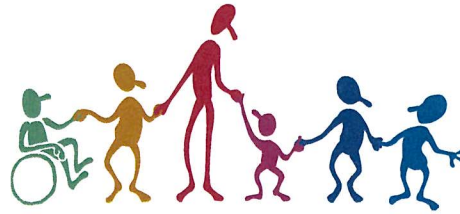


St. Oliver's Special School



Code of Behaviour

Our Mission

St. Oliver's Special School aims to be a caring community dedicated to enhancing individual development, founded on high professional standards, mutual trust and respect for the essential worth and human dignity of all its students and staff.

St. Oliver's Special School caters for pupils from ages 4 to 18 years of age who have a Moderate, Severe or Profound Learning Disability. St. Oliver's Special School also caters for pupils who have physical, sensory or behavioural difficulties. St. Oliver's has an obligation to the students and families to provide an educational setting that caters to the student's educational social and emotional and behavioural needs. As is the nature of autism and intellectual disabilities, challenging behaviours are a part of our school. We do this through a multidisciplinary approach, using a combination of educational and behavioural approaches with a positive behaviour outlook. The school adopts a proactive approach to dealing with behaviours, by placing emphasis on the use of preventative strategies, while recognising the pupil's personal integrity and rights. The policy shall serve to create a whole school approach that is consistent and cohesive.

Vision

The school staff and parents strive to provide an environment which will enable each child to live, learn and grow to his/her full potential. This is founded on high professional standards, mutual trust and respect for pupils and staff. We believe that our positive Code of Behaviour will facilitate this goal.

Aims

- To allow the school to function in an orderly way where children are helped to progress to all aspects of their development.
- To create an atmosphere of respect, tolerance and consideration for others
- To promote positive behaviour and self-regulation
- To recognise the differences between children and to accommodate these differences
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- To assist parents and pupils in understanding the systems and procedures that form part of the Code of Behaviour and to ensure their co-operation in the

application of these procedures

- To ensure the system of rules and rewards are individualised to meet the needs of each student
- To ensure that every student has access to the items/activities they find most powerfully reinforcing, to increase their chances of success with any goals or objectives that have been designed for them to achieve.
- To ensure that all Behaviour Support Plans and Individual Education Plans (IEPS) promote the development of desirable behaviours rather than the suppression or elimination of undesirable ones.
- To ensure that all staff members know that the reliance on punishment as the primary means of behaviour change is unacceptable
- To ensure the intervention in managing behaviour emphasises rewarding of desirable behaviours rather than the punishment of undesirable ones

The school promotes good behaviour by:

Having a whole school approach to promoting high standards of good behaviour and having high expectations for student behaviour.

- The behaviour of an adult in a child's life, including parents, teachers and special needs assistants, is a significant influence on how a child behaves. St. Oliver's School expects that the behaviour of all members of the school community should reflect the following values:
 - ✓ Respect for self and others
 - ✓ Kindness and willingness to help others
 - ✓ Courtesy and good manners
 - ✓ Fairness
 - ✓ Forgiveness
 - ✓ Readiness to use ways of resolving difficulties and conflict that are respectful of everybody involved
- Developing strategies to strengthen student and parental involvement
- Input from the multi disciplinary team agreed strategies catering for pupils who present with challenging behaviour.
- The school promotes good behaviour by having a whole school approach to promote positive behaviours and agreed strategies for catering for children who present with challenging behaviours
- The school recognises pupils in St Oliver's Special School have communication difficulties and these children may have difficulty interpreting the world around them or difficulty in conveying information which may give rise to feelings of frustration. The school will work to help each child develop an appropriate means of communication
- The school will provide a positive learning environment with consistent boundaries for behaviour and clarity on expectation. Predictability and consistency in the classroom through the use of class rules, routines, schedules and timetables are

necessary for children to understand what is expected of them at school

- The environment can contribute to the behaviour of a pupil in the school. All classroom environments shall be mindful of noise, light, heat or cold, space, seating etc as it may impact on how a pupil copes with and intended learning environment
- Due to the complexity of some disabilities presenting in St Oliver's Special School, pupils may engage in behaviour that is hazardous to themselves, to others and may result in damage to property. In this instance staff must take steps to ensure the safety of all involved while attempting to support the pupil through the crisis. It is essential that all staff understand the phases of an incident as outlined in Appendix 1
- When a pupil displays difficult behaviour consistently on a number of occasions, the family and members of the multi-disciplinary team shall be informed and all relevant parties including those working in the school will be involved in the development of a support plan. Details of the support plan are outlined in Appendix 2

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1. Guidelines for behaviour in the school

Student: The school encourages the children, in accordance with their ability:

