

St. Paul's S.N.S.



Flight Risk and Physical Intervention Policy

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Introduction

This policy was drafted by the staff and Board of Management of St. Paul's Senior National School to provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the school when a child absconds or attempts to abscond from a class or from the school premises or while on a school trip or when a serious incident of violent behaviour occurs in school or on a school trip.

Rationale and Relationship to school ethos

St. Paul's S.N.S. is an inclusive school committed to the holistic education of all of our pupils. The health, safety and wellbeing of all our pupils and staff are of paramount importance.

Different pupils can present with various needs which can, on rare occasions, cause them to behave in a way that is a threat to their own or others safety. While every measure will be taken to prevent incidents, safety of pupils and staff will be prioritised if and when incidents occur.

This policy was formulated by consultation with staff and the Board of Management of our school and reflects the need for clarity around the procedures relating to serious incidents of violent behaviour and absconding.

Aim

To ensure that procedures around serious incidents of violent behaviour and absconding are understood by all stakeholders.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Staff will use the 'Continuum of Support' to put in place behaviour plans for all children who may pose a risk of absconding or physical violence, in consultation with parents/guardians.

Prevention, in terms of sensory breaks, braincalm approaches and facial expression, tone of voice, distraction/diversion, verbal support, rewards, praise and close supervision will be prioritised.

Environmental alterations and specialist teaching may be put in place - sensory area in classroom, sensory room separate to class room, 1:1 teaching, mindfulness teaching, movement breaks.

If the school requires it, specialist training will be provided to staff to deal with a medium to high risk of physical violence or absconding.

A staff member may intervene physically to prevent a pupil from harming him or herself, another pupil or a staff member. Physical intervention will be measured and appropriate.

A staff member may attempt to intervene physically to prevent a pupil from absconding from the school. If physical intervention is deemed impossible or likely to result in injury to the pupil or the staff member, it may not be possible to intervene physically.

In the event that it is deemed impossible to intervene physically and the pupil manages to abscond from the school, the school will contact the pupil's parents and the community Garda. If possible, the school will attempt to keep track of the location of the pupil (within staffing constraints).

Outline of procedures when choosing physical intervention

ACT BALANCE CHOOSE

- Adopt a calm, non threatening stance and posture
- Use a slow controlled voice
- Give clear verbal directions
- Pause and allow time for compliance
- The likely outcomes if physical intervention 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
- Persons who are most likely to succeed
- Best place available
- Best time available.
- Minimum use of force necessary to achieve the desired result

Records and Discipline

Any serious incidents of violence or any incidents of absconding or attempted absconding will be documented and recorded on the child's file and communicated to the parent/guardian. The Code of Discipline may be invoked for any incident if deemed necessary and appropriate, up to and including suspension.

Complaints and Allegations

The school seeks to engage positively with parents/guardians regarding all aspects of their child's education, care and management. Parents/guardians of pupils who engage in high risk challenging behaviours are prioritised for meetings/phone calls etc. with the Class Teacher, S.E.N teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal. 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.

How to make a Complaint

Parents wishing to make a complaint should in the first instance contact the Principal who will furnish the parent with a copy of the Complaints Procedure.

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.

Communication with parents

This policy will be available in the school and supplied to parents/guardians of pupils who may provide a risk of physical violence, absconding from the school or other challenging behaviours.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle.

The school management team and the teachers will implement this policy.

