year if relevant. The opinions of a psychologist, if available, will be especially valuable. This plan will be part of the school's annual Self Evaluation Report.

COMPLAINTS & ALLEGATIONS:

The school seeks to engage positively with parents regarding all aspects of their child's education, care and management. Parents of pupils who engage in high risk challenging behaviours are prioritised for meetings/phone calls etc. with the Principal or Deputy. The school will endeavour to keep parents informed in a manner that is reasonable and in the best interests of the child. This will take the form of meetings, phone calls, diaries or letters as appropriate.

How to make a Complaint:

- Parents wishing to make complaint should in the first instance contact the Principal who will furnish the parent with a copy of the Complaints Procedure. In accordance with our Child Protection Policy parents may also decide to contact Child Protection Services directly themselves and pursue a complaint using this avenue if they are concerned about the welfare of a child.
- Staff wishing to make a complaint should in the first instance contact the Principal who will furnish the staff member with a copy of the Complaints Procedure (also available in the Class Information Folder). In accordance with our Child Protection Policy, staff may also decide to contact Child Protection Services directly themselves if they are concerned about the welfare of a child. Staff also have the right to contact the Gardai in the event of any assault occurring in school.

REVIEW PROCEDURES:

It is recommended that this policy is reviewed annually, in the light of changing information and in consultation with the wider community.

CIRCULATION:

The completed policy was circulated to staff, parents and the school's patron.

Part 6: Anti-Bullying Policy

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Our Lady of Good Counsel School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and staff. Therefore the school is fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour by promoting:

- A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and encourages pupils to identify, disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment using whatever means of communication is available to them.
- Respectful relationships across the school community.
- Effective leadership with all adults providing models of behaviour that reflect the school ethos where diversity is accepted and celebrated.
- A school-wide approach involving management, staff, parents and pupils;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
- Recognition of the fact that cyberbullying can occur via text and social media.
- Awareness that staff can engage in behaviours toward pupils that could be interpreted as bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils throughout the school day.
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies).

And

- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy using the school self-evaluation review system.

The *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* defines bullying as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

Staff identified the following pupil to pupil behaviours which could fall within the definition of bullying in the context of our school:

1. Cyberbullying:

- Inappropriate comments/photos, etc. on Facebook or other social media.
- Inappropriate texts/messages/photos via pupils' phones.
- Inappropriate pictures/websites on iPads, laptops, etc.

2. Physical: Pushing, pulling, kicking, spitting, pinching, hitting, squeezing, head-butting, body products, biting, choking, stabbing, scratching.

3. Emotional: Exclusion, name calling, teasing, ignoring, intimidation, expression, body language, shouting, growling, taking or breaking possessions, destroying work, invasion of privacy, telling lies, verbal intimidation, peer pressure.

Isolated or one-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including aggression towards a peer do not fall within the definition of bullying and will be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. *The one exception to this is one off comments which are communicated via social media. These fall within the remit of bullying as they can be shared by a wide audience almost immediately and are almost impossible to delete permanently.*

In accordance with Section 6.8 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* the relevant teacher for investigating and dealing with bullying will be the class teacher. The Principal and or Deputy will provide support and guidance where necessary.

AWARENESS & PREVENTION:

The following awareness and preventative strategies and programmes are used in the school (see Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- Careful planning of class groups each year – openness to changing this if necessary mid-year.
- Recognition that some pupils do not ‘get on’ with others.
- Identification and risk assessing ‘Hot Spots’ - playground, toilets, corridors, transitions from one activity to another, visiting other classrooms or areas of the school where the presence of another child causes anxiety, assembly and home time – implementation of strategies to reduce identified risks such as delaying some pupils at home time, providing additional supervision in toilet areas, Behaviour Support Plans, etc.
- School transport – close liaison with escorts, drivers, parents and school staff regarding behaviours on school transport.
- Developing ‘Pupil Profiles’ at the end of each year for handover to next classroom.
- Staff awareness of pupils who have a documented history of engaging in risky behaviours and support provided to them to manage incidents where necessary.
- Certified training provided to staff of how to physically intervene in certain situations (c.f. Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Staff Policy).
- Awareness of staff on the importance of taking the time to listen to children and to give them time to process what is said to them.
- Teaching relevant SPHE and Stay Safe programmes.
- Developing Social Stories on building respect, empathy and resilience.
- Implementation of the School Rules.
- Active communication and liaison with parents, bus escorts and drivers.
- Regular team meetings with parents of relevant pupils.
- Implementation of positive handling strategies as outlined in our Positive Handling Policy such as diversion, diffusion, de-escalation, re-directing etc.
- Use of relevant educational materials to promote and foster respect for others.
- A strong and active culture of child protection.