- Abide by class rules(within their ability) (e.g quiet hands, quiet voice)
- To tolerate and respect other children and staff in their environment and to respect other children and staff in their environment and to respect the property of the school, and of the other students and staff.
- Each pupil will be supported to reduce any self-injurious behaviours a BSP designed to include reinforcement strategies

2. Whole School Approach in promoting positive behaviour

2.1 Staff

- The principal and all staff will be responsible for the implementation of the Code of Behaviour.
- All staff of St Oliver's Special School will be trained in Management of Actual and Potential Aggression (MAPA) by the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) with focus on de-escalation with a low arousal approach and emphasis placed on physical interventions being a last resort after all other strategies have failed and the individual poses a threat to the welfare and safety of themselves, other students or staff or are at risk of doing major damage to property.
- All staff members of St Oliver's Special School will request the assistance of others if necessary and use the internal alarm system in the school to request help.
- The schools SPHE curriculum, in conjunction with each student BSP's is used to support the Code of Behaviour. It aims to help our children develop communication skills, appropriate ways of interacting and behavior and conflict resolution skills. Parents, teachers, multi-disciplinary team, and SNA; s is all involved in the developing of goals of each students IEP

2.2 Board of Management

The Board of Management has ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The Board is particularly responsible for the ethos of the schools well as the overall responsibility of learning within the school.

- The BOM is responsible for reviewing the Code of Behaviour and deciding on what if any changes should be made to it before they ratify it.
- The BOM will review the Code of Behaviour on
- The BOM will support various staff training that the Code of Behaviour

deems necessary.

- Responsibility for dealing with breaches of Code of Behaviour ultimately lies with the BOM.

2.3 Parents

The school recognises and encourages the importance of effective communication between itself and the parents. Their involvement and cooperation are vital to the success of the programme

- Parent is encouraged to discuss any behavioural problems that may arise at home
- Parents input, review, and approval are always required before implementing BSP's and IEP's
- Seesaw is used daily for communication between parents and teachers
- All policies are given to parents upon enrolment of their child
- Parents are expected to help the school implement the Code of Behaviour by
 - Ensuring their children attend school regularly
 - Provide staff with the necessary items that their child finds highly reinforcing to enable school staff to achieve greater outcomes with goals and objectives at school
 - Following the school BSP as best as possible within the home
 - Attending meetings at the school if requested
 - Informing the school of medication their child may be on and subsequent changes to dosage of that medication
 - Consenting to the BSP and the procedures within this

2.4 Pupils

Each student who engages in behaviour that challenges or severely interferes with their learning will have a BSP which supports their IEP

3. Positive strategies for managing behaviours in St Olivers

3.1 Reinforcement

- Staff must have access to any items that the students find highly reinforcing, in order to bring about the most significant changes in behavioural goals and educational tasks
- Reinforcer assessments (preference assessments) will be carried out
- Token economy systems are introduced for all students as required

3.2 Classroom

- Implementation of individualised BSP's. Each BSP must contain preventative strategies based on the principles of de-escalation
- Appropriate goals in each student's IEP, at the appropriate level for each student
- Ensure appropriate ratios of adults: students in group situations depending on the needs of the student

- Individual token economies
- First and then and visual schedules clearly displayed
- Various communication devices and communication training (AAC devices, PECS, Lamh, spoken language etc)
- Classroom management techniques that ensure a variety of activities and methodologies to sustain pupil interest and motivation
- Social stories

4. Rewards and Sanctions

4.1 Rewards and acknowledgement of good behaviour

Some interventions which may be found in individual students BSP's and within their IEPs to prevent challenging behaviours which may occur may include the following.

- Verbal acknowledgement of appropriate behaviour
- Individual rewards which can include extra ipad time, favourite toy, music, book, school job or outdoor activity
- Individual token economies
- General reinforcement for appropriate behaviours such as individual, group, and quiet praise.

4.2 Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour/aggression or violent misbehaviour

The school recognises that many pupils in St Oliver's have communication difficulties. Due to the complexity of some disabilities presenting in St Oliver's pupils may engage in behaviour that could be a danger to themselves, others and may result in damage to property. In this incident staff must take steps to ensure the safety of all involved while trying to support the pupil through the crisis.

When a pupil displays difficult behaviour consistently on a number of occasions, the family and members of a multi disciplinary team shall be informed. All relevant parties including those working in the school will be involved in the development of a support plan. (an example of The Support Plan details is outlined in Appendix 2)

The following are strategies which may be included as ways managing unacceptable behaviour:

- Individual discussion with a pupil who has shown unacceptable behaviour including reasoning, modelling, direction, and visual supports
- Communication with parents. Parents will be informed of behaviours that challenge at an early stage
- Temporary separation from peers for safety reasons or to have a calming space
- Following individual behaviour management programs/strategies which have been devised by Behaviour Support Therapists

When Serious incidents occur:

Following incidences of behaviours that challenge of a serious nature, a record is made in

the form of an incident report and if necessary the Behaviour Support Therapist or Psychology will be alerted

A record must also be made in the incident books for the Department of Education. In instances where a peer or staff member has been hurt, an incident report must be filled in and the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed.

