



## **Christ The King Boys National School**

**Annaly Road, Cabra Dublin 7.**

**Phone: 01-8680503 Roll No: 16988T**

**[www.christthekingbns.ie](http://www.christthekingbns.ie)**

### **Code of Behaviour and Challenging Behaviour Policy: Le Chéile ASD Classes**

#### **1. Introduction**

Christ The King BNS aims to provide a happy, secure and friendly learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and Board of Management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

This policy stems from Christ The King Boys National School's commitment to provide an optimum learning and teaching environment in our two special needs classrooms Le Chéile 1 and Le Chéile 2. The policy is designed to ensure the rights of children in Le Chéile 1 and Le Chéile 2 and the staff who support them, so that everyone can learn, work, flourish and develop in an environment that is positive, respectful, safe and inclusive.

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

In Christ The King BNS we believe that children benefit from structure, routines and clear boundaries. In order for rules and routines to be effective, we feel that continuity and consistency are of the utmost importance.

#### **2. Definition of Challenging Behaviour**

Challenging behaviour is "behaviour, within the context of the school, which prevents participation in appropriate educational activities; often isolates children from their peers; affects the learning and functioning of other pupils; significantly reduces the opportunities for involvement in ordinary community activities; makes excessive demands on staff and resources; places the child or others in physical danger" (Harris, Cook and Upton 1996)

Christ the King BNS' approach to Behaviour Support acknowledges that the student's behavioural difficulties may be linked to the dyad of impairments, sensory sensitivities, medical reasons and/ or cognitive abilities of the individual. The school acknowledges that the students may have a dual diagnosis and the impact this may have on behaviour. All of these factors will be assessed and will inform the approach taken when providing behaviour support for individual students. We feel that consistency and continuity are of the upmost importance in implementing effective routines and structured learning environments. The



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school is committed to working with parents to help reduce challenging behaviours; however the complex needs of individual students will always inform the ultimate approach adopted.

Children are encouraged and guided to develop respect for themselves, other children and all adults with whom they come in contact with. The following behaviours, where excessive and infringing on the rights of others, are deemed :

- **Aggressive behaviour:** pinching, biting, scratching, punching, slapping, pushing, pulling, kicking, head butting, pulling hair, using objects against people and themselves.
- **Non-compliance:** lying down, non- cooperation, resistance to teaching, refusing to do things.
- **Disruptive, nuisance or threatening behaviour:** shouting, screaming, swearing, repetitive vocalisation, verbal abuse, remarks/discrimination, curses, gestures or threats to harm, teasing, arguing, interrupting, obstructing, taking food or drink from others, setting off the fire alarm, invading personal space.
- **Absconding:** wandering outside the classroom without permission, running away or trying to run away.
- **Attention seeking:** constantly misbehaving in order to seek attention.
- **Destruction of property:** damage to property belonging to self, other children or adults or damage to school property.
- **Socially inappropriate behaviour:** spitting, interrupting others, provoking others, making inappropriate comments.
- **Temper tantrums:** outbursts of bad temper.
- **Self-injurious behaviour:** head banging, scratching, biting and poking.
- **Passive challenging behaviour:** glaring, refusing to respond, averting gaze, withdrawal.

### 3. Strategies for Promoting Positive Behaviour

The most effective methodology in attempting to manage challenging behaviour is to prevent or minimise the occurrence in the first place. It is important to understand that challenging behaviour usually serves a purpose for the individual. Often it is a means of communication and if we understand what the child is trying to communicate by engaging in the behaviour, we may be able to support the child to learn a safer and more effective way of communication. Acceptable behaviour is reinforced in a school and classroom climate which is supportive of positive behaviour. In Christ The King BNS, we believe that school and home should work



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cooperatively together in order to enhance and successfully promote positive behaviour. The positive school ethos extends to all members of the school community adopting a positive, calm approach to challenges that may be encountered from time to time. Every effort should be made to ensure that the classroom and school environment is enriched with frequent opportunities for students and staff to encounter social praise and acknowledgement for achievements and to experience a varied schedule of activities to be enjoyed across the school day.