Other Relevant Related Policies

- Supervision Policies.
- Photo and Video Policies.
- Monitoring internet and phone usage in school – ICT Policy.
- Child Protection Policy – Intimate Care and General Handling of Pupils Policies.
- Child Protection Policy – Code of Behaviour and Positive Handling Policies.
- Health and Safety Policies.
- Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Staff Policy.

Diversity and Difference:

The school promotes a positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and will avail of opportunities to respect and/or to celebrate the following:

- Different cultural holidays/events.
- Religious observances including those related to food and fasting.
- Use of materials that include pictures of persons from different cultural backgrounds.
- Geography lessons - clothes, hairstyle, music, etc.
- Social observances - for example respecting a child's cultural background which teaches that maintaining eye contact when interacting with a staff member is disrespectful.

Procedures for Investigating and dealing with bullying: (Section 6.8.9 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

School authorities must ensure that the school has clear procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying and that these are set out in the school's anti-bullying policy. The school's procedures must be consistent with the following:

- i. The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).
- ii. In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- iii. All reports, including anonymous report of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in "telling". This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- iv. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- v. Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- vi. It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and pupils) understand the above approach from the outset.
- vii. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- viii. Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- ix. All discussions with pupils should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the fact that all pupils in the school have been diagnosed with moderate learning disabilities. This means that some will have difficulty communicating with each other and with staff. Appropriate supports will be provided to assist pupils during discussion, if necessary.
- x. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should consult other staff.
- xi. In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The

- school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils.
- xii. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied using appropriate supports such as visual schedule, social stories, etc. Referrals to multi-d team members may be made to support the pupils involved.
 - xiii. It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
 - xiv. Follow-up with the relevant parties involved may be organised with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.
 - xv. In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 1.
 - xvi. In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
 - Whether any issues between the parties has been resolved, as far as is practicable.
 - Whether the relationship between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable.
 and
 - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
 - xvii. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
 - xviii. In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Follow Up:

- Where disciplinary sanctions may be required, it will be a private matter for the person being disciplined, his/her family and the school.
- Follow up meetings may be scheduled with the relevant parties as required or social skills programmes set up to develop co-operation and mutual respect.
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the teacher in the template at Appendix 2.
- In determining if it has been adequately addressed, the teacher will take into account the following factors:
 - Has the bullying behaviour ceased ?
 - Have the issues between the parties been resolved as far as is practicable ?
 - Has the relationship between parties been restored ?
 - Has any feedback been received from their families or the Principal or Deputy Principal ?

- Where a parent is not satisfied with how the school has dealt with the bullying case, the parents have the right to complain to the Board of Management. If they remain dissatisfied with local representations, they can decide to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- Serious incidents bullying behaviour may be referred to the HSE Children & Family Services and/or the Gardai as appropriate.

Recording:

The template in Appendix 1, for recording the investigation into allegations of bullying behaviour, will be provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal. Data gathered from these reports will provide information in relation to the presence of bullying behaviour in the school. This data will be collated at least once each year and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any trends in behaviour. A record of this analysis will be retained and made available to the Board of Management once each term. Appropriate responses to any issues identified should be drawn up and implemented.

Supports for children affected by bullying will include their engagement in programmes to develop their self-esteem, develop their friendship and social skills and promote their resilience to actions of a bullying nature.