4.3 Involving parents in management of problem behaviour

Parents will be alerted to serious inappropriate behaviour immediately through verbal or written communication.

Any intentional negative behaviour that occurs at home should be reported to the school immediately.

5. Suspension/Expulsion

Schools are required under section 23(2) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 to include their procedures for suspension and expulsion in their Code of Behaviour. St Oliver's in drafting their suspension and expulsion policy referred to Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools, NEWB, 2008 (Ch. 10 Suspensions and expulsions: legal and procedural requirements. Ch 11.0 Suspension, Ch 12 Expulsion). The entitlement to education is protected in a range of constitutional and legal provisions and in human rights Conventions. These legal protections for the individual student's right to education means that decisions to suspend or expel a student are open to appeal and may be subject to judicial review by the High Court (Section 29 of the Education Act 1998)

St Olivers has a successful record of education of its pupils

This is attributable to

- Appropriate programmes and methodologies used in the school
- Expertise and experience of staff
- The close involvement of parents with school
- The quality of communication with the parents on a very frequent basis. In particular, they are promptly advised of any problems.

However, despite these strategies, serious incidents may occur which may result in suspension and expulsion. The Board has a duty of care to students and staff to provide a safe working environment.

5.1 Suspension

In some instances, if behaviours that challenge escalate to such a degree that the safety of the child, other pupils or staff are at risk or, if serious damage is done to the school property, the Board will consider taking steps to suspend a pupil. Similarly in a case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion with the parents.

In all situations the school and the Board of Management will endeavour to take every

measure to avoid escalation to this level through following behaviour management guidelines and consulting with psychology or behaviour support therapist for support and advice.

The decision to suspend a student requires serious grounds such as that:

- The student's behaviour has had a seriously detrimental effect on the education of other students
- The student's continued presence in the school at this time constitutes a threat to safety
- The student is responsible for serious damage to property
- The student demonstrates aggressive violent behaviour towards a staff member or another pupil

A single incident of any of the above may be grounds for suspension.

In the case of decisions to suspend made by the Board of Management, an appeals process will be provided by the Patron.

5.2 Expulsion

Due to the nature and conditions of our children, this is not an option which we will be using unless the pupil's behaviour presents a serious safety risk to himself/herself and others.

Expulsion may be considered in extreme cases, in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Local Welfare Education Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. The authority to expel a pupil rests with the Board of Management.

Process:

- (i) The parents should be informed of the grounds upon which expulsion is being considered, and the nature of the evidence being relied upon.
- (ii) The parents should also be provided with a fair opportunity to consider the evidence and to offer evidence as rebuttal.
- (iii) Having considered all aspects of the case, if the principal decides to recommend to the Board of Management that the student be expelled, she/he must inform the student's parents in writing of the decision, the reasons for it and their right to make representations to the Board of Management. In the interest of the student, parents should be required to give notice to the Secretary of the Board of Management of their intention to make such representations no later than a specified date to enable an early hearing by the Board of Management
- (iv) The parents are entitled to seek access to the student's file and to documentation relevant to the expulsion. If the Principal, for whatever reason, refuses to hand over copies of the documentation, the parents may subsequently have a legitimate complaint that full details of the 'the case to answer' were not furnished in advance.

- (v) Arrangements should be made as the earliest possible date for a joint meeting of the Board of Management with the Principal and the parents. The recommendation of the principal and the representations (if requested) of the parents should be heard by the Board at this meeting. No new evidence of information which had not previously been made known to the parents should be introduced at this meeting. The student may need to stand suspended from the school pending the decision of the Board of Management.
- (vi) When the Board has heard all of the evidence, the parents and/or their representatives and the Principal must withdraw to allow the Board to consider the case. Even though the Principal is a member of the Board, s/he may not be party to the consideration of the case as s/he is an involved party. Further, the Board should ensure that any member of the Board who may have a conflict of interest should be excused and not be involved in the decision.
- (vii) To ensure the independence as the final authority in the case, the Board of Management must not be involved in the process leading to the decision of the Principal to recommend the expulsion of the student.
- (viii) The Board of Management may decide to invite an independent Board from another school to consider the case.
- (ix) If the recommendation of the Principal is rejected it is a matter of the Board to decide what conditions, if any, will apply to the student being allowed back to school.
- (x) If the recommendation of the Principal is approved the parents must be informed of their right to appeal the decision to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Skills under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998
- (xi) Where a Board of Management has taken the decision to expel a student, it is obliged to notify the designated Educational Welfare Officer of its decision and the reasons for it. A student shall not be considered expelled before the passing of 20 school days from the receipt of such notification by the Educational Welfare Officer. The Board is obliged to co-operate fully with the Educational Welfare Officer in the fulfilment of his/her duties under Section 24 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000

5.3 Appeals

Under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. Parents (or pupils who have reached the age of 18) are entitled to appeal to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Youth against some decisions of the Board of Management, including (1) permanent exclusion from a school and (2) suspension for a period which would bring the cumulative period of suspension to 20 days or longer in any one school year.