The following are some of the strategies that have been developed in our Le Chéile ASD classes to promote positive behaviour:

- Developing language and communication skills – including PECS.
- Clear and simple classroom rules and instructions with visual supports
- The use of timers, countdowns and strategies to plan for transitions
- Visual supports for communication
- Visual schedules
- Sensory diets
- Use of sensory room
- Reward systems
- Choice boards
- Regular communication with parents – daily journal
- Teaching of social skills
- Use of social stories
- Consistent approaches to behaviour by staff members
- Clear, consistent consequences for misbehaviour
- Talk and discussion of behaviour with the child (if appropriate)
- The teaching and reinforcing of appropriate replacement behaviours that serve the same function for the child (e.g. teaching the student an appropriate means of asking for a break from a demanding task without resorting to challenging behaviour)
- The use of social praise and acknowledgement
- Access to preferred items/ activities intermittently throughout the day following an appropriate request or the completion of a particular task



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### 4. Staff Training

In Christ The King BNS we promote Continuous Professional Development to help SNAs and teachers in our Le Chéile classes to develop their skills and confidence to work successfully with students who have challenging behaviour. This also helps support positive behaviour.

### 4. Responsibilities related to behaviour management

**Teachers** will be responsible for:

- Providing a safe and supportive classroom environment which promotes the educational, social, emotional and behavioural development of all students. This includes communication with the student's parents/guardians as early as possible to discuss concerns, suggest forms of support and encourage feedback.
- Implementing suitable classroom management practices and appropriate intervention strategies for students who are at risk of developing challenging behaviour. Behaviour Management Plans will be put in place where needed.
- Participating in professional development that contributes to skill development in the pupils and a clearer understanding of students with challenging behaviour.
- Documenting all challenging behaviour incidents as they occur. Incident reports will be written when needed.
- Reporting all challenging behaviour and incidents to the principal and parents/guardians.

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

- Communicating with the child's teacher or school principal concerns about their child's behaviour.
- Utilising the student communication journal on a daily basis. Parents will sign the communication journal to show that they have read teacher/SNA's notes and comments.
- Contributing to management plans that concern their child and providing feedback on the results of any interventions.
- Cooperating with interventions and strategies that are proposed by the child's teacher and the principal.
- To inform the school if their child is receiving any regular medication. Where prescribed medications are known to have a behavioural effect these possible effects



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will be factored in to all behaviour support measures Talk in confidence to the class teacher or principal about any significant developments/changes in a child's life, which may affect the child's behaviour

The **Principal** will be responsible for:

- Facilitating the development of a supportive school environment and implementing the 'Challenging Behaviour Policy' within the school.
- Leading the school in relation to the management of students with challenging behaviour and supporting staff in relation to these students.
- Facilitating access of all staff to programs of professional learning in relation to students with challenging behaviour as deemed appropriate by the principal.
- Providing the opportunity for the teachers in Le Chéile 1 and Le Chéile 2 to develop higher level skills so that they can provide additional support and advice within the school.
- Seeking outside support and advice i.e the child's disability service team, NCSE, NEPS.
- Deciding on a final course of action when all intervention programs have been exhausted e.g. reduced day, suspension, expulsion (as a last resort).

### 5. Sanctions

The approach adopted by Christ the King B.N.S. in response to challenging behaviour is to affect a decrease in inappropriate behaviour by increasing appropriate behaviour. This should be achieved through the employment of reinforcement strategies and positive behavior promotion. Only when data indicates that these positive measures have been tried and exhausted; or have been unsuccessful in eliminating or sufficiently reducing problem behaviour, should the following strategies be considered;

#### Minor challenging behaviour:

- Will be discussed with the child using clear language and visual supports
- Will be dealt with at class level and privileges/preferred activities may be withheld as appropriate.
- Will be written up in the child's communication journal.
- Focus will remain on the child to support then in continuing to work for their preferred activity on their choice board

#### Minor challenging behaviours which are ongoing:

- Will be discussed with the child with visual support
- Will be written in the child's communication journal



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- Will be reported to parents/ guardians and discussed with the class teacher.
- Support may be sought from the child's disability service with consent from parents.

### **Damage to property:**

- The child will be spoken to by staff directly involved with visual support.
- Will be reported to the class teacher and written up in the child's communication journal.
- Will be reported to parents/guardians and the parents will be asked to come to the school to discuss their child's behaviour.

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

- Will be discussed with the child with visual support.
- Will be written in the child's communication journal.
- Will be reported to parents/guardians.
- The parents will be asked to come to the school to discuss the child's behaviour
- Support from the child's disability service team will be requested.