SUPERVISION & MONITORING OF PUPILS:

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

* * * * *

This policy has been made available to school personnel and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the Patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, and be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the Patron and the Department.

Appendix I: TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR BY CHILDREN.

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name: _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil/pupils engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report

(tick)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Special Needs Assistant	
Bus Escort	
Other	

4. Location of incidents

(tick)

School Bus	
Corridor	
Classroom	
Toilets	
GP Hall	
Therapy room	
Other	

5. Name of person (s) who reported the bullying concern:

--

6. Type of bullying behaviour (tick the relevant box)

Physical Aggression		Verbal abuse name calling	
Damage to property		Taunting	
Intimidation		Removing possessions from child	
Assault		Gossip	
Isolation/Exclusion		Cyber bullying	

7. If behaviour is regarded as identity based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Traveller	Other (Specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

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9. Details of action taken:

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Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal / Deputy Principal: _____

Appendix II: CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

The Board of Management of Our Lady of Good Counsel School will undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation using the following checklist for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. In order to complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate across the various elements of the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy will be required.

	<i>Yes/No</i>
Has the Board formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	
Has the Board provided a copy to the Parents' Association ?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff) ?	
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day to day work ?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils ?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies ?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented ?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined ?	
Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy ?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal ?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board ?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents ?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation ?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed ?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour ?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement ?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement ?	

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed: _____
Principal

Date _____

NOTIFICATION REGARDING THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT’S ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

To: _____

The Board of Management of Our Lady of Good Counsel School R.N: 18208A wishes to inform you that:

- The Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s anti-bullying policy and its implementation was completed at the Board meeting of _____ [date].
- This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in **Appendix 4** of the Department’s *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed: _____
Principal

Date _____

Appendix III: CODE OF DISCIPLINE / BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL (Shortened version for parents).

Our Lady of Good Counsel School endeavours to promote a positive approach to discipline and behaviour management in order to provide a happy working environment for all pupils and staff. The following is a shortened version of the school's Behaviour Management Protocol. The full text is available from the Principal or Class Teacher on request.

This protocol has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, Teachers and Representatives of the Parents' Association.

The following strategies are used in the school to manage behavioural incidents.

1. Redirecting/distracting the pupil
2. Reasoning with/Cajoling the pupil
3. Using Social Stories to clarify expectations
4. Using 'Planned Ignoring'
5. Defining boundaries
6. Using Cause/Effect/Consequence – child's action results in loss of privilege.
7. Using praise and positive attention to reinforce acceptable behaviour
8. Using rewards
9. Fostering peer support
10. Using augmentative communication systems to assist understanding
11. Using the SPHE Programme to discuss behaviour in general
12. Using Behavioural Support Plans (which are agreed with parents) where appropriate
13. Using contracts or recording notebooks where appropriate.
14. Using schedules / personal diaries and other appropriate communication aids.

(The type of strategy chosen will depend on the competency and ability of the child)

The following consequences to unacceptable behaviour are used in the school.

1. Use of facial expression.
2. Use of a firm tone of voice.
3. Removing pupil from the group for a short period.
4. Removing others from the vicinity of the pupil.
5. Putting the pupil 'on notice' of a possible consequence of their behaviour.
6. Sending a note home.
7. Withdrawal of privileges for a reasonable period of time realistic to the individual pupil.
8. Sending a pupil to another class (of children of a similar age).
9. Sending a pupil to the Principal.
10. Rewarding other pupils for desired behaviours.
11. Where the behaviour is very serious such as repeated aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards other pupils or staff, the parent may be asked by the principal to take the child home for the rest of that day.

(The type of strategy chosen will depend on the competency and ability of the child)

Where behaviours persist or pose a persistent challenge to other pupils or staff, the school uses the following processes.

1. Referral to school psychologist
2. Establishment of a Behaviour Support Plan and or Risk Reduction Plan (in consultation with parents and members of the multi-disciplinary team where appropriate).