6. Keeping Records

- Incident reports are filled out for any harm caused to students or staff members. These reports are reviewed by the Principal
- MAPA logs are filled out for all MAPA intervention carried out for each student and these incidents are reported to the NCSE.

7. Procedures for notification of pupil absences from school

The school attempts to implement a number of strategies to encourage school attendance

- Creating a stimulating and attractive school environment using appropriate token economy and reinforcement schedules
- Making parents aware of the terms of the Education Welfare Act and its implications
- When children are absent Parents must contact the school via phone or seesaw to let them know of the absence. This is recorded on Aladdin
- The school uses the standard forms to report on pupil absences and an accumulative role list is sent to Tulsa

8. Reference to other Policies

List of other school policies that have a bearing on the code of behaviour

- SPHE Plan
- Anti Bullying
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Substance Use/Misuse
- Equality and Sexual Harassment
- Enrolment
- Record Keeping
- Home/School Links
- Bi Cinealta
- Parental Complaints
- Restrictive Practice Policy
- Health and Safety
- Equality
- Special Educational Needs
- Behaviour Management Policy

Signed: Tosha Rayth
Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: Bernie Creaven
Principal

Date: 21/01/2026

Date: 21/01/2020

Date of next review: Jan 29'

Appendix 1

Approaches

The approaches outlined are intended as a guideline for staff in dealing effectively with a serious incident. It may be necessary to vary the approaches for individual pupils based on prior knowledge of the pupil's pattern of behaviour

1. Trigger & Agitation: At this point the pupil displays anxiety. The staff approach should be supportive, empathetic and attempt to alleviate the anxiety. The trigger/source of agitation should be identified if possible and removed if this is feasible
2. Acceleration/Escalation: Here the anxiety levels are heightened affecting the pupil's self-control. The staff approach should now be directive - setting limits for the pupil and offering choices. Diversionary tactics can also be employed at this stage
3. Peak: At this stage the pupil has lost control and is exhibiting violent aggressive behaviour which is hazardous to themselves and others in the vicinity. The following steps should be taken, the child's safety is paramount at all times:
 - Stay calm - breathe slowly
 - Keep a safe distance from the pupil
 - Be aware of tone of voice and speak softly
 - Listen to the pupil
 - Empathise: Acknowledge feelings
 - Depending on the situation remove the pupil or if more appropriate the other pupils in the immediate area
 - It may be appropriate in some instances to leave the pupil alone and once safety is ensured monitor the situation from a distance.
 - Use distraction if appropriate
 - Doing something unexpected or funny may change the mood
 - In extreme circumstances it may be necessary to restrain or restrict the liberty of a pupil to prevent injury to him/herself or others. This should only be done as a last resort. Such measures should be discussed with relevant professionals and parents prior to implementation and outlined in individual support plans. Staff should be trained to correctly carry out these procedures.
 - If a behaviour incident persists over a long period it may be necessary to contact family and/or other appropriate support personnel.

4. De-escalation: In this phase the pupil displays a drop in physical and emotional energy and begins to regain rationality and focus. Staff should aim to re-build communication and provide therapeutic care.

Recovery: At this point the pupil has regained control of his/her behaviour, has been reassured and is returning to return to his/her class activities. Staff should record any physical injuries sustained by anyone during the incident in the Incident Book located in the office and arrange for medical attention if required. Individual staff involved in the incident should record the details of the event. All body marks or injuries should be identified on a body chart. A debriefing meeting for staff involved should be organised as soon as possible. At this meeting staff should reflect on the incident, provide emotional support for each other and decide if procedures need to be adjusted.

Appendix 2

The Support Plan

The plan should include the following:

Gathering information

- Access the pupils behavioural; skills, deficits and excesses
- Consider both internal and external contributing factors
- List antecedents and consequences
- ABC charts and Behaviour charts are used to record a child's behaviour over a period of time

Interpretation

- Be aware of multiple causes

Intervention

- Identify likely causes of the problem
- Specify the help the student needs
- Specify the help the staff need
- Exclude if possible contributory external causes
- Develop strategies for changing the environment if appropriate
- Build on the pupils' strengths
- Use negotiation, if appropriate
- Agree on an individual support plan