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

- The child will be spoken to by staff directly involved.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the class teacher.
- A written report will be made outlining exact details of the incident.
- The matter will be brought to the attention of the principal.
- Each incident will be reported to parents/guardians.
- A verbal apology will be given by the child/parent to the injured party.
- If the behaviour persists, parents will be invited into the school to attend a meeting with the teacher and the principal.
- The parents will be informed of strategies which will be put in place.
- Request for support will be logged with NCSE with consent from parents.
- Support from the child's disability service team will be requested also.
- In the event of the situation not improving, the child will be suspended by the Principal or put on a reduced day. (The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed).
- Further serious infringements may warrant longer suspensions of up to five days. (The Chairperson of the BOM will be informed)



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- If no improvement is made the matter will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management for consideration and a decision as to what actions should be taken.
- Continuous disruptions and/or violent behaviour may result in expulsion of the pupil. This will be considered where the student's behaviour is causing persistent and significant disruption to the learning, safety and wellbeing of others.
- When the child has had six days suspension, the Education Welfare Officer will be informed.
- For long suspensions in exceptional circumstances, the matter will be monitored by the Chairperson of the BOM, in consultation with the principal.
- If a decision is made in relation to expulsion, the parents/guardians will be informed of their rights according to Section 29 of the Education Act and a copy of the application form to appeal the decision will be forwarded to the parents/guardians.

### **Automatic expulsion may result from:**

- A serious threat of violence towards another pupil or staff.
- Actual physical violence or assault.

### **Procedures in respect of expulsion:**

Where a preliminary assessment of the facts confirms challenging behaviour of a serious nature or behaviour which is infringing on the teaching and learning of the other pupils in the class on a continuous basis, these behaviours could warrant expulsion. The procedural steps will include;

1. A detailed investigation to be carried out under the direction of the Principal.
2. A recommendation to the Chairperson of the Board of Management by the Principal.
3. Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing.
4. Board of Management deliberates and actions are drawn up following the hearing.
5. Consultations arranged by the Educational Welfare Officer.
6. Confirmation of the decision of Expulsion.

### **Step 1: A detailed investigation carried out under the direction of the Principal**

- Inform the student and their parents/guardians about the details of the alleged behaviour /misbehaviour, how it will be investigated and that it could result in expulsion.
- Parents/guardians should be informed in writing of the alleged behaviour/misbehaviour(s) and the proposed investigation. This letter will act as a record of having informed the parents.



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- Give parents/guardians and the student every opportunity to respond to the complaint of serious behaviour/ misbehaviour(s) before a decision is made and before a sanction is imposed.
- A meeting with the student and their parents/guardians is essential. It provides the opportunity for them to give their side of the story and or the school to explore with the parents/guardians how best to address the student's behaviour.

### **Step 2:** A recommendation to the Chairperson/BOM by the Principal

Where the Principal forms a view, based on the investigation of the alleged behaviour/ misbehaviour(s), that expulsion may be warranted, the Principal makes a recommendation to the Board of Management to consider expulsion. The Principal should;

- Inform the parents/guardians and the student that the BOM is being asked to consider expulsion.
- Provide the BOM with the same comprehensive records as are given to the parents.
- Notify the parents/guardians of the date of the hearing by the BOM and invite them to that hearing.
- Advise the parents/guardians that they can make a written and oral submission to the BOM.
- Ensure that parents/guardians have enough notice to allow them time to prepare for the hearing.

### **Step 3:** Consideration by the Board of Management of the Principal's recommendation and the holding of a hearing

- After both sides have been heard, the BOM should ensure that the Principal and parents/guardians are not present for the deliberations.

### **Step 4:** The BOM will then decide actions following the hearing.

## **6. Limitations**

This document is not designed to list all the possible situations that may arise, nor state all the possible strategies to address challenging behaviour but to serve as a general guide to the students, the staff and the Principal. This policy should be used to assist in dealing with difficult situations.





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### 7. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff members of Christ The King BNS must adhere to the 'Challenging Behaviour Policy'. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all staff are made aware of it.

### 8. Policy Review/ Ratification

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

Signed: *Anne Dollard*  
Chairperson of BOM

Date: 03/03/2022

Signed: *Clodagh Vahey*  
Principal

Date: 03/03/2022

**Last date reviewed:**

**Next review date:**