3. Frequent meetings/phone calls to parents as part of the process
4. Keeping incident reports where applicable (copies of which are available to parents) on request.
5. Informing the Special Educational Needs Organiser of the need for possible extra resources for the pupil.
6. Referring the pupil to Trasna Training Services to prepare an analysis of the reasons for the behaviour
7. Sourcing extra training for staff.

The Board of Management provides regular certified training courses for staff in the area of positive handling of pupils which is updated at least every two years. This is called ‘**Team Teach Training**’ (www.team-teach.co.uk). See Part 5 of the full text of our Child Protection Policy available from the Principal. These courses train staff in positive handling strategies using a whole school holistic approach to managing difficult, disturbing and sometimes dangerous behaviours. This includes risk reduction strategies to de-escalate, diffuse and redirect in order to safeguard pupils and staff. Staff are trained to manage potentially serious situations using physical interventions that are appropriate, necessary and reasonable to the situation. Parents are informed if such interventions are necessary. Regular review and risk reduction takes place by the Principal and Deputy Principal (who are certified Team Teach tutors) in cases where these interventions are deemed necessary. In all cases the long term strategy is to reduce, minimise and where possible eliminate the need to use such strategies with our pupils.

In extreme cases, where all internal processes have been exhausted and the Board of Management is of the opinion that the school does not have the resources to meet the challenge posed to the welfare of the pupil, other pupils or staff, the Board will follow the procedures and guidelines as stipulated in the Education Welfare Act 2000, Section 24 with regard to suspension and expulsion. This action will be taken when there is no alternative and only with due consultation with parents, the National Educational Welfare Board and School Staff.

The following restrictive practices are used in the school in certain circumstances in consultation with parents:

1. High handles on some classroom doors to prevent absconding of children.
2. Some doors are secured to prevent pupils entering into areas that are unsupervised or unsuitable at certain times.
3. Harnesses/seat belt guards for some children are provided on school buses if the pupil has demonstrated that they will open their seatbelt or engage in behaviours that put other vehicle users at risk.
4. Front Door Access System using fobs is installed at the main doors to reduce the risk of pupils absconding from the building and preventing access to the school by unauthorised visitors.
5. Pupil Support Rooms/Safe Spaces are available for certain previously identified pupils to provide a safe area to which they can retreat to for a break from the classroom routine or be escorted to by staff for the health and safety of other pupils. A Risk/restraint Reduction Plan outlining the use of these rooms, *which has been drawn up in consultation with parents*, is mandatory for these instances. In circumstances where it is necessary to secure the door to the support rooms to prevent injury to other pupils or staff, pupils are monitored from outside the door, parents informed and the reasons for doing so recorded and reviewed by the class team. There are a specific set of guidelines (part 5 of the school’s Child Protection Policy) available to staff regarding the use of physical interventions with pupils. These are available from the Principal on request.

6. The hands of pupils may be held by staff to prevent a pupil absconding or attempting to hit out at others.
7. 'Team Teach' certified positive handling strategies to diffuse, de-escalate and safeguard pupils and staff when necessary.

2015/16

Appendix IV: CHILD PROTECTION – NOTE FOR PARENTS

Our Lady of Good Counsel School follows the policies and guidelines outlined in the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of children. Any concerns relating to the welfare of children will be reported in the first instance to the Social Worker assigned to the school by the Brothers of Charity and from there may also be reported to the relevant Area Social Worker in the HSE. In some cases a report may go directly to the HSE. Parents are usually informed by the Principal (who is the Designated Liaison Officer for the Protection of Children in the school) if a report has been made.

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time. The following are summaries of definitions found in the “**Children First Guidelines.**”

Neglect

Neglect is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, medical care, attachment to and affection from adults.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a caregiver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child’s needs for affection, approval consistency and security are not met.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his/her own gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

Designated Liaison Person to whom any concerns regarding the welfare of pupils should be reported:

SIOBHAN ALLEN, PRINCIPAL

Deputy Designated Liaison Person:

AISSLING HEIDT, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

A full copy of the school’s Child Protection Policy is available from the Principal on request.